

SUTTON COURTENAY NEWS

VOLUME 54 No. 1

FEBRUARY 2025



VILLAGE DIARY FOR FEBRUARY

Sat 1	Community Brunch (p 9)	River Room	9:30-11:30
Sat 1 & 8	The Abbey Café (p 7)	The Abbey	10:00-14:00
Tue 4	Parish Council Meeting (p 3)	Village Hall	19:15
Thur 6 & 20	WeCare2 (p 11)	River Room	11:15-12:30
Fri 7 & 21	Bridge Afternoon (p 13)	River Room	14:00-17:00
Thur 13	Together in Stitches (p 10)	River Room	19:30-21:00
Thur 13 & 27	Community Café (p 10)	River Room	10:30-12:00
17 - 18	Closure of the Village Green Parking Area (p 3)	Near Abbey	All day
Mon 17	Knit & Natter (p 10)	River Room	14:00-16:00
Tue 18	WI (p 5)	River Room	19:30
Sat 22	Movie Matinée (p 10)	River Room	16:00
Tue 25	ADYP AGM (p 12)	Village Hall	19:00

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

MARCH 2025 SCN DEADLINE – WEDNESDAY 19TH FEBRUARY 2025

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

VILLAGE CONTACTS

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: [c](https://www.facebook.com/suttoncourtenayvillagehall)

Cricket Club: drb71@hotmail.co.uk

WI - Sutton Courtenay: kathyhead809@gmail.com

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.





Closure of Village Green parking area for tree works

Please Note: On Monday 17th and Tuesday 18th February the parking area on The Green (near The Abbey) will be closed to enable contractors to complete tree works. Please ensure no vehicles are left there overnight on Sunday 16th February.

There will also be tree works at the Recreation Ground although the work there will not affect the parking area or access to the facilities.

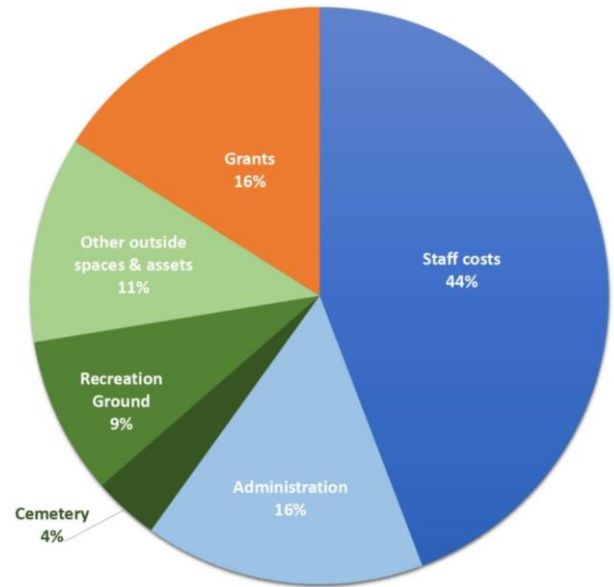
Parish Council Budget for 2025-26

The Parish Council has agreed the budget for the forthcoming financial year. The new budget includes provision for the employment of a new member of staff (part-time) from the autumn. This has resulted in an increase in the precept (the Parish Council’s share of Council Tax) of £9,200 which means a Band D property household would be paying an additional £4.11 for the year (the total being £76.09).

SUTTON COURTENAY PARISH COUNCIL	BUDGET FOR 2025-26
RECEIPTS	
Precept	102,000
Contribution to grass cutting from OCC	1,608
Cemetery fees	4,000
Interest, donations & wayleaves	1,262
TOTAL RECEIPTS	108,870
PAYMENTS	
Staff costs	48,945
Administration	17,352
Cemetery	4,074
Recreation Ground	9,779
Other outside spaces & assets (inc. Village Green)	12,776
Grants	17,750
TOTAL PAYMENTS	110,676
<i>TOTAL SURPLUS (+) or DEFICIT (-)</i>	<i>-1,806</i>

Average Band D property comparison	
2022/23 Council Tax Band D average	£65.38
2023/24 Council Tax Band D average	£65.38
2024/25 Council Tax Band D average	£71.98
2025/26 Council Tax Band D average	£76.09

This chart shows how the total expenditure is split across budget headings. The full budget is available on the Parish Council’s website.



Grants awarded

As part of the budget setting process the Parish Council has awarded the following grants to local charities and not for profit organisations:

- 26th Abingdon Scouts £2,000
- All Saints' Church £1,500
- Be Free Young Carers £500
- Citizens Advice £3,000
- DAMASCUS Youth Project £4,000
- Home Start £500
- Sutton Courtenay News £1,750
- Sutton Courtenay Village Hall £3,500

Additionally, £1,000 has been included for the Friends of Sutton Courtenay School, subject to an updated application being received.

Council meetings and contact details

Members of the public are welcome to attend Council meetings. The dates of the next meetings are Tuesday 4th February, Tuesday 4th March and Tuesday 1st April 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 noticeboards located outside Hari & Esha News, High Street; near Costcutter, Bradstocks Way; and on the open space at Skylark Fields.

Councillors: Rita Atkinson (chairman), Robert Dalby (vice chairman), Teresa Field, Paul Galliver, Father Morkos, Joanna O’Callaghan, Lia Plowman, Ian Pratley, Hugo Raworth and Jason Warwick.

