

# SUTTON COURTENAY NEWS

VOLUME 55 No. 1

FEBRUARY 2026



## VILLAGE DIARY FOR FEBRUARY

Tue 3	Parish Council Meeting (p 3)	Village Hall	19:15
Every Wed	ADYP Drop-in (p 4)	Village Hall	18:30
Thur 5 & 19	WeCare2 (p 12)	River Room	11:15-12:30
Fri 6 & 20	Bridge Afternoon (p 12)	River Room	14:00-17:00
Sat 7	Community Brunch (p 9)	River Room	9:30-11:30
Every Sat	The Abbey Café (p 7)	The Abbey	10:00-14:00
Thur 12 & 26	Community Café (p 10)	River Room	10:30-12:00
Thur 12	Together in Stitches (p 11)	River Room	19:30-21:00
Mon 16	Knit & Natter (p 11)	River Room	14:00-16:00
Tue 17	Ladies' Tuesday Club (p 12)	River Room	19:30
Sat 21	Movie Matinée (p 10)	River Room	16:00
Sat 28	Jumble Sale (p 10)	Village Hall	13:30-16:00

Previous copies of SCN are available on the website under Archives at [suttoncourtenaynews.co.uk](http://suttoncourtenaynews.co.uk)

**MARCH 2026 SCN DEADLINE – WEDNESDAY 18<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY 2026**

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

## VILLAGE CONTACTS

Parish Council:	Clerk, 07496 924 685 <a href="mailto:info@suttoncourtenay-pc.gov.uk">info@suttoncourtenay-pc.gov.uk</a>
Stay & Play Toddler Group:	Facebook page: <a href="#">@SCstayandplay</a>
Friends of All Saints'-Chair:	Sue Jenkins 07885 437454
Matrix Music School:	847264
The Abbey:	847401
Village Hall – SC:	<a href="mailto:scvillagehallbookings@googlemail.com">scvillagehallbookings@googlemail.com</a>
Cricket Club:	<a href="mailto:drb71@hotmail.co.uk">drb71@hotmail.co.uk</a>
Nordic Walking Group:	Graham Wells 847322
Churchmere Carp Synd.:	Andy Barrett 07717 662039
DAMASCUS Youth Project:	07956 038022
SC Local History Society:	John Talbot <a href="http://sclhs.org.uk">sclhs.org.uk</a> <a href="mailto:enquiries@sclhs.org.uk">enquiries@sclhs.org.uk</a>
SCIDS (Drama Society):	Sally Dubock, 847707 <a href="mailto:sallydubock@gmail.com">sallydubock@gmail.com</a>
Sutton Courtenay Singers:	Kathy Harrop-Griffiths, 848230 <a href="mailto:secretary@suttoncourtenaysingers.org">secretary@suttoncourtenaysingers.org</a> <a href="http://www.suttoncourtenaysingers.org">www.suttoncourtenaysingers.org</a>
Sutton Courtenay Action:	<a href="mailto:suttoncourtenayaction@gmail.com">suttoncourtenayaction@gmail.com</a>
Non-urgent Police, 101 or policing team email:	<a href="mailto:AbingdonOuterNHPT@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk">AbingdonOuterNHPT@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk</a>
Environment Agency:	Landfill Odours 0800 80 70 60 <a href="http://www.gov.uk/report-smell">www.gov.uk/report-smell</a>
Thames Water (leaks):	0800 71 46 14
Thames Water Customer Service:	0800 316 9800
Police Anonymous Hotline:	0800 555 111
Power Cuts:	105
<b>Websites:</b>	
Sutton Courtenay News:	<a href="http://www.suttoncourtenaynews.co.uk">www.suttoncourtenaynews.co.uk</a>
Parish Council:	<a href="http://www.suttoncourtenay-pc.gov.uk">www.suttoncourtenay-pc.gov.uk</a>
Vale of White Horse DC:	<a href="http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk">www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk</a>
Oxfordshire CC:	<a href="http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk">www.oxfordshire.gov.uk</a>
Village Hall:	<a href="http://suttoncourtenayvillagehall.co.uk">suttoncourtenayvillagehall.co.uk</a>
Action Fraud:	<a href="http://www.actionfraud.police.uk">www.actionfraud.police.uk</a>
Citizens Advice:	<a href="http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk">www.citizensadvice.org.uk</a>

