# SUTTON COURTEN Y NEWS

**VOLUME 52 NO. 10** 

DECEMBER 2023 - JANUARY 2024



# VILLAGE DIARY

DECEMBER	Fri 1 & 15	Bridge Afternoon (p 11)	River Room	14:00-17:00
	Sat 2	Community Brunch (p 10)	River Room	9:30-11:30
	Thur 7 &21	WeCare2 (p 11)	River Room	11:15-12:30
	Sun 10	All Saints' Singers Christmas Concert (p 12)	The Church	19:30
	Thur 14	Community Café (p 10)	River Room	10:30-12:00
	Thur 14	Together in Stitches (p 11)	River Room	19:30-21:00
	Sat 16	Angel Hunt (p 9)	Across Village	9:30
	Sat 16	Friends of All Saints' Yuletide Evening (p 11)	The Abbey	18:30-20:30
	Mon 18	Knit & Natter (p 10)	River Room	14:00-16:00
	Thur 21	Carol Singing (p 9)	Across Village	18:00
	Sun 24	Torchlight Procession (p 9)	Start at School	18:00
	Thur 4 & 18	WeCare2 (p 11)	River Room	11:15-12:30
JANUARY	Fri 5 & 19	Bridge Afternoon (p 11)	River Room	14:00-17:00
	Thur 11 &25	Community Café (p 10)	River Room	10:30-12:00
	Thur 11	Together in Stitches (p 11)	River Room	19:30-21:00
	Sat 13	Community Brunch (p 10)	River Room	9:30-11:30
	Mon 15	Knit & Natter (p 10)	River Room	14:00-16:00
	Tues 16	WI (p 11)	River Room	19:30
	Sat 27	Movie Matinee (p 11)	River Room	16:00
	Sat 27	All Saints' Singers Quiz Night (p 12)	Village Hall	19:00

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

# FEBRUARY 2024 SCN DEADLINE – WEDNESDAY 17<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2024

Unless otherwise stated the Sutton Courtenay News copy deadline is the 3<sup>rd</sup> 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 Amanda Bell 520057
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

enquiries@sclhs.org.uk

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

Sutton Courtenay Village Hall is available to individuals and Commercial users to hire for adult or children's parties as well as other social/regular events. The hall has a bar/kitchen area with fridge and hot water urn. A smaller Committee room for meetings/gatherings and a fully equipped Kitchen. Facilities include Wifi, Projector screen, microphones and a music centre.

A Registered Charity, we are funded by the revenue from this hire which is used to cover the cost of insurance, repairs and utilities. To book the hall go to: suttoncourtenayvillagehall.co.uk and follow the on screen prompts. If you need to contact the booking clerk please 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 (07966 512062) 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 or scmail07@gmail.com Copy can also be posted in the mailbox on the outside the garden door of Cross Trees, 1 Church Street before the copy deadline. Otherwise, telephone us and we can arrange for collection of your letter. 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.

### POST OFFICE SERVICES

The nearest Post Office is at Milton, 11H Park Drive OX14 4RS and is open Monday to Friday from 8.00 to 17.15 with a final collection time of 16:45. It is closed on Saturday & Sunday. Further afield there are Post Offices in Didcot (in WHSmith, 188 The Broadway OX11 8RN) & in Abingdon (5-13 West St. Helen Street OX14 5BL) both of which are reasonably accessible by public transport.

# **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 outside the Football Clubhouse in the



Recreation Ground. The third is outside the Fish on Appleford Road.



# Cutting of verges under review

As part of the budget setting process for 2024-25 the Parish Council will be looking at increasing the number of times the verges in the village are cut. Aware that the Council's existing contractor would be retiring in 2023 the Council had reduced the number of times the verges were cut in the year due to the predicted increase in associated costs.

During 2023 both the outgoing contractor and the new contractor had equipment issues which have led to significant delays in getting the verges cut. Parish Councillors have considered residents' feedback and are looking to increase the number of cuts to at least 5 a year. Previously the Parish Council arranged for the verges to be cut 8 times a year, monthly from March to October.

Oxfordshire County Council, who owns the verges, have an agreement with the Parish Council in which they contribute £1,606 and the Parish must cut the verges at least twice a year. (The County Council has issued an amendment to reduce the minimum number of cuts to one a year from April 2024.) The remaining cost is covered by the precept – the Parish Council's proportion applied to residents' Council Tax bills.