Correspondence should be sent to the Clerk, Jennie 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.



My warmest wishes for the New Year. It was wonderful to join in local social and festive occasions such as the switching on of Christmas lights.

Before parliament ended, I was able to address ministers about important matters. These included: how local communities can benefit from clean energy schemes, the need for improvements in services provided by coroners following the sudden deaths of those with epilepsy, and the need to address electoral reform. Some responses were more helpful than others!

I spoke in debates about the problems faced by those with disabilities, shared concerns raised by poor estate management, and championed the BBC (which I am sure many of us watched and listened to over Christmas).

The Transport Select committee meet to hold the Department of Transport to account. Two key areas discussed have been rail services and infrastructure, and the backlog of driving tests, which so many constituents have aired concerns about.

Flooding remains a significant concern. I chaired a meeting with Thames Water and the local councils to facilitate working together. I will continue to provide updates about this vital piece of work as we need to see real improvements.

Over the winter months, I have been updated about the FCC site. I continue to monitor the situation, and I'm grateful for the work Peter Stevens continues to do. I'm sure many of you now know this, but if there are further odour issues, please report them to the Environment Agency's hotline via 0800 80 70 60.

My team provides support for all our constituents. Please contact me if I can help, or if you would like me to attend a local event or meet with a local organisation. My parliamentary email address is olly.glover.mp@parliament.uk

If you use social media, you can follow me for more regular updates on Facebook: www.facebook.com/OllyGloverLD/ and Bluesky - as I have moved away from X/Twitter: [@ollyglover.bsky.social](https://bsky.app/profile/ollyglover.bsky.social)

I look forward to meeting as many of you as possible in 2025.
Olly

ALL SAINTS' SINGERS CONCERT

Brahms: Ein deutsches Requiem

All Saints' Church 30th March 2025 @ 7:30 pm

SAVE THE DATE!

Details about ticket sales available soon

SUTTON COURTENAY (NATIONAL POWER) TRUST

The **Sutton Courtenay (National Power) Trust** charity considers applications for grants to:

- Individuals living in Sutton Courtenay who are experiencing financial hardship
- Individuals living in Sutton Courtenay for education, recreation or other general charitable purposes
- Organisations based in Sutton Courtenay which operate for the benefit of the civil parish of Sutton Courtenay

ALL APPLICATIONS ARE CONSIDERED IN TOTAL CONFIDENCE

If you would like to know more & how to apply, please contact the Clerk to the Trustees either by:

email: clerk.scnpt@gmail.com

phone: 07778 284193 or writing to 8 Church Street, Sutton Courtenay, OX14 4NJ

We are in the midst of winter with a very cold snap just past; but now, as I write, it is currently unseasonably mild and dry, which is a relief. I saw the County's special pothole filling machine pass my home last week. It is an excellent invention, as it allows workmen to fill potholes on the go, literally taking minutes per pothole, avoiding the need for road closures, and enabling the team to do whole roads in a day. I watched as they repaired some terrible holes close to my home. A mobile arm in front of the truck is positioned over the hole, then there is a blast of fire which heats up and melts the surrounding tarmac. The truck then moves forward and drops a fresh hot tarmac mix in the hole, then finally the roller at the back of the truck compresses the tarmac, binding it to the heated surrounding tarmac and levelling it off. Two men control traffic around the truck for the 2-3 minutes this takes, then the truck moves on to the next hole up the road. I don't think the repairs are any more resilient than the old method, so holes may recur in time, but at least this repairs the roads much more quickly – it is a pleasure to see in action.

The county has also upgraded its road-salting fleet and facilities this winter, with 10,000 tonnes of salt, 30 vehicles and 60 drivers serving the county. Much of this runs from Drayton Depot and I regularly see the drivers stoically salting 1,200 miles of roads across the county on icy nights.

Last weekend, I joined a group of local residents to walk the paths between Sutton Courtenay, Appleford and Didcot, noticing that many are in poor condition, or are unsightly or unpassable. I also saw the extensive work FCC and Heidelberg are doing to manage the landfill, leachate issues, waste recycling and materials operations between our villages. This was in preparation for chairing the liaison committee on Monday, where they are held to account for being good neighbours and are asked to outline their plans for future operations, and for the land after they have finished. I intend to work with them and local parties to improve the area's paths for access and for leisure, and to ensure future plans respect our local environment and balance our needs against commercial or wider objectives.

ACTION FRAUD

If you receive any suspicious emails or text messages, report them by forwarding emails to: report@phishing.gov.uk, or texts to 7726.

Find out how to protect yourself from fraud: stopthinkfraud.campaign.gov.uk

If you've lost money or provided financial information as a result of any phishing scam, notify your bank immediately and report it to Action Fraud at www.actionfraud.police.uk/report-phishing or by calling 0300 123 2040.

The biggest plan locally is the new HIF1 road and the bridge over the Thames between Sutton Courtenay and Appleford which will enable traffic to travel more easily and quickly from the A415 at Culham to Didcot and on to the A34. This was given planning permission just before Christmas after several years of deliberation by the Secretary of State. The project now moves to detailed design, with more consultation locally to mitigate remaining concerns as much as possible, before starting work in 2026 with a planned completion date of early 2028. I know opinion is divided on the road, depending on where you live and travel. However, the road does provide an opportunity to improve local routes for cycling and walking such as over Sutton Bridge to Culham and the Europa School, as well as diverting HGVs and heavy traffic away from smaller roads. It will also do much to accommodate the extra traffic from all the new and planned developments around Didcot in order to minimise the adverse impact of these builds on our communities. It is well intentioned.

