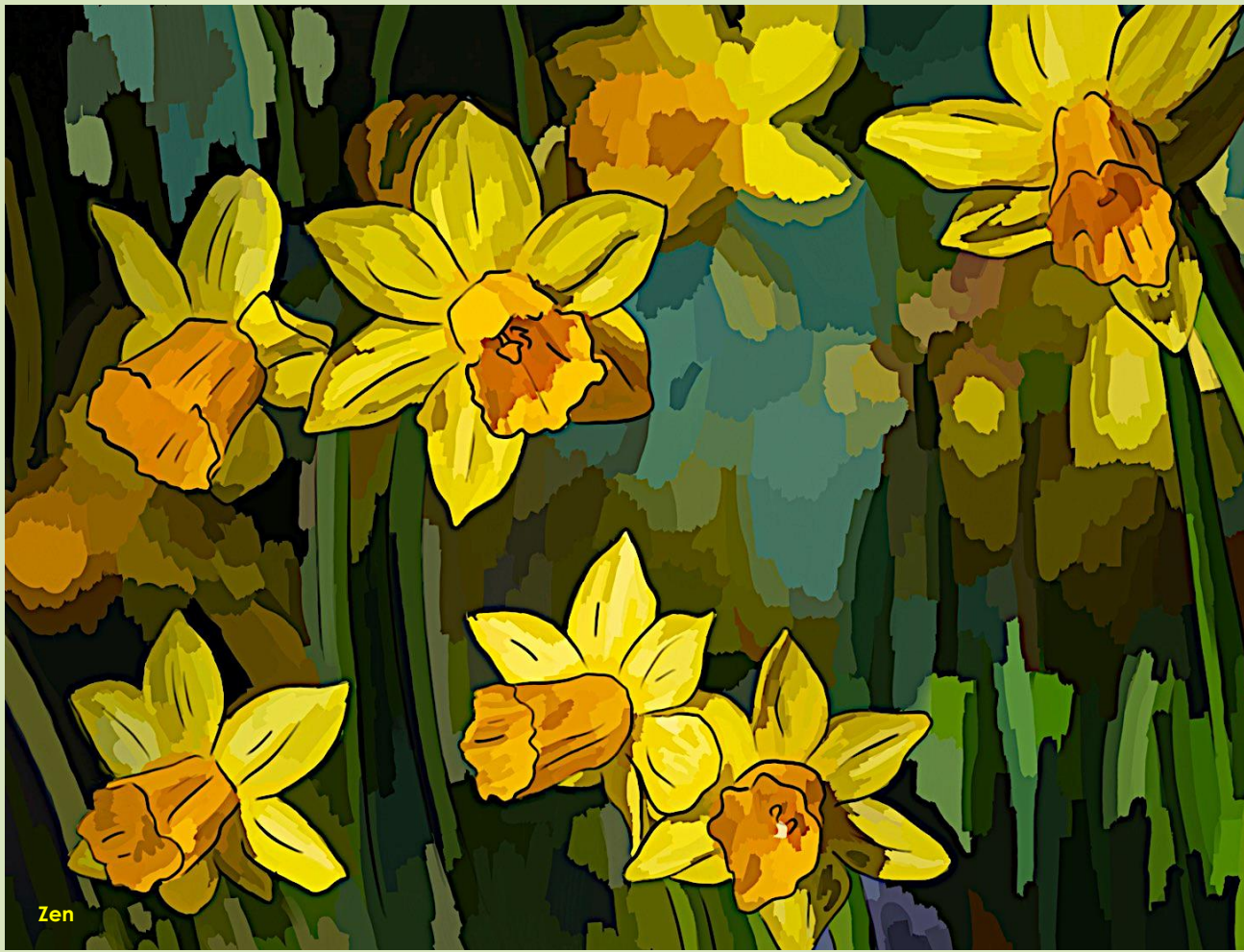


SUTTON COURTENAY NEWS

VOLUME 53 No. 2

MARCH 2024



VILLAGE DIARY FOR MARCH

Fri 1 & 15	Bridge Afternoon (p 10)	River Room	14:00-17:00
Thur 7 & 21	WeCare2 (p 9)	River Room	11:15-12:30
Sat 9	Community Brunch (p 9)	River Room	9:30-11:30
Sat 9	Friends of All Saints' Quiz Night (p 10)	Village Hall	19:00
Thur 14 & 28	Community Café (p 9)	River Room	10:30-12:00
Thur 14	Together in Stitches (p 10)	River Room	19:30-21:00
Fri 15 Sat 16	The Wizard of OX (p 7)	Village Hall	18:30 14:00 & 18:30
Mon 18	Knit & Natter (p 9)	River Room	14:00-16:00
Fri 22	Spiritual Mediumship (p 6)	Village Hall	19:00-22:00
Sat 23	Movie Matinee (p 9)	River Room	16:00

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

APRIL 2024 SCN DEADLINE – WEDNESDAY 20TH MARCH 2024

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](https://www.facebook.com/@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
Action Fraud: www.actionfraud.police.uk
Citizens Advice: www.citizensadvice.org.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.