# Old Wallingford Way Cemetery - Christmas tributes

The Parish Council appreciates that many families will be visiting the cemetery over the Christmas period. In February 2024 the Parish Council will arrange for the removal and disposal of any remaining Christmas wreaths and tributes.

Visitors to the cemetery are requested not to leave glass or plastic items (except artificial flowers) as these are prone to being broken due to weather conditions and wild animals who often take a great interest in objects at the cemetery. Glass and plastic items may be removed by the Parish Clerk.



### **New Councillor**

Sutton Courtenay Parish Council can have a maximum of 11 Councillors. Following the May 2023 election process 2 seats remained vacant. Paul Galliver applied to join the Council and at the November 2023 meeting the Councillors voted unanimously to co-opt him.

There remains one vacancy and the Council is looking to fill the position 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.

### Council meetings and contact details

Members of the public are welcome to attend Council meetings. The dates of the next meetings are Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> December, Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> January and Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> February at 7.15pm. Meetings are normally held in the Committee Room at 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: Rita Atkinson (chairman), Robert Dalby (vice chairman), Teresa Field, Paul Galliver, Lyn Hodder, Father Morkos, Joanna O'Callaghan, Hugo Raworth, Jason Warwick and Fiona Wolveridge.

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**



# Working across the Trust to get the best for all children

It has been an exciting month for the Trust, with the two new primary schools (Long Wittenham CE and All Saints CE) completing the formal process to join our family of schools. There were celebration assemblies at the two schools, and everyone enjoyed eating the official RET celebration cupcakes. Meanwhile, we are already seeing the benefits of being part of a wider team of primary schools within the Trust. On Thursday afternoon, the headteachers of all the primary schools met with Paul Shaughnessy, our Director of Primary, to discuss projects taking place in our schools and the ways we can support each other and share expertise. There are lots of areas where we can work together, developing our unique curriculum in each school and keeping our identities, but also sharing knowledge of what works best to include and stretch the children in all our schools.

# **Armistice Day & Remembrance Sunday**

The 11<sup>th</sup> of November was a Saturday this year, with the annual church service of Remembrance taking place on Sunday. The previous Monday, the children had a special assembly where we revisited the reasons behind the day, including the need to show support for those who have been injured in conflict, and to have respect for those who died so that we could live in freedom. These can be difficult concepts for young children to understand.

On Friday morning all children in the Foundation Stage took part in a short ceremony using the wreath they had made. On Sunday, all families were invited to join with the



school as our wreath was placed on the war memorial outside All Saints' Church. There was a two-minute silence before the bugle call. Afterwards, there was a family friendly service in the Church where children placed a poppy for each named soldier from the parish who died in the First and Second World Wars.

Headteacher: Ms Rachel Hornsey

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

Telephone: 01235 848333

# **Make Some Noise About Bullying**

13th-17th November is Anti-Bullying Week and the theme is 'Make Some Noise About Bullying'. All children will be focused on this for their PSHCE lessons this week, and we started the week with a special assembly in which we practiced making noise! We want all children across the school to know that we are ALL responsible for calling out deliberate, repeated unkindness, so we know to shout "STOP! I don't like that!" if something that isn't kind happens to us or to someone else.

We talked about the difference between bullying and conflict with our friends.

To help us remember that we are all different and that we need to work together to keep our school a happy place where everyone feels safe, we started the week with Odd Socks Day!



# **MINI Minds Design Challenge**

One of the children in Wrens class recently entered a competition to design a wrap for the new Mini-Electric in the Mini-Minds competition with Crayola. As a result, he has won a wonderful selection of art resources from Crayola for the school! One part of the prize was to get his design put on a real MINI Electric which was delivered to the school. It was the first time he had seen his design on the car, and it was lovely to share this with his friends. The photographs taken will be used in the Mini Electric marketing campaign so we are all hoping to see a lot more of this wonderful design.





# **COUNTY & DISTRICT COUNCILLOR**

Are we losing the ability to disagree constructively? For much of the past month, I have been fielding questions/concerns and sometimes abuse over transport and highway issues. From Oxford's LTN's (about which I can do very little) to 20mph zones (which I fully support) - these issues provoke strong feelings. Of course, they matter, but with our social services under evermore financial strain, and a cost-of-living crisis that will not go away, it is interesting, and a bit depressing, that potholes and restrictions on traffic speed seem to dominate the local agenda.