Lastly, the government is currently engaging with local councils to devolve power away from Westminster. Both County and Vale of White Horse District councils have expressed support, as in theory locally devolved decisions mean that they are more likely to better suit our local communities. However, it is not yet clear what this means or how it will work, so I will report back in due course as it becomes clearer.

In the meantime, wrap up warm, check your homes and pipes are insulated, and good luck weathering out the winter months. The council publishes a [Snow Guide](#), which may be helpful.

Peter Stevens



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 visit

Tuesday 18th February 2025

The talk will be about henna painting

Contact us via email at

suttoncourtenaywi@oxfordshirewi.co.uk

Or 01869 331081



SUTTON COURTENAY PRIMARY SCHOOL



It has been a busy month for the children and staff at Sutton Courtenay Primary School, with lots of exciting Christmas activities and then a flying start to the new year.

December saw the usual array of celebrations, including the Light Up Christmas Fair, organised by the Friends of Sutton Courtenay School, the Key Stage 1 Nativity, trips to Peter Pan the Panto at the Village Hall, and the joyous Christmas church service on the final day of term. Thank you to all those supporting the Friends of Sutton Courtenay School to make the Light Up Christmas Fair the highlight of the term once again!



Year 5 and 6 children also supported the Christmas Bell Hunt by helping prepare the packages for families to hunt down and take home. As always, the children were really pleased to be able to contribute to the wider community. We would like to thank the Reverend Kendrick for giving us the opportunity to help again.



Reading has had a real boost this month at the school with all of the reading corners, 'book nooks' and other reading spaces having a revamp, and children having additional opportunities to prioritise reading. The coming months will see reading for pleasure continuing to be a focus for the school and something that will be further boosted by the news that, thanks to additional funding from central Ridgeway Education Trust, a totally new library space will be coming soon.



This month, we also launched a new leadership opportunity for children with the establishment of our anti-bullying ambassadors. Two children from each class have been chosen to take on this key role in maintaining our strong inclusive school culture. Moving forward, we will be developing leadership further with a school council and reading ambassadors on the horizon.

Despite the cold weather, our budding gardeners were also busy this month tidying up the vegetable garden and the Forest School, as well as planting a new tree as a reminder of our respect for our environment. Thanks to Mr Greenough for doing the heavy lifting and supporting the children to enjoy our outdoor spaces.

Finally, we are really pleased that January has started so well - despite the arctic temperatures! We have a number of new staff this term and it has been a real sign of Sutton Courtenay School's community spirit to see how welcome our children and parents have made them. This has helped them settle in very quickly and enabled them to start supporting the positivity of our school with considerable energy.

As always, if you are interested in finding out more, or considering whether our school is right for your child in the future, we would love to meet you and show you what our school has to offer. Please get in touch.

Mrs Chende, Headteacher
office@sutton-courtenay.school
Telephone: 01235 848333

THE ABBEY, SUTTON COURTENAY

The Abbey Café

Bring your friends and enjoy a selection of delicious homemade cakes or a light brunch in our beautiful medieval hall.

We are open every Saturday from 10 am to 2pm. Please note that occasionally we need to cancel the cafe if we are hosting a retreat. For this reason, The Abbey Café will be closed the last two weeks of February on the 15th and 22nd, and also on the 1st of March. So, check our website for any updates.

SHED OXFORD

Come join Shed Oxford at The Abbey for a fun moment of creating nesting boxes for our swift friends! Following the success of their first workshop last year, they are delighted to offer you another one on the 8th of March, from 10am to 2pm. Limited space, so please book soon to reserve your place: info@shedoxford.co.uk

Shed Sutton Courtenay is a community workshop, in the grounds of The Abbey, offering the chance to work alongside other like-minded people, both sharing skills and learning new ones. You can work on your own projects and hobbies as well as joining in with repair and renovation work with others. They have a wide selection of both manual and power tools in their workshop, including a lathe and table saw.

Above all, they offer a warm, social atmosphere where people can enjoy friendship and gain a sense of fulfilment in being productive for the time spent together.

This is part of the Men In Sheds network, menssheds.org.uk, which focuses primarily on older men's well-being, but they're here to encourage everyone from all parts of the community to learn and share skills in a friendly atmosphere!

Visitors are welcome to have a chat over coffee, and see what Shed Oxford has to offer. They are open Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 10.30 until 15.30.

You can contact them at info@shedoxford.co.uk for more information.

Volunteering at the Abbey - The walled garden

If you have a few hours to spare each week and want to help us care for our beautiful walled garden, we'd love to hear from you. Gardening experience is not necessary but would be helpful. Join our volunteer team and make new friends.

Please contact Pascaline at: welcome@theabbey.uk.com or by phone: +44 (0)1235 242 283 for any questions. You can also visit our FB page "The Abbey Sutton Courtenay" or our Instagram account [@theabbey Sutton Courtenay](https://www.instagram.com/theabbey Sutton Courtenay)


THE ABBEY OFFICE OPENING TIMES: 9AM - 1PM weekdays

JOIN US ON SATURDAY 8TH MARCH
10AM - 2PM

WORKSHOP

Swift nesting box making with Shed Oxford
at The Abbey

Exciting opportunity to come and make your own swift box in time for bird nesting season. Although focusing on nest boxes for swifts, we can also help you make boxes for other types of birds.