## ALL SAINTS' CHURCH

### The Ministry Team

Rector:	The Reverend Helen Kendrick The Rectory, 3, Tullis Close, Sutton Courtenay, OX14 4BD Office: 01235 847179 Home: 01235 848297 Mobile: 07443 524216 <a href="mailto:rector@damascusparish.org.uk">rector@damascusparish.org.uk</a>
Assistant Curate:	The Reverend Dov Whittle 07586 969985 <a href="mailto:curate@damascusparish.org.uk">curate@damascusparish.org.uk</a>
Assistant Priest:	The Reverend Rosie Bruce 07707 087131 <a href="mailto:rosie-bruce@hotmail.co.uk">rosie-bruce@hotmail.co.uk</a>
Churchwarden & Pro-Warden:	Alison Budd <a href="mailto:alison@pbudd.me">alison@pbudd.me</a>
Pro-Warden:	Mary Warrington <a href="mailto:contrary63@gmail.com">contrary63@gmail.com</a>
Parish Administrator:	Alison Bampton. 01235 847179 <a href="mailto:admin@damascusparish.org.uk">admin@damascusparish.org.uk</a>
The DAMASCUS Parish Office,	All Saints' Church, The Green, Sutton Courtenay, Abingdon, OX14 4AE

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](http://suttoncourtenayvillagehall.co.uk) and follow the on-screen prompts. If you need to contact the booking clerk please email: [scvillagehallbookings@googlemail.com](mailto: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](mailto:editor@suttoncourtenaynews.co.uk) or [scmail07@gmail.com](mailto: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](mailto: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](http://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 9:00 to 17:30 with a final collection time of 16:45. It is closed on Saturday & Sunday. Further afield there are Post Offices in Didcot (in TG Jones, 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.



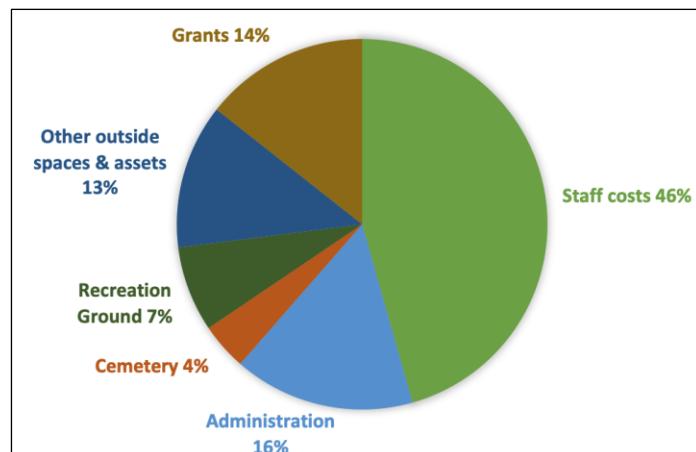


## Parish Council Budget for 2026-27

The Parish Council has agreed the budget for the forthcoming financial year. The 2025-26 budget included provision for an additional member of staff for part of the year. The new budget includes the staffing provision for the full year. This, alongside increased costs for grounds maintenance and emptying of litter and dog waste bins, has resulted in an increase in the precept (the Parish Council's share of Council Tax) of £6,000. Which means a Band D property household would be paying an additional £3.89 for the year (the total being £79.98).

SUTTON COURtenay PARISH COUNCIL	BUDGET FOR 2026-27
<b>Receipts</b>	
Precept	108,000
Contribution to grass cutting from OCC	1,608
Cemetery fees	4,000
Interest, donations & wayleaves	962
<b>Total Receipts</b>	<b>114,570</b>
<b>Payments</b>	
Staff costs	53,871
Administration	18,675
Cemetery	4,855
Recreation Ground	8,806
Other outside spaces & assets (inc. Village Green)	14,922
Grants	16,970
<b>Total Payments</b>	<b>118,099</b>
<b>TOTAL SURPLUS (+) or DEFICIT (-)</b>	<b>-3,529</b>
<b>Average Band D property comparison (annual charge)</b>	
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
2026/27 Council Tax Band D average	£79.98

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



## 2026 Community Litter Pick

Following the success of the October litter pick and considering feedback from people who would like to be involved in future events, the next litter pick will be held on Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> April 2026 at 2pm. Everyone is welcomed to join Councillors in litter picking in designated areas of the village. Equipment is provided on the day. On your return to the hall there will be refreshments.