There has, however, been good news (most agree):

- The delivery of the long awaited Drayton Road Build out in Sutton Courtenay together with the new SID (speed indicator devices) will, we hope, go some way to improving the accident statistics and quality of life along that road. There are similar hopes for the new SID at Appleford Railway Bridge.
- The completion of the Mill Road bridge in Marcham will allow greater access to the countryside for residents of Marcham and Drayton once the weather cooperates.
- Work continues to resolve County and District planning issues in Drayton.
- Work between District and County Councils on the Joint Vale and South Local Plan continues apace. New government allowing, we are hopeful that Housing delivery targets will be more modest than many we're expecting.

Whatever the numbers are, planning enforcement is in dire need of reform. Many councils do not have the resources to provide a decent service; too few enforcement officers and a set of regulations lacking teeth, have steadily eroded public confidence in the planning system; too often planning conditions are sidestepped and even ignored; there are weak penalties for abuse, an endlessly forgiving system over retrospective planning applications, and overlong time given to applicants to comply with conditions. This has all resulted in a general perception that planning is entirely in the hands of developers rather than planning authorities. It is time for a wholesale revision of planning regulations to restore public confidence in the system.

The Thames Water plans for a Reservoir rumble on. TW would now like the reservoir to be even larger. Most local residents would like the whole idea to be shelved. 2024 may well turn out to be decisive.

And finally, has anyone else noticed the enormous increase in the local squirrel population? We now have a family who have settled in under our eaves and are becoming increasingly assertive. There is one who looks back in through our window in the mornings, with a look of defiance on its face having spent the night chewing through the wire mesh, moth balls and polystyrene filler we have used to try to fill its access points. Using poison which birds and pets can pick up, we are told, is illegal and I don't own a blunderbuss! We are now trying "pigeon spikes" — potentially turning the house into a prison camp. Are these squirrels just picking on us or are others having problems?

Richard Webber Cllr 07546 571521 Richardwebber777@gmail.com

# VILLAGE HALL REFURBISHMENT

The Sutton Courtenay Village Hall Management Trustees are pleased to announce the completion of the refurbishment of the toilets, lobbies and entrance area to the Village Hall. Considerable improvement to the electrical and fire safety of the building has also been undertaken. This work was carried out in direct response to our village-wide survey in which you told us that the appearance of the entrance to the building was dated and didn't feel welcoming. We hope that you will agree that these areas have been transformed from "tired and dated" to clean, modern and energy-efficient. It has taken several person-hours to raise the funds, plan and design the project and manage its execution. Huge thanks go to Paul Galliver, Jane Chamberlain, Mary Warrington, Karl Gebhart and Rita Atkinson. A big thank you, also, to our contractor, Ian Maconochie, and his team.

Thank you to the Parish Council for supporting our s106 application and to FCC Community Foundation for a grant that enabled this work to be undertaken.

The refurbishment was phased and there is still more work to be done. However, the Trustees are first reviewing the management of the Village Hall with the support of the Parish Council to move towards a viable and sustainable management model. Currently the management is heavily dependent on the voluntary contributions of a few trustees.

Robin Norman

Chairman, Sutton Courtenay Village Hall Management Trustees



New inner lobby of the Village Hall

# **DAVID JOHNSTON MP**



Thank you very much to the 2,127 people who signed my petition to re-open Grove Station. It shows again the huge strength of feeling on this locally, and I will now be presenting it to the House of Commons

and to the Department for Transport to make the case to them. Thanks too to Andy Holding of the Wantage and Grove Rail Supporters' Group for his support. I will keep pushing for this station, which makes economic, social, and environmental sense.

We are the proud home of the 11 Explosives Ordnance Disposal and Search Regiment at Vauxhall Barracks in Didcot, and it was a pleasure to visit again and meet Lt Col Rob Swan and the team. Just this year they have so far responded to more than 1,800 requests in the UK to deal with explosive devices. I planted a remembrance stake in Parliament's Garden of Remembrance in their honour. I also took part in poignant remembrance services and parades — this year in Wantage and Didcot. Thank you to everyone who made them happen.

UK Parliament Week takes place every November, and I was pleased to visit local schools and talk to different youth organisations about my role as an MP and how they can get involved in politics, including: Wallingford School, St Michael's CofE Primary School in Steventon, Brightwell Primary School, St Blaise Primary School, the 7th Abingdon Beavers, Chilton Explorer Scout Unit and Brightwell-cum-Sotwell Scouts.