Learn new woodwork skills, enjoy making with others outdoors. Materials and instruction provided. Also welcome to bring your own materials if you have them. Please let us know asap if you would like to join this activity so we can prepare materials.


£5 per person,
plus £10 for materials

Limited to 8 people so please book soon to reserve your place!
info@shedoxford.co.uk



**VOLUNTEERS
NEEDED**

At the Abbey



Got some time on your hands to give to a worthwhile cause? Then why not help us in our beautiful walled garden.

CONTACT US :
welcome@theabbey.uk.com





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

Dear Friends,

As I write this, the church is in the season of Epiphany. Sandwiched between Christmas and Easter, it would be easy to overlook this part of the church calendar. However, Epiphany includes the celebration of two significant events from the Bible: the baptism of Christ and Jesus' first miracle.

The baptism symbolises the start of the ministry of Jesus, a point at which 'heaven was opened' with the Holy Spirit descending and the voice of God proclaiming Jesus to be God's son. Soon after that the first miracle happened. It took place at a wedding in Cana in Galilee where Jesus turned water into wine. Other than showing Jesus to be a great party guest, these two events represent the start of a journey for Jesus. It is a journey of faith that so many people across the world continue to experience.

This faith journey continues throughout our lives whatever our faith looks like. It is a journey of learning, of acceptance and, most importantly, of knowing the presence of God in our world as demonstrated by the events remembered in Epiphany. It is a journey that the Church in its various forms helps us to face. This is despite the mistakes that are made which further emphasize the need for the presence of God. This need for God and for the companionship of those also on a faith journey is part of the reason we meet on a Sunday; to spend time together and to reflect and recharge spiritually within the busyness of life. If the thought of such a pit-stop appeals to you, please do come and visit, whether on a Sunday morning or at another time. Our church is a place where over the centuries people on a similar journey have found peace and rest. I cannot promise any wine-related miracles, but I can guarantee a reminder of how God is with us wherever our journey takes us.

With prayers and best wishes,
Reverend Dov Whittle *The Reverend Dov Whittle*
Assistant Curate of the DAMASCUS Parish

Services of Worship

1st Sunday: Family service at 11:00 am
2nd Sunday: Parish Eucharist at 11:00am + Junior Church
3rd Sunday: Morning Worship at 11:00am + Junior Church
4th Sunday: Parish Eucharist at 11:00am + Junior Church
5th Sunday: Special services across the Damascus Parish – please see church noticeboard for details

Holy Matrimony

We send our best wishes and congratulations to the following who were married in All Saints' Church recently: Malcolm ROSS and Alexandra LANDSBERT (1st December 2024)

Rest in Peace

We send our condolences and the assurance of our prayers to the family and friends of the following person who died recently: Terence Roy GRUNDY (10th November 2024)

And the following whose ashes were interred in the churchyard:

Sheila Doreen DAVIDSON (9th December 2024)

CHURCH DIARY FOR FEBRUARY

EVERY TUESDAY – online prayer Group – see advert for details.

Saturday 1st – 9:30-11:30 Community Brunch in the River Room - **WARM SPACE**.

Monday 3rd - 19:30-21:00 Baptism Preparation in the River Room for all those interested in baptism.

Thursday 13th – 10.30-12noon Community Café – **WARM SPACE**. 19:30 Together in Stitches in the River Room – an evening of chat and craft - come along with your own knitting / sewing / craft and enjoy free refreshments and company - **WARM SPACE**

Monday 17th – 14:30-16:00 Knit and Natter in the River Room - an afternoon of chat and craft - come along with your own knitting / sewing / craft and enjoy free refreshments and company – **WARM SPACE**

Saturday 22nd – 4pm Movie Matinee in the River Room – **WARM SPACE**

Thursday 27th – 10.30-12noon Community Café – **WARM SPACE**

CHURCH DIARY FOR MARCH

Saturday 1st – 19:30-21:00 - 'Lights, Camera, Action' – an illustrated talk by Fred Cabbage on 'British Film Locations' in the River Room. Entrance by donation. Drinks and nibbles available. Raising money for the All Saints' Bell Appeal.

Wednesday 5th – **ASH WEDNESDAY** – 19:30 Holy Communion with the Imposition of Ashes to mark the beginning of Lent, All Saints' Church.

Saturday 8th – Marriage Preparation Day for all those getting married in the DAMASCUS Parish in 2025.

Sunday 15th – 19:00 Friends of All Saints' Quiz Night in the Village Hall

WARM SPACES in Sutton Courtenay

We are continuing to offer a WARM WELCOME SPACE in the River Room at various times and dates this winter. Where these are indicated on the individual adverts this means that the event is free and open to all. We offer free WiFi and kitchen facilities from which simple free refreshments are served.

If you would like to make use of a warm space just turn up or contact either: rector@damascusparish.org.uk or ring the Parish Office on 01235 847179 for more information.



COMMUNITY BRUNCH

The NEXT Community Brunch will be from

9:30-11:30

in the River Room, All Saints' Church

Saturday 1st February

Bacon and Sausage Butties with Vegetarian and GF/Dairy Free options. Croissants and pastries. Fruit and Granola. Fruit Juice. And plenty of coffee and tea!