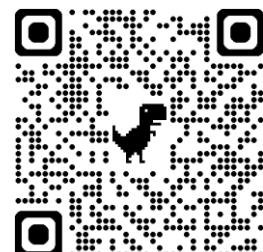
## Councillor Vacancies

Sutton Courtenay Parish Council can have a maximum of 11 Councillors. At present there are two vacancies and the Council is looking to fill the positions 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.

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 3<sup>rd</sup> February, 3<sup>rd</sup> March, 7<sup>th</sup> April and 5<sup>th</sup> May 2026. Meetings normally start at 7.15pm and are 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](http://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), Paul Galliver, Cathy King, Joanna O'Callaghan, Lia Plowman, Ian Pratley, Hugo Raworth and Jason Warwick.

Correspondence should be sent to the Clerk, Sutton Courtenay Parish Council, c/o Village Hall, Hobbyhorse Lane, Sutton Courtenay, OX14 4BB [info@suttoncourtenay-pc.gov.uk](mailto:info@suttoncourtenay-pc.gov.uk) 07496 924 685 (new number April 2025). Alternatively, you can contact Councillors directly, their email addresses are on the website.



This past month has been particularly busy, both in Parliament and meeting with local businesses in the constituency.

As discussions about the government's Great British Railways Bill continue, I have used my role as Liberal Democrat Transport Spokesperson to ensure the passengers are at the centre of these discussions. It is essential there is an improvement in the ongoing issues, such as train delays and expensive tickets, which I and many in our constituency experience regularly.

In parliament, a debate regarding Thames Water ensured I was able to raise the concerns raised by residents about the escalating costs and the lack of trust in Thames Water to safely build the largest bunded reservoir in the county.

I have also engaged with local media about problems with postal delivery services, including Evri, and the delayed parcels in Grove and other areas of the constituency. In an interview with the BBC, I spoke about the GP surgery delays specifically affecting Great Western Park.

I have been spending time with some of our wonderful small businesses to better understand the impact of last year's budget and the support they need to keep trading and providing us with products and food. It is always a highlight of my week to visit local businesses and community groups to learn about the work they do for our communities, making sure I am well informed when raising their needs in parliament. I have also had the pleasure of meeting many residents in Stanford in the Vale and Didcot on their doorsteps recently and in Wantage at one of my regular surgeries. My team and I have now closed over 10,000 constituent cases, supporting individuals, families and businesses to resolve a huge variety of problems.

As always, if there is anything you feel I can help you with please do not hesitate to contact me and my team at [olly.glover.mp@parliament.uk](mailto:olly.glover.mp@parliament.uk), or by leaving a voice message on 0207 219 7657.

Olly

**Olly Glover, MP for Didcot and Wantage**



## ADYP

The Abingdon DAMASCUS Youth Project  
Registered Charity 1098966



The Abingdon Damascus Youth Project brought festive cheer to the village with a Christmas Quiz and Bingo evening! Thanks to the support and hard work of our young people, from planning to running the event, the night was a huge success. Every table was full, and laughter and fun were shared by all. A wonderful way to celebrate the season together!



## Weekly Youth session



6:30pm

Every Wednesday  
@the village hall  
Year 6 pls

For more  
info contact



@lisa.adyp



[lisa@damascusyouthproject.org.uk](mailto:lisa@damascusyouthproject.org.uk)

## SC (NATIONAL POWER) TRUST

### Do you need financial help?

Sutton Courtenay (National Power) Trust may be able to give some help.

- The Trust is a charity based in Sutton Courtenay.
- It can make grants to individuals living in Sutton Courtenay and organisations based in Sutton Courtenay which operate for the benefit of the residents of the civil parish of Sutton Courtenay.
- Grants MAY be available to assist with a number of charitable purposes e.g. personal financial hardship, education, illness, charitable activities that benefit Sutton Courtenay residents.

For more information, in confidence, about the type of applications the Trustees will consider or how to apply for a grant, please email the Clerk to the Trustees [clerk.scnpt@gmail.com](mailto:clerk.scnpt@gmail.com) or write to 8 Church Street, Sutton Courtenay, OX14 4NJ.