Mobile communications

Following requests from residents the Parish Council approached Oxfordshire County Council to enquire whether there were any plans to improve mobile connectivity in the parish. Many residents have a very poor phone signal and limited mobile data connection.

Oxfordshire County Council has a Digital Infrastructure Team, who advised that they are not currently aware of any of the mobile operators planning to install in Sutton Courtenay. However, operators regularly review the network and this could change in future.

You can read more about the current communication projects in the county online at www.digitalinfrastructureoxfordshire.co.uk. Please continue to contact the County Council and your MP to raise awareness of the issue in Sutton Courtenay.

Didcot Garden Town HIF1 road scheme

The Public Inquiry into the Didcot Garden Town HIF1 road scheme has started. (We included the outline plan in the February 2024 issue of Sutton Courtenay News.) The Inquiry is being held at the Bee House in Milton Park. It is expected to continue well into April, and possibly into May. For further details please go to gateleyhamer-pi.com/en-gb/didcot-garden-town/ where a live link to watch the proceedings online is available.

High Street phone box to be removed

During the February meeting the Parish Council debated what to do with the disused 1980s phone box in the High Street. The phone box was decommissioned by BT and purchased by the Parish Council for £1.

Until late 2023 it had been used as a location for a defib, but the structure needs to be refurbished. The unit has a triangular footprint with 2 glazed sides and the side facing the path is open. Ideas included replacing the glazing, repurposing the unit to become a noticeboard, reusing it to house a defib, and building a cabinet inside the box for a book exchange.



After discussing the options, taking into consideration that the site is within the Conservation Area and the costs involved Councillors voted to have the phone box removed.

Vacancy for 1 Councillor

Sutton Courtenay Parish Council can have a maximum of 11 Councillors. At present there is 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 5th March, Tuesday 9th April and Tuesday 7th May 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.

Sutton Courtenay Neighbourhood Plan to go to referendum

Following the independent examination of the Sutton Courtenay Neighbourhood Plan, the District Council has decided that the plan should proceed to referendum. The referendum will take place on Thursday 11th April. Those entitled to vote in the referendum will be sent a poll card by the District Council.

To read more about the referendum and to view the final documents visit www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/vale-of-white-horse-district-council/planning-and-development/local-plan-and-planning-policies/neighbourhood-plans/emerging-neighbourhood-plans/sutton-courtenay-neighbourhood-plan/ or scan the QR code.



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.



Growing the future

Gardening with Mr Greenough keeps going through the winter months. The children find that when they are busy digging they quickly get warm! In the corner of the grounds opposite Falcons' classroom a horse chestnut tree has been planted. Typically, these live for over 150 years. Who can begin to imagine how our world will be by then? The children in our school now will have had their own children, grandchildren, and great grandchildren. There may not even be a school here! Sometimes, planting a tree can be the most profound act of optimism and faith in the future. This is why gardening can be such a great way of teaching children to take a moment for reflection and peace.



Year 3 visit to the Story Museum

On Wednesday, Nightingales Class visited the Roald Dahl Story Museum in Great Missenden. They have been reading Charlie and the Chocolate Factory together as their class book this term. At the museum, they were able to find out all about Roald Dahl's life and what motivated him to be such a great story writer. They also had a chance to dress up and make their own picture books! This will inspire them with their writing back at school.



Robins visit to the Dinosaur Museum

Robins had a fantastic day at the Natural History Museum where they learnt about the history of dinosaurs. They started off in the museum classroom with a story, 'Dinosaur Roar', which was read by Chris in such a captivating way. They did really well; listening beautifully and making us all very proud. Then they had an opportunity to touch bones and fossils, some of which were as big as a child's head. Afterwards they explored the Museum. It was a great day!



Tilly the Master Baker

We have been very excited this year to follow Junior Bakeoff on Channel 4, because an ex-pupil of ours, who left in 2022, has won the finals!

Here is Tilly. She has a brother, Milo, in the school. Milo told us that he really enjoyed watching the finals and seeing all the TV cameras. The series was filmed last summer. His favourite thing Tilly made was the Halloween cake which was like a skeleton. You can watch the final on Channel 4 catchup. Tilly always loved baking and we are very proud of her achievements!



Reading together

This week, Reading Ambassadors from Didcot Girls' School visited Falcons class to look at the Primary Novels shortlisted for this year's Oxfordshire Book Awards. The children will continue reading the shortlisted books together over a series of visits in the coming weeks before deciding which is their favourite. The winners of the Oxfordshire Book Awards are decided solely on votes from students, so this gives our young people an opportunity to be a part of something really exciting!



Headteacher: Ms Rachel Hornsey

Asst Headteachers: Lisa Knight & Louise Potter

Office.3243@sutton-courtenay.oxon.sch.uk

Telephone: 01235 848333

AVAILABLE FOR HIRE

THE RIVER ROOM

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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.