FREE - WARM SPACE

ALL WELCOME!

(Donations welcome – surplus funds go to the Abingdon Food Bank)

Thanks also go to everyone who supported our Craft De-Stash Sale on 11th January. We raised the amazing amount of £656.81 for church funds.

It was a great day and thank you to all those who helped to set up and clear away and to all the stallholders and customers who snapped up some fantastic bargains and helped us raise such a fantastic sum of money.

CHRISTMAS THANKS

It might feel a long time ago but we must thank everyone who helped to make Christmas 2024 such a joyful and uplifting time at All Saints' Church and beyond. It was lovely to see so many people at all the different services and events – from the dozens of young children who took part in our Pop-Up Nativity on Christmas Eve to the 1000+ people who participated in the Torchlight Procession.

We exceeded our target of 500 bells and over 700 handmade bells were distributed in Sutton Courtenay and Appleford – thank you to Bryony for coordinating this; to the Crafters for making them; to the Year 6 children at Sutton Courtenay CofE Primary who packed them all up; and to the walkers who distributed them and everyone who took the time to find them and take a bell home to hang on their Christmas tree.

We were also delighted to be able to distribute 99 hampers, as gifts of love, across the village – thank you to Alison Budd for coordinating the shopping (and thanks to Aldi and all their staff in Didcot for being so helpful) and all those who packed them (Bradley, Eleanor & Georgia) and deliver them. And particular thanks go to the individual who generously donated to make this possible. Special mention must also be made of our cake baking team who handmade and decorated all the cakes for the individual and couple hampers. We are hoping to deliver hampers again for Christmas 2025 and will be asking for nominations later in the year.

The Singing Saints must be thanked for their musical contribution to the Christmas celebrations, ably led by Philip and Kieran Agg on the organ and piano. It was wonderful to see so many new voices joining us this year. The Carol Service, combined with singers from Drayton, was really uplifting and the Singing Saints also toured the village carol singing and helped lead the carols at the Torchlight Procession. Thanks to the Flower Arranging team who decorated the church so beautifully.

And a HUGE Thank you to all those who donated money to our Christmas Charity. Through collections at the December Community Café; at the Carol Singing around the village and at the Torchlight Procession and with reclaimed Gift Aid, we were able to raise the amazing amount of £2024.23 for the **DEC Middle East Humanitarian Appeal – thank you everyone!**

Thanks also go to David McKenzie for organising the sale of the torches and the shops (Costcutter, Hari & Esha News & Changes Hairdressers) who sold them for us. The marshals for keeping everyone safe enroute; Margaret Hamilton and Chris Brown for support vehicle duties; the Allen family for providing the bonfire and especial thanks to Callum for all he does as the all-important fire marshal. And thanks to Jon Smith for providing the light and the sound and to Alfie and Seanna who helped with all the setting up. And finally, thank you to all those who followed the star to sing and celebrate the birth of Jesus with us. *Helen*

Community Café in the River Room



Run by the church for the whole community

Thursday 13th & 27th February

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?

This is part of the **WARM SPACE** initiative
Open to all – a good place to meet with friends or make new ones. If you need transport to and from the church please 'phone the Parish Office on 01235 847179

Vicar's Fun Day 2025

We are hoping to hold another Vicar's Fun Day on the Village Green (subject to permission from the Parish Council) on **Bank Holiday Monday 26th May 2025**. At this stage we are just trying to gather together some volunteers who would be happy to help in the planning and running of the day. If you would like to volunteer in any capacity and / or have any ideas we would love to hear from you. Please contact Helen at rector@damascusparish.org.uk or phone the parish office on 01235 847179.

We are planning to raise money for the restoration of the bells in All Saints' Church and for the creation of safer access to the tower and ringing chamber to ensure the bells can be safely rung for generations to come.

MOVIE MATINEES

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

Saturday 22nd February 2025 – 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 are available.

DAMASCUS parish online prayer meeting Tuesdays 7.45-8.15am

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, and our world.

Interested?
Please contact DAMASCUSprayer@gmail.com to join.

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

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

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, & come & 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!**

RIVER ROOM & COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

Wecare2

Would you enjoy a little singing, a little company,
some armchair exercises
oh!and a cup of coffee?

Do you care for someone who would enjoy this
kind of gentle social interaction?

Music and company do help to keep us in touch.

Wecare2 is a small group that meets on the
1st and 3rd Thursday from 11.15 - 12.30
in the River Room at All Saints' Church.
Transport can easily be arranged.

For any more information please contact
Morna Whitlock on -
01235 848335 or morna28whitlock@gmail.com

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

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



HEALTHWATCH OXFORDSHIRE



Have you recently needed health or medical care immediately or the same day in Oxfordshire?

Healthwatch Oxfordshire would like to hear from anyone who has needed urgent or emergency care or help in Oxfordshire in the last two years. This might include calling NHS 111 or your local GP practice, going to a hospital Accident and Emergency (A&E) department, or contacting a mental health crisis team.

We'd like to know what you understand about these health services, what information you used to find out about services, and your experience of getting the right help quickly.

Your feedback will help us understand your experiences and identify areas for improvement.

To tell us about your experiences, please complete our short online survey at www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/UECservices/ or by scanning the QR code above.


The survey is anonymous and will be open for comments until Monday 17th February 2025.