## DISTRICT & COUNTY COUNCILLOR

Now that days are starting to get a little longer, it feels like we are over the worst of winter. Flooding and fear of it continues to be a big issue locally, and I refer residents to the Oxfordshire Flood Toolkit on-line which contains lots of advice. In an emergency, please ring the emergency services on 999. I believe that the fourfold increase in jetting and clearing gullies this year has exposed a lot of defects which now require more extensive remedial work to fix. The budget this year which we are hoping to agree next month, does propose more money to repair problems identified by the cleaning of over 70,000 gullies locally this year. Issues like Sutton Wick Lane and Milton High Street are at the top of my list for fixing.

The public consultation for Thames Water's proposed SESRO mega-reservoir ended 13<sup>th</sup> January, and I submitted my priorities, supporting the parish, district and count council submissions. I also went to Farmoor Reservoir and met the Head of Reservoir Safety (responsible for all their 50+ reservoirs) and saw the emergency discharge facility there back into the Thames, which was impressive, but pales into insignificance to SESRO which would be c.17 times bigger. Although Thames Water have a lot of issues, they also do a lot right. A day later, a Sutton Wick resident made an interesting comparison that when there is burst pipe, Thames Water respond 24/7 to fix them often overnight, whereas roads blocked by flooding, seem to be so much harder to fix. Anyway, I have made reasonable objections to SESRO's plans and wait to hear their responses.

Work continues on Steventon Lights and I have been liaising with the project team to try to improve the flow of traffic during the works. At long last, on the last weekend of February, the A34 interchange will be properly re-surfaced, and thereafter once the Steventon Lights works finish, work will start on the new HIF1 road which will provide a new faster traffic route all the way to the Golden Balls roundabout, removing the rat-runs and bridge congestion through Milton, Sutton Courtenay, Appleford and Clifton Hampden. Work will take a couple of years, and so I am establishing a working party to liaise with the project to minimise disruption locally.

As Chair of Abingdon Localities, I am also working to leverage this new road to improve local cycling and walking routes, including better safety across the Sutton Courtenay – Culham bridge, and linking Peep'o'Day Lane cycle route from Abingdon to Milton Park and onto Steventon. We had a really constructive meeting with the local landowner from Peep'o'Day Lane through to Milton Park, and hope to do the same with the local landowner at the other end where we are seeking a manageable incline for the last stretch into Steventon.

### PLEASE HELP - VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Sutton Courtenay News needs volunteer distributors for the Heritage Park Area. If you are interested and want to know more, please contact: Lynnette by text to 07966 490233 or email [editor@suttoncourtenaynews.co.uk](mailto:editor@suttoncourtenaynews.co.uk)

For Steventon, I have asked relevant officers to come to a Steventon parish council meeting to explain what is happening with the bridge. Essentially, the work has been completed, as best as possible, but as it is an old bridge, and not designed for the amount and weight of traffic that wants to cross it, if it was to be re-opened again to unrestricted two way HGV traffic, it would fail again quickly, so the council is unwilling to open it up again fully, and wants to consult with the local committee on the best alternative options. I have asked the council to explore alternatives, like two way with a weight limit, or limit to cars only, or re-marking it so it is one way for HGVs in the middle whilst two way for cars, or even an ANPR system for traffic lights triggered when trucks approach. The quicker we agree a solution, the quicker I can help get it normalised. I encourage you to participate in the consultation or share your views with me to pass on.

Meanwhile, we wait to hear how central government propose to devolve power to the regions – will we move to one unitary council across Oxfordshire... and will we get a mayor across the Thames Valley (which would be apparently the strongest economic powerhouse outside of London) or some other arrangement? Let's see...

In this regard, I have been talking to our MP, Olly Glover, and we plan to collaborate on a range of issues.

Olly in his transport role can help facilitate plans to improve the train station and service from Appleford. FCC have offered us some land for a new car park, and I am working with the HIF1 team to link the cycle and walking route through to the station, providing safe access to each platform, which will enable much better use of the station, particularly whilst construction hampers roads to help people be more reliant on the train. This also requires temporary improvements to the service so more trains stop there. We believe that once the car park is built, many from surrounding areas will prefer this station over Didcot and Culham, and if we can show that people use it, temporary services could become permanent.

Olly is also championing new legislation to aid state adoption of roads on recent housing developments where there are often long-standing issues hindering adoption or completion of work to satisfactory standards impacting local residents. I know this has been a really stressful issue for residents of Partridge Close and Rye Gardens and actually every village seems to have at least one development facing these issues. I really hope he can find some traction to report back constructive news soon.