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All enquiries: 01235 847179

NORDIC WALKING

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For more information contact Graham Wells

at graymar.wells@btopenworld.com

Housing

Apparently, the latest acronym for an extreme “NIMBY” (Not in my back yard) is “BANANA” (Build absolutely nothing anywhere near anything).

Wherever we are in the argument – everyone agrees we have a large and growing problem. Since 2010, no less than 16 housing ministers have tried to address the problem with little success.

The national shortage of housing has been a major issue for the UK for the past 50 + years. Of all post war governments, it was the MacMillan government (1957 – 1963) that managed to build the most houses. Since then, we are told we have been falling ever further behind. This has helped to push house prices to levels far beyond the reach of most young people. A few lucky ones have been able to rely on “the bank of Mum and Dad” or “help to buy” schemes; another minority have made use of “affordable” homes schemes; but most have been thrown on the mercy of a shrinking number of homes for social rent caused, at least in part, by “right to buy” schemes.

In our part of “leafy, rural” Oxfordshire, the issue is most acute - and don’t most of us know it? All political parties now accept that we must face and address the problem before it produces social unrest.

The uncomfortable and conflicting facts are that: 1. There is growing concern that many of our villages are now separated by a single field. 2. As a major contributor to the national exchequer, there is enormous pressure for us to grow our local economy as rapidly as possible. 3. VWHDC has already taken more houses in the last 10 years than any other District in the UK. 4. We have a number of Brown field sites which are often sited as suitable places for future housing. 4. Our road system is already suffering from congestion, and, at present, more road building seems to be the only solution on offer. 5. Leafy and rural we may be, but much of the space we do have is Area of Natural Beauty, Green Belt and Flood Plain.

It is hard to see a way out of this dilemma but there is one unavoidable conclusion. Any solution is going to involve some pain for all of us. It is vital that that pain is fairly shared between us all. Local Councils and Government are going to have to work together in a way they have failed to do for many years.

Flooding

Living in Drayton, it is easy to forget that Oday Hill, in all its 30ft majesty protects the village from the worst of the recent local flooding. Given the dire forecasts of ever more frequent and extreme flooding events, this protection may not last for long. However, at present, it seems that only a small number of Drayton homes built centuries ago are affected.

Spare a thought for our neighbours in Steventon, Milton and Sutton Courtenay. Milton village (with many older homes)

was particularly badly affected by the recent flooding. Some of the roads in Milton were like rivers.

Solutions fall into two categories – first, immediate actions by councils, the EA and local residents* and secondly longer term solutions (most of which involve more money from central government) and changes in planning policy.**

* Some drivers determined to challenge the floods and driving too fast resulted in abandoned cars and more water entering already part flooded homes.

** Those drafting the almost complete Sutton Courtenay Neighbourhood Plan have been told by an Inspector that the plan cannot restrict the road between Drayton and Sutton Courtenay from further development because there is already much development on the South side of the road. By implication, development on the North side of the road might happen in the future. For those that know that road, it was up to four feet under water in the recent flood.

I don’t believe I am behaving as a NIMBY – still less a BANANA – when I say this seems like Planning gone mad.

Richard Webber Cllr

07546 571521 Richardwebber777@gmail.com

LETTER FROM A VILLAGE NEWCOMER

Dear Liza

It took months but the move was very quick when it finally happened. We’ve been in Sutton Courtenay two weeks now and have most of the boxes unpacked. I can’t really believe we’re here. I feel like we went for a weekend away in the country and got left behind. It’s a long, thin village, so if you turn off the main street and go past a few houses you are in the fields. You asked about my birthday... I could do with some wellies to fit in around here!

I’ve made a few friends already, although admittedly they are all horses. They don’t half love Twixes! I’ve actually discovered it’s highly inadvisable to feed horses chocolate, so good thing it was mostly biscuit and caramel. They wouldn’t have CCTV would they?

Now that we’re away from the city, I’m really noticing the stars and the birds. It’s properly dark down our lane. Did you notice there was a meteor shower? I went over to the recreation ground and saw my first shooting star! And one morning I woke up around 6 and it was the dawn chorus. Not like me at all, but I actually went outside to record it and then went back to bed. I just couldn’t believe how loud it was. A pair of red kites nests in the tree outside. Sometimes I just sit and watch them flying low over the velux window. I suppose we shouldn’t have trouble with mice.

Don’t forget we’ve got a spare room now so come and see for yourself.

Love from
George



One of the most common questions I'm asked is 'what is life like as an MP?'

In general my week is split Monday-Thursday in Parliament and Friday-Sunday back home in Didcot.

At the time of writing this, the last week kicked off with a team meeting at the Department for Education, followed by my weekly meeting with the team delivering our huge expansion of childcare, with the first 15 hours of free childcare becoming available for working parents from April. Alongside various other meetings, children from Chilton County Primary School came for a visit to Westminster, and it was great to meet them and take their questions.