If you would rather talk to someone about your experience, or would like a paper copy or translated version of the survey, please contact Healthwatch Oxfordshire on **01865 520520** or at hello@healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk

To find out more about the work of Healthwatch Oxfordshire see www.healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk




SCIDS presents



Much ado about

Ali Baba

FRIDAY 21 MARCH 6.30pm
 SATURDAY 22 MARCH 2.00pm & 6.30pm
 Sutton Courtenay Village Hall



All tickets: £7
 Box Office: 847707 / 848335
 (from 24 Feb)



An essential new reservoir for the South East

What's happening in your area

We're conducting site surveys and ground investigations in the local area, including near Steventon, East Hanney, Drayton, and Sutton Courtenay. You may see our surveyors conducting various investigations, such as winter bird surveys and traffic surveys.

We're also carrying out a clay compaction trial on land off Hanney Road, near East Hanney, to support our reservoir design plans. We have begun excavating the clay to build temporary embankments up to three metres high to test the clay. We're aiming to finish by February 2025, weather permitting.


For more information on what's happening in your area, please visit: www.thames-sro.co.uk/sesro



ABINGDON DAMASCUS YOUTH PROJECT (ADYP)

SUTTON COURTENAY

The Abingdon DAMASCUS Youth Project
 Registered Charity 1098966




Youth & Community Acting Together

The Abingdon Damascus Youth Project (a voluntary and registered charity) prides itself on enabling young people to make a positive difference within their own communities. Our team is made up of enthusiastic, qualified youth workers who have a passion for seeing change in young people's lives

SPORTS
ARTS & CRAFTS
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WORK
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WEDNESDAY
6:30- 7:30PM
SUTTON
COURTENAY
VILLAGE HALL
£1 ENTRY
 SCHOOL YEARS 6 AND ABOVE

www.ycat.org.uk
 alfiet.adyp@gmail.com

You are warmly invited to the Abingdon DAMASCUS Youth Project

AGM

To be held on
 Tuesday 25th February 2025
 At 7:00pm in the
 Sutton Courtenay Village Hall



January News – Hedgerow Highways

Hedges are a vital part of our local nature, providing shelter and resources for many species of mammals, insects, and birds (from hibernating hedgehogs to the smallest of beetles). They're crucial wildlife corridors that allow safe travel between isolated habitats.

The benefits that hedgerows provide for biodiversity are endless. In a heavily fragmented landscape, hedgerows link up valuable habitats for wildlife such as woodland, grassland and ponds. This connects populations that would otherwise be isolated and vulnerable and allows relocation to better habitat. Over 100 priority species utilise hedgerows for a variety of reasons such as for shelter, food, or navigation. Birds and small mammals nest in hedges, bats use hedgerows as foraging grounds and navigational markers, and reptiles hide in the long tussocky margins associated with hedgerows.

November through to March is the best time of year to plant new hedges. The first step is to acquire your roots. In Oxfordshire we recommend planting Blackthorn, Spindle, Buckthorn, Guelder Rose, Hawthorn, Wild Privet, Cherry Plum, or Hazel. Plant 4 or 5 plants per metre, about 25cm apart using the slit planting method, ensuring all fibrous roots are completely buried in the soil. To see a detailed tutorial of this planting method, head to our website where you can watch a demonstration from expert Nigel Adams. www.wildoxfordshire.org.uk/guidance/hedgerows-guidance

Aftercare for hedgerows is crucial. Keep weeds and grass away from the hedge plants for the first 2-3 years to give them plenty of space to absorb moisture and light. Thoroughly water the plants during dry spells. Compost can be very helpful to maintain vigour due to the competition for nutrients between such closely situated plants. Try to trim your hedge annually in the first three to five years to encourage bushy growth. Once your hedgerow is fully established (approximately 5 years) you can trim every year or every two or three years but make sure you don't trim your hedge to the same place every cut. More detailed aftercare information is also available on our website. Good luck with your new hedges!

New Year – New Nature!

Why not make some **green themed resolutions** this new year! Perhaps yours is to cultivate new hedge life. Maybe you're going to reduce your meat intake, find eco-friendly cleaning products, or make your garden more wildlife friendly using native plants. There are endless ways to make a difference!

Why not sign up to our monthly email Bulletin, visit our website, and follow us on social media for the latest nature news and ways you can join others in helping nature in Oxfordshire www.wildoxfordshire.org.uk/news

Jess Bower – Wild Oxfordshire Hedgerows & Partnerships Officer

Poppy Appeal Total for 2024 for Sutton Courtenay and Appleford

The total raised through the pop-up shop and collection tins around the village was £1559.84.

A big thank you to everyone who donated, to Alan Calver for creating his wonderful display on The Battle of Britain and standing at his gate in the cold for hours and to the staff at Cost Cutters for decorating the shop so beautifully and hosting Darren and his pop-up shop.

Melanie Jefferies
Poppy Appeal Organiser for Sutton Courtenay & Appleford
poppyappealsca@gmail.com



PLEASE VOTE FOR THE SCOUT GROUP AT TESCO

The 26th Abingdon Scout Group, based in Sutton Courtenay, has been selected for the Tesco Stronger Starts campaign. We are aiming to buy camping equipment for the Beavers, Cubs and Scouts so that they can take part in weekend, and longer, expeditions.