That's all for now, stay warm and best wishes,  
Councillor Peter Stevens

### 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](mailto:graymar.wells@btopenworld.com)



## A Joyful and Ambitious Start to the Spring Term

The Spring Term has begun with purpose, energy and a wonderful sense of togetherness at Sutton Courtenay. From the moment the children returned, there has been a calm, focused atmosphere across the school. Staff and visitors have commented on how ready the children are to learn, how respectfully they interact with one another, and how confidently they are stepping into the new term.

Classrooms have been alive with rich learning. In English children are using full sentences in speech, employing ambitious vocabulary, and building their ideas through well-structured expression. Their mathematical reasoning has deepened through manipulatives, and increasingly accurate model drawings—an important foundation for confident, fluent learners.

Creativity is thriving too: our DT projects have sparked enormous enthusiasm, with many children continuing their designs at home and proudly bringing in their creations the next day. These moments capture the heart of an ambitious curriculum—one that excites, challenges and nurtures imagination.

### Dream Big Day – Inspiring Futures

On Thursday 15th January, we held our first **Dream Big Day**, a transformational event designed to raise aspirations and open children's eyes to the extraordinary range of careers available to them. We were delighted to welcome volunteers including architects, actors, scientists, nurses, physiotherapists, talent consultants, accountants, filmmakers, graphic designers, AI programmers, firefighters, writers and researchers.

Volunteers were really impressed by how articulate and confident our pupils were, especially in linking their learning to real-world careers. One highlight came from the AI workshop, where children explained with ease how programming connects directly to artificial intelligence development.

Children left the sessions buzzing with possibility:

*"I didn't know what an architect was before today - now I want to be one."*  
*"I love writing - I can't believe I could spend my life doing research & stories."*



Parents also reflected on the impact, noting how this event "planted a seed of possibility". Dream Big Day has enriched our wider curriculum, nurturing ambition, imagination and emotional engagement—essential ingredients in helping every child see themselves as the hero of their own future.

### Looking Ahead

The coming weeks are full of opportunities: teacher-led clubs begin shortly, Storytelling Week and cyber-safety workshops are on the horizon, and our pupil-led clubs and class trips will continue bringing learning to life. We remain committed to strengthening reading, writing, mathematical fluency and the routines that support wellbeing through Zones of Regulation and our "Ready to Learn" expectations.

We are proud of the purposeful, joyful culture growing in every classroom. Thank you to our parents, staff, governors and—most of all—our remarkable children, who inspire us daily and make our school community so special.

### Raluca Chende

Headteacher, Sutton Courtenay CofE Primary School

[office@sutton-courtenay.school](mailto:office@sutton-courtenay.school)

Telephone: 01235 848333



# THE ABBEY, SUTTON COURtenay

## Winter Harmony Singing Retreat

Join us for a cosy harmony singing retreat day at The Abbey, and enjoy beautiful songs in full harmony, all taught by ear. You don't need to be chorister, nothing more than a love of music and desire to have fun is needed to be part of this day retreat led by Rachel Holmes, a singer and choir leader based in Oxfordshire. She connects emotion, body and voice into powerful group singing. In 2019 she trained as a natural voice leader with Kate Valentine and currently runs natural voice song circles in Chilton and Cholsey. She completed Line Hilton's singing teacher training in 2020 and completed her Foundation in Art Therapy at IATE in 2021. Rachel loves bringing these threads together into a holistic and uplifting experience of singing.

For more info, please check here: [www.upliftchoir.com](http://www.upliftchoir.com)

## Saturday talks at The Abbey

Join us for the second session of our three-part workshop series, "If mindfulness is a doorway, what's on the other side?", on Saturday 14 February 2026, from 10am to 1pm in the Library.

Following the positive response to September's workshop and the success of the first session in this series, we're delighted to continue this journey with Peter Yiangou.

Peter Yiangou, a retired chartered architect, and now Chair of the Board, and also a teacher at Oxford Mindfulness, will guide these workshops exploring what lies "on the other side" — and how this inquiry can deepen our understanding of happiness, awareness, and personal growth.

You will find more details on our website and social media pages. The last session will take place on Saturday 14 March.

## Volunteering at the Abbey

### The walled garden

We are developing a great team of volunteer gardeners. 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. Come and spend time in this special garden and enjoy working with other volunteers and make new friends.