Tuesday included a meeting with GARD to discuss the next steps following me echoing their call for a public inquiry of the reservoir proposal in December; attending a networking event of charities and businesses involved in our Disability Action Plan; and responding for the Government in a debate about nursery provision in the South West.

Just as MPs like myself have regular surgeries with constituents, so Ministers have regular surgeries with MPs to discuss problems they're having locally in areas the Minister covers, and Wednesday kicked off with one of these. After attending PMQs, I presented to Parliament my petition to reopen Grove Station, for which I am grateful to those 2127 of you who signed. I met my Parliamentary team before taking another debate - this time on special educational needs - and several other meetings.

Last week was National Apprenticeship Week and on Thursday I visited childcare apprentices and then another nursery. To and from the visits I had calls with 10 local authorities and did some paperwork.

Then on Friday I began with a Q&A at Didcot Sixth Form, then met with Liane and Mark from Active Future South Oxfordshire, and visited apprentices at Williams Racing in Grove. I had several surgery appointments, including meeting a local sub-postmaster who contacted me after seeing the ITV drama about the Horizon scandal having recognised that what happened had also happened to her. I am pleased this Government is taking such decisive action to right this wrong.

I met with Niamh Dernie from Wantage to talk about the next steps in her campaign against sexual harassment, and then had the pleasure of presenting Mikayla Beames from Team Mikayla, of which I am a proud patron, with her Points of Light award from the PM. Then I rounded off the day with my weekly visit to Merv, as part of my volunteering with the Didcot Good Neighbours Scheme.

Weekends are always a combination of door knocking, emails and paperwork for both MP and Minister roles, and - when I can manage it - Liverpool games!

I love being able to make a difference in my job, and the variety of work I handle - as I always say to people, it's better to be very busy than bored.

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

An Evening with Spiritual Mediumship

BACK BY POPULAR DEMAND!

7pm - 10pm

Friday 22nd March 2024

Sutton Courtenay Village Hall

Tickets - £10 Per Person

AVAILABLE NOW AT
WWW.OXFORDSHIREWILDLIFERESCUE.CO.UK

Licensed Bar - Nibbles - Raffle

Featuring Alan Salmon and fellow mediums,
raising money for the Oxfordshire Wildlife Rescue

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**FUN FOR BABIES, PRE-SCHOOLERS AND
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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](https://www.facebook.com/SCSTAYANDPLAY)**

Six Ways Criminals Secure Your Trust

Reciprocity: Criminals aim to create a psychological impulse in victims to reciprocate a favour from someone they perceive as acting lovingly or generously.

Consistency: Criminals exploit our desire to demonstrate consistency in our behaviour over time. They achieve this by initially making modest requests and progressively increasing their demands.

Social Norms: Criminals exploit our inclination to adopt certain beliefs or behaviours when it appears that others share the same beliefs or engage in similar behaviour. For example, most individuals tend to immediately help those in distress, especially when it involves their own children.

Liking: Criminals know that we tend to trust people who appear likeable and similar to ourselves. They might claim shared interests and launch a charm offensive, pretending to be genuinely interested in your life and showering you with flattery.

Authority: People tend to trust and comply with the requests of those perceived to be in a position of authority.

Scarcity: The habit to believe that rare goods, services and opportunities are better than those that are abundant. For example, fake shopping websites use a large hourglass or timer to indicate the deal is about to end, panicking you into making a purchase before you've done any checks.

Taken from National Trading Standards Scams Team's Feb Scam Newsletter

ENERGY SAVING TIPS

Tips for low & no-cost ways to save money on your energy bills include:

1. Reduce your combi boiler flow temperature to save up to £70 a year
2. Insulate your hot water cylinder to save up to £50 a year
3. Turn down radiators in rooms you aren't using to save up to £50 a year
4. Install an energy efficient shower head to save £40 a year
5. Take shorter showers and save up to £70 a year
6. Wash clothes at a lower temperature to save up to £20 a year

For more tips on making simple changes & to see how it all adds up, visit [GOV.UK/SaveEnergy](https://gov.uk/SaveEnergy)

Taken from Neighbourhood Watch (ourwatch.org.uk)

OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

The Council's website

(oxfordshire.canto.global/v/communicationsportal)

has useful information about the following:

- cost of living support
- have your say on road safety
- local nature recovery strategy
- libraries – more than you think
- winter warmth
- public switched telephone network withdrawal
- home upgrade grant

You can email the Council for more information on these & other topics (communications@oxfordshire.gov.uk).