I have been campaigning to improve our roads since I was elected and I have now launched my Local Roads Survey to give you the opportunity to tell me exactly where you are seeing issues that need to be resolved on our roads — including potholes, congestion, speeding and other safety concerns. I want to pull together a complete map of all the issues we are facing, and where, so that I can raise these with the road authorities. Fill it out at www.david-johnston.org.uk/RoadsSurvey

Now that I am the Minister for Children, Families and Wellbeing, one of the things I have responsibility for is overseeing the Government's big new expansion in childcare for parents. Once it is completed in Autumn 2025, it will give working parents 30 hours of free childcare every week from when their child is 9 months old until they start school. It is great to be involved in delivering this exciting new policy and you can see exactly what you're eligible for at www.childcarechoices.gov.uk.

It is also great that the Prime Minister has successfully delivered on his promise to halve inflation by the end of the year. It involved hard decisions and discipline, but it is right that we focused on this as inflation eats away at the pound in your pocket and has had negative effects on both prices and interest rates.

I wish you a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

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

### **ADYP**

The Abingdon DAMASCUS Youth Project



Youth & Community Acting Together

# **ADYP Drop-in:**

When? Wednesdays from 6:00-7:30pm

Where? Sutton Courtenay Village Hall

Contact? James Quartermain

jamesq.ycat@gmail.com 01235 848694

www.damascusyouthproject.org.uk James Damascus, Jake Damascus



James\_Damascus; Jake\_Damascus

YouTube-The Abingdon Damascus Youth Project-MIND GYM

### STAY & PLAY



31A9 And Play

FUN FOR BABIES, PRE-SCHOOLERS AND ACCOMPANYING GROWN-UPS

FRIDAYS, 9:00-10:30

AT SUTTON COURTENAY PRIMARY SCHOOL

£2 PER CHILD WITH ADULT

HOT DRINKS AND SNACKS FOR ADULTS

WEEKLY NEWS AND UPDATES ON FACEBOOK

@SCSTAYANDPLAY

# **NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH & SCAM INFORMATION**



Campaigning to Protect Our Rural County

# The Big Give Christmas Challenge One donation, twice the impact One week only 28th November – 5th December

CPRE Oxfordshire campaign to protect our rural county. We are passionate about making the countryside, its villages and market towns, better places for everyone to live, work and enjoy.

Join us in making a real and lasting impact. Your donation will be matched, doubling your contribution. Help us launch the Oxfordshire Green Defenders Network and protect our natural heritage.

# Every donation counts.

During this week only, every donation, no matter what size, will be doubled – up to our target of £4,500 which will generate £9,000 in total.

What you need to do?

- Add a calendar reminder for your diary for 28<sup>th</sup> November, including this link: tinyurl.com/2mn6ttkj
- Have your debit or credit card details ready when you make your donation.
- Tell others! Please pass on this message to anyone you think might be interested in supporting us and having their donation doubled.

Remember: The link for donations will go live on our Big Give Christmas Challenge portal on Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> November and will run until Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> December.

With huge thanks from us all at CPRE Oxfordshire. If you'd like any further information, please contact Laura Reineke: comms@cpreoxon.org.uk 07392 769377



# Lowering Energy Bills for Oxfordshire Residents

We are dedicated to helping households on a low income improve the energy efficiency of their homes, lower their bills, and reduce their carbon footprint.

We have been able to secure government-backed Home Upgrade Grant funding to install energy efficient measures such as insulation, solar panels and heat pumps in residents' homes.

We have the funding, now we need to let people know about it - which is where you come in! We want home owners and landlords to register their interest in grant funding via our 'Welcome the Warmth' website. We are relying on your support to direct people to where they can get help.

We've created a toolkit which is full of useful ways to spread the word about the 'Welcome the Warmth' campaign.

It includes:

- Posters and flyers you can order from us (for free) or print out yourselves
- Social media posts you can use on your channels
- Text that can be used in a newsletter or online post.

Please use these where you can, so as many people as possible can hear about the help that is on offer.

For information see: www.welcomethewarmth.org.uk

If you have any questions about the support available, or this campaign, please get in touch with:

Gayle Pilkington Retrofit Project Manager, Oxfordshire County Council County Hall | New Road | Oxford | OX1 1ND

Email: gayle.pilkington@oxfordshire.gov.uk | Tel: 07927 589233

# Cold callers in the Abingdon area

Thames Valley Police and Oxfordshire County Council's trading standards team have been receiving calls about cold callers operating in the Abingdon area.

### Our advice is:

Don't agree to offers of building work, home repairs or maintenance that come from a cold call. Many traders will be booked up, so be wary of traders who can arrive to start the work the following day and push for a quick agreement to use them.