Please pop your blue tokens into our pot when you shop at Tesco in Abingdon or Grove. Voting is open now and lasts until the end of March.

THANK YOU!



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

Come and join us



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CLASSICAL MUSIC CONCERT

THE IVEL FLUTE TRIO
WILL PERFORM A VARIETY OF PIECES, IN A LOVELY AND RARE COMBINATION OF FLUTE, PIANO AND CELLO



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WWW.FLEXICARE.ORG | 01865 321881 | ADMIN@FLEXICARE.ORG

For ticket information please email
events@flexicare.org

The RSPB Local Group (Vale of White Horse) is holding monthly talks (details below) over Zoom for winter, and returning to the River Room, by the church, Sutton Courtenay for the March meeting. We also do monthly wildlife walks.

Our next session is on 20th Jan: Camouflage without Spots (Ian Alexander, Zoom only).

We have also opened up our photo competition, rules and an entry form are on the local group website www.rspb-vwh.org.uk Entries should be emailed to Mike Haddrell (mikehaddrell@gmail.com) by 17 March. The images will be judged by Ben Andrew at the River Room meeting on 28 April, which is one of the upcoming events:

- * Walk 26th Jan: Radley Lakes
- * Talk 17th Feb: The Wildlife and Sights of Shetland, David Tolliday (Zoom only)
- * Walk 23rd Feb: Port Meadow
- * Talk 17th Mar: The Ridgeway (John Tyler, River Room & Zoom)
- * Walk 30th Mar: Farmoor
- * Walk 27th Apr: Greenham Common
- * Talk 28th Apr: Photographing Birds, Ben Andrew (River Room only)
- * 12th May: AGM and Members' Evening (River Room only)
- * Walk 25th May: Otmoor
- * Walk 22nd June: Greenham Common (evening, nightjars etc)

With not much of the 24/25 season left to go, we have now reduced new membership to £10 for adults (whether or not you are an RSPB member), and free for under-16s. This covers our programme of monthly talks and wildlife walks, and a quarterly e-Newsletter. If you prefer to attend an individual talk, you can do this as a non-member for £5 per talk. You can join using the form on our website (under "Contacts"): www.rspb-vwh.org.uk, or at a meeting (cash, cheque or bank transfer). For meetings with an option to join via Zoom, members receive the link via email a few days beforehand.

OBITUARY

Terence (Tez) Roy Grundy who died on 10th November 2024 was born on 3rd June 1956 to Shirley and Neville and grew up in Sutton Courtenay. After finishing school, Terry became skilled in Artex ceilings before starting work at the local cement plant in 1987. He married Caroline in 1983 and, other than living in Didcot for a few years, they lived and raised their children, Amy, Pete and John, in Sutton Courtenay.

Terry loved the outdoors and enjoyed nothing more than sitting outside in the evening at all times of the year. Many of the activities Terry loved were all about being outside, whether it was growing vegetables, going on camping holidays, being at the beach or his love of hiking known to him as, 'going for a yomp'. Terry was one of life's true characters.

Whether it was telling the time by the sun, keeping rosemary in his pocket, or welcoming all to the 'Allotment Arms', Terry enjoyed life with an infectious enthusiasm. Terry could be described as authentic, he never tried to be someone else, and he was happy with what he had.

Despite being diagnosed with cancer soon after his retirement which meant that he and Caroline could not do all the things they had planned, Terry was able to face his illness with the same positive attitude he always had. Terry will be greatly missed by all his family and friends.

His funeral took place on Wednesday 11th December 2024 in All Saints' Church.

This is an edited extract of the address given by the Reverend Dov Whittle. Personal tributes were also given by Terry's son Pete and by his friend Pete.

Easy Sudoku

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

Medium Sudoku

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

Taken from www.puzzles.ca/sudoku (1093)



WORDSEARCH

The topic is *CAR BRANDS*

H I T B M N H M B U I U K R A
 O V R C E U A M I N A I K A T
 N V I A M N W S I N F N S U O
 D M L M R F T H S T I V U G Y
 A O E O I R G L B I E Y X A O
 J R W A V R E G E Q N S E J T
 E G T W O F X F X Y J F L N A
 E A X B H M C L A R E N O A D
 P N M I Y C A L L I D A C P Z
 J A D S U M A S E R A T I H A
 L U Y Z N E B S E D E C R E M
 A F M Y D J L L A H X U A V J
 S K O D A R O L L S R O Y C E
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- BWM
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- Ferrari
- Fiat
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- KIA
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- Lexus
- Maserati
- Mazda
- McLaren
- Mercedes Benz
- Mini
- Morgan
- Nissan
- Renault
- Rolls Royce
- Skoda
- Tesla
- Toyota
- Vauxhall
- Volkswagen
- Volvo

Taken from www.puzzles.ca/sudoku (1091)

MATRIX ARTS CENTRE

MATRIX ARTS CENTRE

Did you know over 500 people attend an activity at Matrix Arts Centre each week and over 300 of these are part of our Yamaha Music School? Although our catchment area is quite large, more and more cycle or walk to their lessons and activities. Here is our weekly offering:

MONDAY

Pilates 9:30 - 10:30am
Yamaha Music School from 4pm
Yoga 7:30 - 8:30pm
Individual music lessons