SCIDS



SCIDS presents

THE WIZARD OF OX

Friday 15 March 6.30pm
Saturday 16 March 2.00pm & 6.30pm
Sutton Courtenay Village Hall

All tickets: £7
Box Office: from Monday 19 February 847707 / 848335

Sutton Courtenay News

Notice of Annual General Meeting

Notice is hereby given that the AGM of the SCN will be held on Monday 15 April 2024 at 19:00
Committee Room, Village Hall

Nominations for Chairman, Editor, Advertising Manager, Treasurer & Administrator together with the details of two seconders should be sent to
Jayne Franklyn scmail836@gmail.com

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



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

One of my favourite books to dip into every now and then, is "The English Year" a monthly guide to the nation's customs and festivals by Steve Roud. Reading up on the month of March, I found out that the fourth Sunday of Lent, (Mid Lent) was known as Braggot Sunday, when a fermentation of honey and ale was drunk, apparently! Today we know it as something else, which Steve Roud has traced back to a diary entry made in 1644 by Richard Symonds. *"Every mid-Lent Sunday ...when all the children and god-children meet at the head of the family and have a feast. They call it the Mothering-day."* I continued to read on to discover that this regional custom spread from the West Country and Wales and was associated with various special foods for the feast, but the most common were simnel cakes (simnel is Latin for fine flour).

This feast day was then hijacked by Christian writers, making it a day when people went home to visit their "mother" church. Today's church has kept with the term Mothering Sunday, but for non-church goers, this is now completely eclipsed by the imported Mother's Day. This began in Philadelphia before WW1 and appeared in Britain soon after WW2, probably due to the influence of American military personnel. Roud suggests that the opportunity was taken to create a new market for cards and presents to be given to mothers and that if the wording on the cards is anything to go by, Mother's Day wins hands down on Mothering Sunday.

Family and parental relationships may not be as straight forward, and probably much more complex, than in the 1650's. However, we still have people in our lives who care or have cared for us, and we too, might be looking after and caring for someone.

I read on further into the 5th Sunday of Lent which was once known as Care or Carling Sunday. The origins go back to food that was served during Lent. The meaning of "care" has changed over the years, as has the nature of parenting; however, the original meaning of "Mothering" and "Care" Sunday might be something for you to remember during March; about how we are cared for and how we can ourselves be caring.

Take care,

Reverend Rosie Bruce

Associate Minister in the DAMASCUS Parish

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:

Eileen Agnes Kate Townend (3 January 2024)

Jean Patricia Di Giorgio (20 January 2024)

Obituaries on page 14

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 MARCH

Saturday 2nd – Marriage Preparation Course for all those getting married in the DAMASCUS Parish in 2024

Monday 4th – 19.30 Baptism Preparation, River Room

Tuesday 5th – 16.00-17.30 Lent Group in the River Room. 19.30-21.00 Lent Group online

Sunday 10th – MOTHERING SUNDAY – 11:00 Family Communion with the distribution of flower posies.

Monday 11th – 19:30 DAMASCUS PCC Meeting

Tuesday 12th – 16.00-17.30 Lent Group in the River Room. 19.30-21.00 Lent Group online

Tuesday 19th – 16.00-17.30 Lent Group, River Room. 19.30-21.00 Lent Group online

Sunday 24th – PALM SUNDAY – 10.30 Procession with the donkey from Tullis Close. 11.00 Holy Communion with Junior Church.

Monday 25th – 19.30 Service of Reflection for Holy Week

Tuesday 26th – 16.00-17.30 Lent Group in the River Room. 19.30-21.00 Lent Group online

Thursday 28th – MAUNDY THURSDAY – 19.00 Holy Communion followed by Lamb Supper in the River Room

Friday 29th – 11.00 All Age Worship with Hot Cross Buns. From 12 noon church open for private prayer

Saturday 30th – HOLY SATURDAY – from 9am Spring Cleaning of the church and River Room– many hands make light work – volunteers welcome!

Sunday 31st – EASTER DAY – 11.00 Holy Communion with Easter Egg Hunt for children



DAMASCUS parish online prayer
Tuesdays, 7:45 - 8:15 am

A time to gather together online to praise our Father God, to listen to Jesus, and to join the Spirit in interceding for each other, our community, our country, our world.

Contact: Helen and Katie on DAMASCUSprayer@gmail.com.

"they raised their voices together in prayer to God... After they prayed" things began to happen!
Acts 4:24,31

Image by Freepix



SAVE THE DATE

Vicar's Fun Day

Bank Holiday Monday 27th May 2024
on the Village Green

(by kind permission of the Parish Council)

Bringing the Community Together
And helping to mark D-Day 80.

We need lots of help to make this event a success. Please email rector@damascusparish.org.uk if you are able to help in anyway or come to a planning meeting on Thursday 7th March at 7.30pm in the River Room.

Community Café in the River Room



Run by the church for the whole community

Thursday 14 March

Thursday 28 March 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 River Room please telephone the Parish Office on 01235 847179

MOVIE MATINEES

The next Movie Matinee in the River Room is on

Saturday 23rd March 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.

RIVER ROOM 200 CLUB

In Support of the All Saints' Community Space

The result of the monthly Draw on 8 February was:

1st – No. 30 (£32.00)

2nd – No. 21 (£16.00)

3rd – No. 63 (£8.00)

The next draw will take place on

Thursday 14th March at the All Saints'

Community Café in the River Room at 10.30 am.