You should receive a contract of the total price before any work starts and 14 days cancellation rights. The trader should not ask you to sign these away.

Don't be afraid to say 'no', don't be pressured, and check with others if the work is required and what is a fair price to pay. If it's out of the blue, it's not for you!

# Don't fall prey to loan sharks this Christmas

Residents are being warned by Oxfordshire County Council not to turn to loan sharks, who will be seeking to prey on people who are struggling financially in the lead up to, during and after the Christmas period.

Borrowers generally won't receive any paperwork and the lender will add high interest on top of the amount borrowed. If payments are not made, coercive controlling methods may be used, and in some cases violence, keeping people in an endless spiral of debt that is very hard to get out of.

No matter how tempting it may seem, a loan shark is never the answer. They target vulnerable or desperate people who may feel they have nowhere else to go. People get trapped in a cycle of debt with exorbitant interest rates and can face intimidation and threats of violence.

Residents can report loan sharks by calling 0300 555 2222.



The
DAMASCUS
Parish
Drayton | Appleford | Milton
Sutton Courtenay | Steventon

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

This year I find myself thinking about Christmas every time I hear or see the news. Reports of terrible suffering bring a sober challenge to how the historical events around Bethlehem have been turned into a 'Festivitymas' by consumer excess. News and images of young migrants forced to move from their place of birth with no secure abode once they arrive at their destination. Political and military threat surround the population: poverty in body and spirit are everywhere. Few have secure homes or places to stay. Infants are the most vulnerable, but the despised, the outsiders are hardly better off as they eke out a meagre existence in the wild, harsh hillsides.

To the world 2000+ years ago comes the same message as today: 'Do not be afraid, I bring you good news.' The first to hear such news are the innocent, the vulnerable, the ordinary and the despised. The most precious word for this Christmas is the same as 2000 years ago; it is *Emmanuel* - God is with us. I pray that this Christmas we do not 'spend' Christmas or 'observe' Christmas but rather 'keep' it and 'share' it.

Christmas/sacred Christ/massacred — where do I draw the line? When the song of the angels is stilled, when the star in the sky is gone, When the kings and princes are home, when the shepherds are back with their flock,

The work of Christmas begins:

to find the lost, to heal the broken, to feed the hungry, to release the prisoner, to rebuild the nations,

To bring peace among brothers, to make music in the heart. Howard Thurman's poem "The Work of Christmas"

From the Reverend Phil Sutton Associate Minister in 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

### **Holy Baptism**

We send our best wishes and congratulations to the following who were welcomed into the family of the church through baptism:

Jesse Alexander OSBORNE (22<sup>nd</sup> October 2023)

### **CHURCH DIARY FOR DECEMBER 2023**

Please see the church Christmas card for full details of all our Christmas services across the DAMASCUS Parish.

**Saturday 2^{nd}** - 9:30-11:30 Community Brunch in the River Room

**Sunday**  $3^{rd} - 11:00$  Christingle Family Service – all welcome to come and celebrate with us and support the work of the Children's Society by making a Christingle!

Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup>, 13<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup>– 19:30 Advent Course (via zoom – please contact parish office for link) – join us as we explore the stories of Sarah, Isaiah, John the Baptist through Advent.

**Saturday 16^{th} –** Join the Angel Hunt from 9:30am all round the village

**Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup>** – 9:00 School Christmas Service at All Saints

**Thursday 21**<sup>st</sup> – 18:00 Village Carol Singing (see advert for details of all the stops)

**Sunday 24<sup>th</sup>** – CHRISTMAS EVE – 15:00 Crib Service. 18:00 Torchlight Process and Carols around the Bonfire. 23:30 Midnight Mass at Appleford – for Sutton Courtenay and Appleford

**Monday 25<sup>th</sup>** – CHRISTMAS DAY – 11:00 Family Communion

**Saturday 30^{th} – 3pm - Opera Anywhere performs** Amahl and the Night Visitors

**Sunday 31**<sup>st</sup> – 11:00 DAMASCUS Parish Communion Service at All Saints'

### **CHURCH DIARY FOR JANUARY 2024**

**Sunday 7**<sup>th</sup> – 11:00 Family Service for Epiphany – come and celebrate the journey of the Magi with us

### A Traditional Service of Nine Lessons and Carols



6pm on Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> December 2023 at All Saints' Church

With the combined choirs of Sutton Courtenay and Drayton

# **ALL SAINTS' CHURCH**











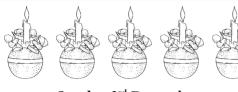
# CHRISTMAS CAROL SINGING AROUND THE VILLAGE -COME AND JOIN THE SONG!