TUESDAY

Yamaha Music School from 4pm
Individual music lessons

WEDNESDAY

Apple Music 10 – 10:30am (2 and 3 year olds)
Yamaha Music School from 4pm
Visual Arts Course 4 – 5:15pm (KS2, school years 3 - 6)
Yoga 7:30 – 8:30pm
Individual music lessons

THURSDAY

Yamaha Music School from 4pm
Visual Arts Course 4 - 5:15pm (KS2, school years 3 - 6)
Visual Arts Course 5:30 - 7pm (KS3 & 4, school years 7 - 11)
Ballet from 4pm
Individual music lessons

FRIDAY

Pilates 9:30 – 10:30am
Apple Music 10 – 10:30am (2 and 3 year olds)
Yamaha Music School from 4pm
Individual music lessons
All Saints' Singers 7:30 – 9:30pm

SATURDAY

Yamaha Music School from 9am
Individual music lessons

The next chance to try one of our Yamaha Music School courses (for 2 to 7 year olds), will be at our open day on Sunday 23 March. Have a look at our website: matrixartscentre.org.uk

MAKING MOSAICS TOGETHER

'PEACE BY PIECE'

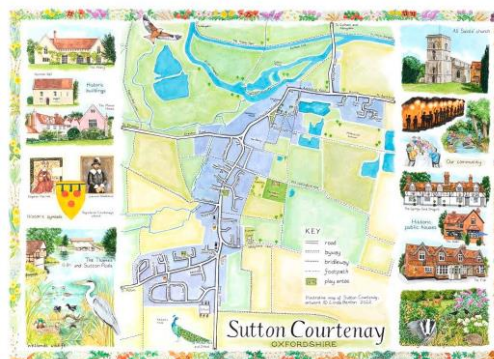
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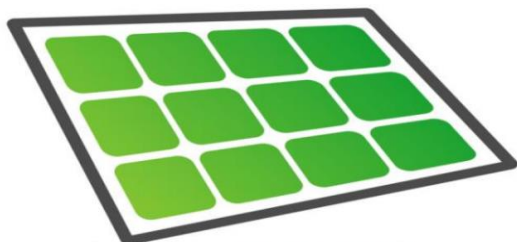
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Framed maps (approx 24" x 20") – £150
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Mark makes learning to play the guitar fun and encourages his students to write their own songs and sing along. He's an established teacher working in three Oxford schools, was formerly a founding member of the band The CandySkins and still performs as a solo artist/ singer songwriter.

30-minute lessons will take place from 4pm onwards on Monday & Tuesday afternoons (starting December 2024) in Sutton Courtenay at a cost of £20. Students will need to bring their own guitar. Parents of younger students are welcome to sit in on lessons. Testimonials available on request.



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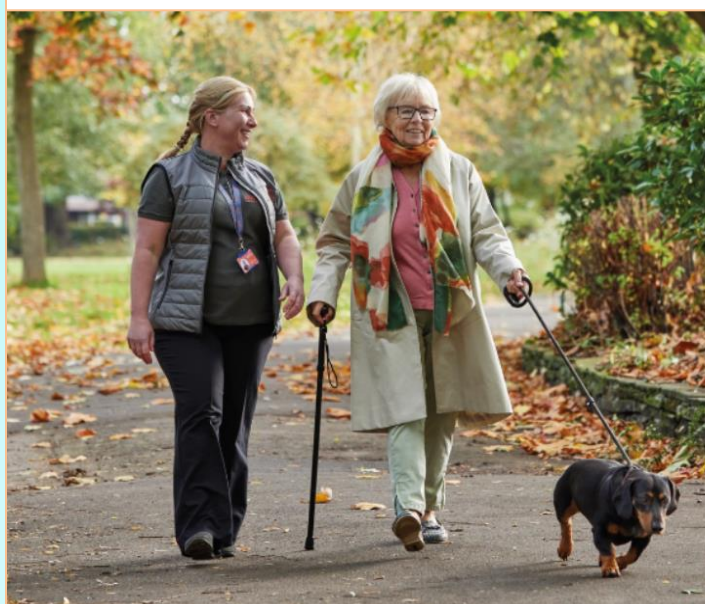
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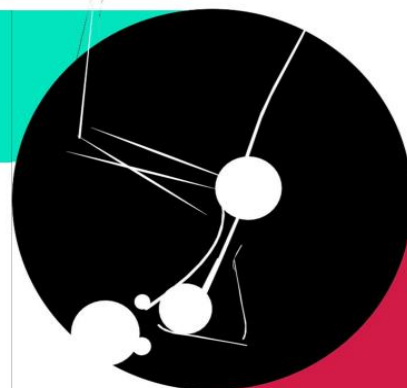
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PILATES

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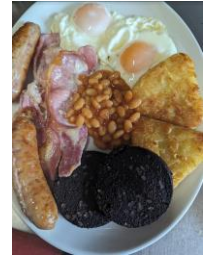
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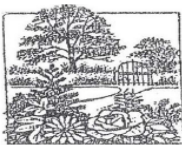


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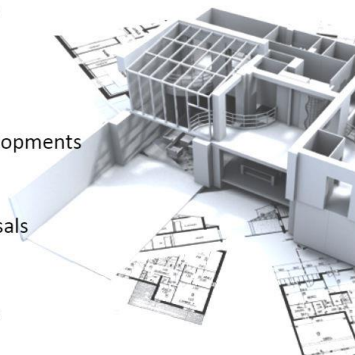


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