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

WARM SPACES – Once again this winter we are hosting Warm Spaces – if you need a **FREE** 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. We can provide a warm space, free internet access and refreshments. All these events are **FREE** and everyone is welcome to spend time in warm company!

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

We care2

We care2 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

Do You Love Classical Music? Would you like to support the local community choir?

Become a 'Friend' of All Saints' Singers, Sutton Courtenay to support our biannual choral concerts of sacred works – classical and modern – held in the church

All contributions, however small, would be valued. For further details of the Friends scheme, and details of how to set up a standing order, contact Nick Dunton at

treasurer@allsaintssingers.org
or 07774 838310



SAVE THE DATE

The next All Saints' Singers concert will be on Sunday 12th May at 7:30pm in All Saints' Church
Dvořák: Mass in D & Charpentier: Te Deum

Come and Join us!

RSPB VoWH LOCAL GROUP

Here's the latest update from the RSPB Vale of White Horse Local Group. We provide monthly talks from September to May at the River Room (by the Church), Sutton Courtenay and / or via Zoom in the darker months, on Mondays starting at 7.30pm and finishing by 10pm. We also meet monthly at local birdwatching sites.

We welcome new members - membership is now £10 for the remainder of the season until May (whether or not you are an RSPB member), and free for under-16s, and includes a quarterly e-Newsletter and the programme of talks and trips. Non-members are also welcome to attend individual talks (in-person or Zoom) for a fee of £5. You can join using the form on our website (under "Contacts"), which also includes details of our full programme: www.rspb-vwh.org.uk, or at an in-person meeting. For meetings with an option to join via Zoom, members receive the link via email a few days beforehand.

Our next talks are:

18 March 2024 (River Room & Zoom): Ian Barthorpe - The Pantanal
Ian will talk about his travels in the Pantanal wetlands of South America
15 April 2024 (River Room only): Jerry Pride - The World of Swifts
Swifts can fly up to 800km a day, and spend almost their entire life on the wing, sometimes flying nonstop for 3 years. It wouldn't be summer without them, but these remarkable birds are in serious decline.

20 May 2024 (River Room only): Members Evening and AGM
At our last meeting of the year we conduct the AGM swiftly (!), then hand over for members' short talks. We may also have a talk about the local Letcombe Brook Project, to be confirmed.

Our next trips are:

25 February 2024: Radley Lakes: meet 10am at far end of Barton Lane (off Audlett Drive) (OX14 3NB)
24 March 2024: Arne Nature Reserve: meet 10am on site
21 April 2024: Otmoor: meet 10am on site
26 May 2024: Whelford Pools: meet 10am on site
9 June 2024: Greenham Common: meet 8pm on site (seeking Nightjars!)

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!

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

FRIENDS OF ALL SAINTS'

FRIENDS OF ALL SAINTS' CHURCH



Saturday 9th March 2024

Time: 7pm for a prompt 7.30pm start

Following our last very successful quiz evening we are organising our next quiz to take place at the village hall in Sutton Courtenay

Cost: £80 per table for a team of 8.

This includes a ploughman's supper
Drinks can only be purchased at the bar available throughout the evening. Please bring cash.
Raffle to take place during the evening

Please contact the chairman Sue Jenkins to enter a team/s either by email: SJJenkins33@aol.com or ring 07885437454

The Friends of All Saints Church are a Charitable Organisation which helps to support the upkeep of the 12th Century grade 1 listed Norman Church in Sutton Courtenay

ADYP (ABINGDON DAMASCUS YOUTH PROJECT)



As Spring approaches and we look forward to some outdoor activities, we thought that it might be nice to share a review of our winter activities with the wider community as we are proud of our young people and their contribution to our community. This month's article has been put together by our young leader, Alfie, and he writes:

'Looking back over the past few months in Sutton Courtenay:

In November we did a community litter pick where the young people came together to help clean up our local community.

In December we ran many festive activities to get the young people in the mood for the school break! These included our festive community quiz, festive movie night and festive games. The young people helped out with the community quiz by doing a flyer drop to help advertise the event, making it feel festive, and even being great quizmasters. We want to thank everyone in the community who joined us and took part! The movie we watched was 'The Grinch' which was chosen by the young people. They enjoyed this, along with heaps of popcorn and hot chocolate.

Currently, at the project Mark is running media production workshops with the young people. So far, they have produced beats and recorded music, created podcasts, interviewed local residents about the community, and much more, including doing some karaoke which was requested by the young people!

I have been running activities based around effective communication, team building and cyber safety. This has been taught through sports and discussion-based activities. Effective communication and team building have been priorities within this group. We have a range of ages and we like to encourage the young people to create positive bonds with other young people whom they would not normally encounter.'



We also say a fond farewell to Daisy as she is leaving us for her world travels at the end of February – we hope she will keep us informed with all her exciting journeys which we will post on the ADYP website. Daisy has been a valuable member of the ADYP staff team and we thank her for all her work.