The 'Singing Saints' will be leading the carol singing around the village raising money for Thames Valley Air Ambulance on **Thursday 21**st **December.** 

Please come and join us at the following stops at the approximate times:

**18:00** - 9 Springfield Way / **18:30** - 53 Bradstocks Way / **19:15** - Tullis Close / **20:00** - The George

**ALL WELCOME!** 



### Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> December

11:00 Christingle Family Service – for all ages Come and make your own Christingle, Follow the Star and Join in the Song.

This service will see the great unveiling of our homemade knitted / crocheted Christmas tree – do come and see!

The service will be followed by refreshments in the River Room.

# CHRISTMAS EVE TORCHLIGHT PROCESSION AND BONFIRE



Torches will be on sale in the local shops from **Saturday 9**<sup>th</sup> **December.** 

Price: £3.50 each (NOT FOR SALE TO UNDER 16s)

The procession begins at 6pm from outside the school gates – please follow the guidance of the stewards and keep to the pavements – culminating in the churchyard at All Saints' for carols around the bonfire.

This Christmas we will be raising money for Thames Valley Air Ambulance — cash and contactless payments taken.

Thank you to those who responded to my plea in the November Sutton Courtenay News — if there is anyone else who would be willing to act as stewards on the night — please do let us know as soon as possible.

01235 847179 or admin@damascusparish.org.uk

# Join the Village Angel Hunt

from 9:30am on Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> December Angels will be appearing across the village. Why not take a walk around the community over the weekend of 16<sup>th</sup> & 17<sup>th</sup> December and if you find an Angel please keep it to hang on your own Christmas tree and read and keep the booklet, as a gift from the church to you. If you find more than one, why not share it with a friend or neighbour to spread the love of Christmas?



If you can make an angel or two for us then instructions and patterns are available at the back of All Saints' Church. Alternatively, phone 01235 847179 or email admin@damascusparish.org or contact us via our Facebook page and we'll get them to you.

Your completed angels need to be back in church by **Friday 8**<sup>th</sup> **December** so we can prepare them for the Angel Hunt.

**WARM SPACES** – Once again this winter we are hosting Warm Spaces – if you need a space to be warm and enjoy some refreshments in the company of others please come along to the Community Café; Movie Matinee; the Community Brunch; Together in Stitches or Knit & Natter. All these events are free and everyone is welcome!

# **RIVER ROOM & COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES**



### **CHRISTMAS HAMPERS**

It's not too late to nominate an individual, a couple or a family who would appreciate a gift of a hamper. Please let us know their name and address, number of people in household and any dietary requirements and we will do our best to ensure a hamper is delivered to them in the week before Christmas.

The aim of the hampers is simply to spread the love of Christmas around the community.

admin@damascusparish.org.uk or 'phone 01235 847179 by **Thursday 7**<sup>th</sup> **December 2023.** 

# **MOVIE MATINEES**

The next Movie Matinee in the River Room is on Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> January 2024 - 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.

# **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** 

# **RIVER ROOM 200 CLUB**

In Support of the All Saints' Community Space

Winners at the Draw on 15 November were:

1<sup>st</sup> - No. 81 (£32.00) 2<sup>nd</sup> - No. 51 (£16.00) 3<sup>rd</sup> - No. 9 (£8.00)

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 14<sup>th</sup> December at the All Saints' Community Café in the River Room at 10.30 am.

# **Community Café in the River Room**



Run by the church for the whole community
Thursday 14 December
Thursday 11 & 25 January 2024
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

### KNIT AND NATTER



# Afternoons of chat and craft

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

Every 3<sup>rd</sup> 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



# **COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES**

### 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

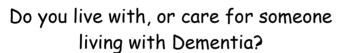


# Friends of All Saints' Church

Yuletide Evening with Supper and **Christmas Carols at:** The Abbey, Sutton Courtenay

Saturday 16th December 2023 6.30pm-8.30pm

Tickets £12 adult £6 child Please contact Sue Jenkins at SIJenkins33@aol.com or ring 07885 437454 for tickets



# Wecare 2

Wecare2 is a small group of people with dementia and, of course, their carers. We meet on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> 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

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



**SUTTON COURTENAY WI** 

We always welcome new members We meet every third Tuesday monthly in the River Room, All Saints Church, at 7.30 pm