Finally, the trustees are now succession planning to ensure the sustainability of ADYP within the DAMASCUS communities, as some of them have been trustees for over 20 years!



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

A one-day retreat/workshop on UNDERSTANDING TRAUMA

Saturday 23rd March 10am – 5pm (Suggested Donation)

A workshop on understanding trauma, and how not to trigger distress in people who suffer post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Someone with PTSD often relives the traumatic event through nightmares and flashbacks, and may experience feelings of isolation, irritability and guilt. We will also explore how to provide mental health first aid. As part of the workshop, we will do some centring and grounding exercises. Light lunch and refreshments will be provided. Suggested donation £25.

Sushila Dhall

Psychotherapist and Capacity Development Lead

Sushila has worked for the past 20 years for an Oxfordshire-based charity, working therapeutically with refugees, asylum seekers, and vulnerable migrants. She has been training staff in a variety of external organisations, such as housing providers, Job Centres, Social and Health Care staff and trainees, voluntary hosts and mentors, GPs, NHS employees, teachers, detention centre visitors, and university staff.

“Say not a word: talking with God”. A one-day retreat/workshop to explore Christian meditation or contemplative prayer.

Saturday 27th April 10am – 4:30pm (Suggested Donation)

At the heart of every person there is a place which no word can describe, and which has no name. In the Christian tradition this is where the encounter with God takes place, in a silence that goes beyond word, thought or idea. The purpose of this day is to leave the activity of life behind for a short while and together explore this inner silence and the transforming power it can have on our lives once we get to know it.

Light lunch and refreshments will be provided. Suggested donation £25.

The day will be led by **Adrian Rance-McGregor**, our Chair of Trustees. Adrian has experienced meditation in different religious traditions and in the secular approach to mindfulness. He practices as a lay Christian and is an ordained interfaith minister. For many years he has been active in the movement to encourage a renewal of contemplative life and the contemplative wisdom tradition of Christianity.

The Abbey Café

NEW OPENING HOURS

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THE ABBEY OFFICE OPENING TIMES:- 9AM - 3PM.

PLEASE CHECK OUR WEBSITE FOR UPCOMING EVENTS:- theabbey.uk.com/events/

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





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
Come along for a visit

**APRIL 18th – ‘Sabah Home of the Orangutan’
Guest Speaker**

(N.B. March meeting is an AGM, for members only)

Contact us via email at
suttoncourtenaywi@oxfordshirewi.co.uk
or 01869 331081



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Sunday 10 March

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www.matrixartscentre.org.uk

OBITUARIES

Eileen Agnes Kate Townend who died on 3rd January 2024 was born on 15th January 1926 at Dropshort in Sutton Courtenay to her parents Henry Thomas Hazel, known as Tom, and Eva Maude Hazel. She had an older sister, Evelyn, and a younger one, Christine. The family went on to live at 64 High Street. Growing up in the village Eileen attended the old school. Being so much older than Christine meant that Eileen helped to bring her up – and would often correct her table manners or threaten to tell their Mum if Christine was doing something of which Eileen didn't approve! Eileen would make clothes for Christine and take her out in the car for outings. They would go for walks together to pick wildflowers and bring them home to press between their Mum's heaviest books. And Eileen showed great patience in teaching Christine to knit.

On leaving school Eileen went to work as a teleprinter and decoder for the Ministry of Defence, at what is now the Vauxhall Barracks. She was hardworking and dedicated, and throughout her working life she received many awards – including 7 gold, 8 silver and 1 bronze Com Stars – and on one occasion was presented to Princess Anne. As a young woman she moved out of the family home to a flat of her own in the Vineyard in Abingdon from where she thought nothing of cycling to Didcot every day for work. Eileen loved cycling and joined the local cycling club with whom she would go for long rides through the countryside at weekends. She enjoyed swimming – whether in the River locally, or on day trips to the seaside. Although a private person, she was a sociable young woman who enjoyed going out and about with friends - including George Major – who was one of the Olympic Torch Bearers for the 1948 Olympics - who sadly died when he was only 34 and is buried in our churchyard. Photographs show Eileen as beautiful, elegant and glamorous – someone who always took great care of her appearance.

She was a talented seamstress and made many of her own clothes as well as fancy dress costumes for Christine. One particularly memorable outfit was when she dressed Christine as 'the Rose of England.' Eileen met her husband, Fred, whilst working for the MoD

and they were eventually married in 1966 and set up home in Chapel Lane, where Eileen spent the rest of her life. They went to Ireland on their honeymoon, which was the furthest away from home that Eileen ever went.

She didn't have any children of her own but was a brilliant Aunt to Eve's and Christine's children. From diary entries the family have discovered just how much she missed Christine's children when they emigrated to Australia. She regretted never making it to Australia to visit - especially when their Mum went there – but family always remained important to her and she loved it when anyone visited her.