December - Christmas Party (Members)

Come along for a visit in the New Year

January 2024 - Speaker/presentation Medical Cures in the 18th Century February 2024- Speaker/presentation **Daily Life in Tudor Times** 

Contact us at suttoncourtenaywi@oxfordshirewi.co.uk 01869 331081



### **BRIDGE AFTERNOONS**

Come and play bridge on the 1st and 3rd Friday afternoons in the River Room from 2-5pm with a cup of tea and a piece of cake - £5 Tables, cards and score cards all provided Just come along and we make up tables based on experience/choice. All standards of play welcome -

from experienced players to those who are 'just in need

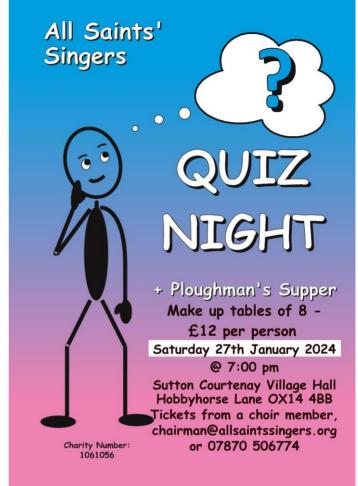
of a refresher', 'very rusty' or learning. Rubber or Chicago – you choose

# **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







# **PUZZLE PAGE**

# Easy Sudoku

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

# Taken from www.puzzles.ca/sudoku ${}_{\scriptscriptstyle{(1090)}}$

# **Medium Sudoku**

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

# WORDSEARCH

The topic is: Crafts to Try During the Winter Months



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



Calligraphy Printmaking Quilting Ceramics Crochet Scrapbooking **Embroidery** Sculpture Knitting Sewing Soapmaking Macrame Stained Glass Mosaics Origami Woodcarving **Painting** Woodworking

Pottery

# Christmas Sing-along at The Abbey - £5 Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2:30 - 5pm, The Great Hall

We are hosting an afternoon of Christmas singing in the Great Hall at the Abbey. We are joined by Claire Cecil from Heart-Light who will be facilitating this event with us.

We will have song sheets of many of the Christmas carol favourites for all the family to join in. Musicians and singers are welcome to come along and contribute to this event.

We are also pleased to announce that Harmony Inspires, our local ladies barbershop chorus, will be joining us for the afternoon with their repertoire of Christmas favourites.

We will also have refreshments available from the popular Abbey Café.

# Taizé by Candlelight Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> December at 7.30pm The Great Hall

\*\*\*\*\*

An old favourite returns to The Abbey. Come and take part in this peaceful and reflective evening in which we sing together the chants from Taizé in front of a great log fire and with the hall lit by candles. The singing will be led by Wren Hughes, an old friend of The Abbey. It will be a lovely Advent occasion as we look forward to Christmas. Please do come along. You don't need to be a great singer and can listen to and soak up the music and the atmosphere.

There is no charge but donations towards the upkeep of The Abbey would be welcome. If you want to come please do register your interest on Eventbrite via our website; theabbey.uk.com/events/

# Children's Christmas Storytelling in English, French, German & Spanish - £5

\*\*\*\*\*\*

Friday 8th December 4:00 - 5:30pm, The Great Hall

Please come and join us at the Abbey Sutton Courtenay for Christmas Storytelling in English, French, German & Spanish. Stories will be told by an open log fire in our magnificent Great Hall with hot chocolate available for the children. There will be chairs at the back of the Hall for parents - children can sit cross legged on the floor around the fireplace.

Parking is available outside the main Abbey building, outside our Garden Lodge (just past the Abbey Building then follow the drive and bear right), or just as you enter the drive to the right on the grass. Free parking is available just outside the Abbey entrance also beside the Green but spaces are limited.

Please use postcode OX14 4AE if you are driving - this will take you to the Abbey entrance.

Spaces are limited so grab your ticket now!

\*\*\*\*\*

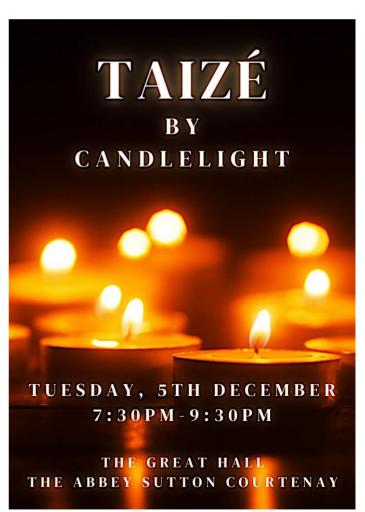
# The Abbey Annual General Meeting Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> December 2:00 – 4:00pm, The Great Hall

If you live locally and have an interest in seeing The Abbey develop as a vibrant resource for all the people of Sutton Courtenay and the surrounding area, please do come and find out how the regeneration of this wonderful place is going since we re-opened in April. Remember, if The Abbey is to flourish as part of our local community, then we do need and value your enthusiasm and support.

You are warmly invited to the AGM on Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> December. I know that AGMs can sometimes be really boring, but we aim to make this an interesting two hours, highlighting the progress we have made and something of our plans for the future. It will be held in the old medieval Great Hall with a roaring log fire to encourage the seasonal spirit.

Do come along if you can. So that we can make all the necessary arrangements for a comfortable and interesting afternoon, please let us know if you plan to come by securing your seat here on our Eventbrite page via our website; theabbey.uk.com/events/

\*\*\*\*\*



Japanese Black and White Woodblock Printing -Talk with Artist Hiroko Imada Saturday 20th January 5:30-6:30pm, Supper 7pm - £40

Japanese Black and White Woodblock Printing Workshop - 2 sessions Sunday 21st January 9:30am -12:30pm or 1:30 - 4:30pm, in The Great Hall - £45

\*\*\*\*\*\*

### **NEW BOOK GROUP**

Every second Monday of the month at 8 pm, next meeting 4 December. The book to read is Crow Lake by Mary Lawson. Or just come along. Text, phone or email Jane Taylor for details. 07933 257854, janehopetaylor@gmail.com

### **REIKI HEALING**

Reiki healing is working with energy and sound to create a relaxing and beneficial treatment. Taster treatment free, as I love giving Reiki as it also goes through the giver. Text, phone or email Jane Taylor on 07933 257854, janehopetaylor@gmail.com

### **COMMUNITY GARDENING AT THE ABBEY**

Come and join us in the beautiful walled garden for gardening at The Abbey, which is just off the green in Sutton Courtenay, on Tuesdays from 2 – 4 pm, and afterwards for tea and cake. Text, phone or email Jane Taylor for details on 07933 257854, janehopetaylor@gmail.com

### SUPPORT GROUP AT THE ABBEY

Would you like to connect more deeply with people on a more-than-superficial level? Support group using co-counselling techniques of equal shared time, free attention and confidentiality. Text, phone or email Jane Taylor on 07933 257854, janehopetaylor@gmail.com

### THE ARTIST'S WAY

Would you like to join a group to support you in your creative endeavours? The Artist's Way by Julia Cameron is a classic book, and we will work through a chapter each week, with exercises to do each week, morning pages and an artist's date. First session Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> December, 8 pm. It is designed to free up your creativity in whatever you are doing; be it art, writing, cooking, craft or anything you are creating. No experience necessary. Text, phone or email Jane Taylor on 07933 257854, janehopetaylor@gmail.com

The Abbey Office opening times: 9am-3pm

The Abbey will be closed 19<sup>th</sup> December 12:30PM-3PM and we'll close for Christmas 22<sup>nd</sup> December 2023, re-opening on 3<sup>rd</sup> January 2024.

The Abbey Café will resume on 6<sup>th</sup> January 2024.

Please check our website for upcoming events:-theabbey.uk.com/events/

Rebecca Bolton, Office Manager theabbey.uk.com rebecca.bolton@theabbey.uk.com +44 (0)1235 242 283





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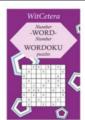


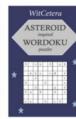




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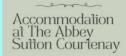
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For larger events and to book The Abbey Main House please email <a href="mailto:welcome@theabbey.uk.com">welcome@theabbey.uk.com</a>



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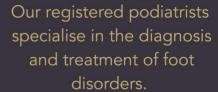
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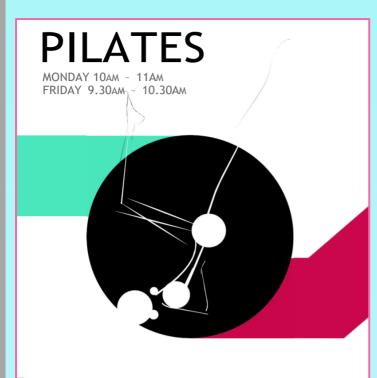


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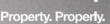
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