She was also devoted to animals – everything from cats and dogs to peacocks – but her constant feeding of the peacocks did not always endear her to her neighbours. For many years she had a little dog called Lucy, whom she had adopted when a neighbour died. Eileen was quiet and reserved, but not without a sense of humour. She loved to read and write poetry – or 'odd odes' as she called them. She loved living in Sutton Courtenay and was extremely grateful for the support she received from her carers, and her neighbours, which enabled her to remain living in her own home where she died peacefully. *This is an edited extract from the address given by the Reverend Helen Kendrick at the memorial service held on 8th February 2024 in All Saints' Church.*

Jean Patricia Di Giorgio who died on 20th January 2024 was born on 11th April 1933 in Birmingham, the only child of Eileen and William Packer and she grew up in Sparkhill, apart from when she was evacuated during the war, and Sutton Coldfield. She grew up loving ice skating, dancing and singing. She left school at 14 and was planning on going to college to train as a window dresser but found a job in a dress shop in Birmingham. She always took a keen interest in fashion and liked to look immaculate – with her hair and make-up always done, and she loved sparkly jewelry. All her life she was a natural at posing for photographs.

OBITUARIES

She met her first husband, Bryce, at a dance hall and, after a big family wedding, went on to have three children – Johnny, Lynne and Lisa. The family moved around Birmingham but also spent a lot of time in Atherstone, Warwickshire on the family's pig farm. Sadly, the marriage broke down in 1968, but Jean re-built her life and eventually met her second husband, Pasq, in 1972, in 'The Supper Basket' nightclub in Warwick. Apparently, it was love at first sight for both of them and they married and went on to have a son, Dino.

Initially they lived in Leamington Spa but eventually Pasq's work brought them to Oxford, and they moved to Sutton Courtenay some 40 years ago. Jean was extremely happy as a stay-at-home Mum and was an excellent homemaker. She was a brilliant cook and specialised in making delicious comfort food – everything from lasagna, cottage pie, stew and dumplings to Christmas pudding, trifle and cakes. She loved her garden and made sure it was full of flowers. Her favourite seasons were Spring and Summer, as she relished being out in the sunshine as often as she could. She also enjoyed spending time by the sea. Jean loved beautiful things and long had an interest in antiques and collectables, and became an accomplished dealer.

She got to know a lot of people through working in the antiques business and travelled a lot – going round all the fairs and auctions from Birmingham to Earls Court with Lynne. For several years she ran a stall in the Cornmarket in Oxford and she developed a good eye for treasure – although Pasq just thought of it as bric-a-

brac and rubbish! Although a private person she was also extremely lively and social – she loved parties – whether as a guest or host. She was interested in people and loved entertaining. She was also fond of animals – and was known as the Cat Lady as she fed all the cats who came to visit. She grew to be extremely fond of Tia's dog – Enzo – who kept her company when she became ill.

Jean's life was not always easy – she experienced some very challenging and sad times – especially when her son Johnny died as a young man – but she strived to live up to her personal motto - 'Never give in, never give up'. She loved her home, her children and her grandchildren and the good times more than outweighed the bad. Sadly, in the last year of her life, dementia began to take hold, her personality began to change and her behaviour became unpredictable - but the family continued to lovingly care for her at home and she never stopped giving the most amazing hugs. They will remember her as a loving Mum and Nan at the heart of her family, who always strived to be loving and kind and generous, someone who loved life and was one of this world's positive people – who liked nothing better than making people happy. She was a woman who had the ability to be able to laugh at herself, with a ready wink and a cheeky smile, and who believed a cup of tea could make everything better. *This is an edited extract from the address and tribute given at her funeral by the Reverend Canon Helen Kendrick held in All Saints' Church on 14th February 2024*



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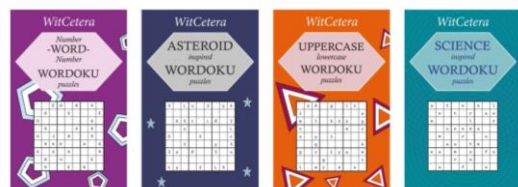
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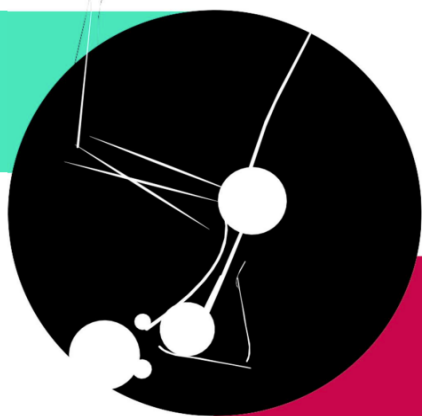


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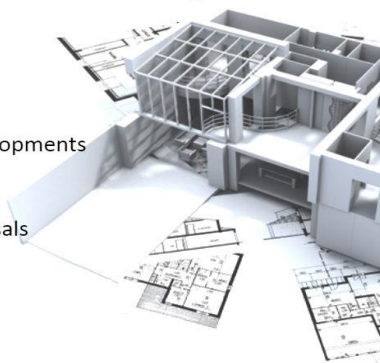
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