### The Abbey Workshop

We have a small but keen band of volunteers who, on top of pursuing their own interests in various woodcraft activities are now also contributing their many and varied skills to helping us maintain the Abbey. New members are always welcome, so please contact us at: [abbeyworkshop@theabbey.uk.com](mailto:abbeyworkshop@theabbey.uk.com) if you're interested and would like to know more.



## The Abbey Café

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

We are open every Saturday from 10 am to 2pm. Occasionally the café won't be held in the Great Hall if we are hosting a retreat or another event so check our website and social media for any updates.

## Meditation at the Abbey

The Abbey offers an opportunity to experience stillness in tranquil & beautiful surroundings with a supportive group.

Meditation can help us to feel more connected, balanced and at peace. Heartfulness is a very simple and natural method which guides participants to focus on a deeper source within our hearts and to experience harmony within. It is offered to anyone interested, for free.

The meetings take place on Wednesdays at 7pm for 30-45 minutes in the Abbey. All are welcome regardless of experience. (more information at: [www.heartfulness.org.uk](http://www.heartfulness.org.uk))

Please contact us at: [welcome@theabbey.uk.com](mailto: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)

OFFICE OPENING TIMES: - 9AM - 1PM weekdays

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## HEARTFULNESS MEDITATION

A SIMPLE WAY TO FIND YOUR INNER HARMONY

You are warmly invited to try it out for yourself with a friendly welcoming group or at home with the Heartfulness app.

WEDNESDAYS  
7PM TO 7:45PM  
THE ABBEY,  
SUTTON COURtenay

Free of charges and open to all over 18.  
For more info contact:  
[Oxfordshire@heartfulness.uk](mailto:Oxfordshire@heartfulness.uk)

Registered Charity Number 1128649 in England & Wales, SC038615 in Scotland



## From the Ministry Team

A metaphor found in the Bible that I particularly like is the idea that we are refined by God's holy fire. The metaphor comes from the practice of burning away the impurities of metals to leave the purest and most valuable metal possible. In terms of our relationship with God, the idea is that through God we can remove the unhelpful things in our lives to become the person God wants us to be. This is a useful image for the season of Lent, which begins on the 18<sup>th</sup> February with Ash Wednesday. During an Ash Wednesday service, the ashes from the burning of last year's palm crosses are placed on the forehead of each person in the shape of the cross. At first, this may seem like an unusual thing to do, but it is a practice that is centuries old. It's purpose, and the reason for the ashes, is to signify our mortality and our need to turn to God. The symbolism of Ash Wednesday begins the period of Lent where we can reflect on what being refined by God's fire may mean in our lives in preparation for the events of Easter. This time of reflection is where we can consider what changes we may wish to make for our own benefit and the benefit of those around us. If there is something we can change to make us feel happier and healthier, Ash Wednesday is a good time to start (or restart depending on how well any new year's resolutions have gone). This year, the Ash Wednesday service for the Parish will be held at St Michael and All Angels Church in Steventon at 7:30pm and all are welcome.

Before that though, there is Shrove Tuesday (or Pancake Day) on the 17<sup>th</sup> February when all those tasty treats that we may wish to give up during Lent can be used and eaten. On pancake day at St Blaise in Milton at 5pm, there is even the chance to put your pancake flipping skills to the test. We are also running a Lent course in the River Room at All Saints' Church in Sutton Courtenay on Wednesdays at 7:30pm starting on 25<sup>th</sup> February. We look forward to welcoming you to one or all of these services and events.

With prayers and best wishes,

*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

## 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:

**Roy Francis MASON** (13 November 2025)

*See obituary on page 14*

## CHURCH DIARY FOR FEBRUARY

**EVERY TUESDAY** – Feel like you have no time to pray? Why not join our online prayer Group for 30 minutes every Tuesday – see advert for details.

**Saturday 7<sup>th</sup>** – 9:30-11:30 Community Brunch in the River Room - **WARM SPACE**. This is a FREE Brunch open to all (although donations are welcome). Why not make it your New Year's resolution to come along, enjoy a breakfast and meet people from across the community!

**Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup>** – 17:00 Pancake Party to celebrate **Shrove Tuesday** in St Blaise, Milton – all ages welcome (children must be accompanied by an adult)

**Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> ASH WEDNESDAY** – 19:30 Holy Communion with the Imposition of Ashes for the DAMASCUS Parish at St Michael's, Steventon

**Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup>** – 19:30 Lent Course begins, River Room – all welcome to join us as we 'Discover Jesus through the Eucharist'

**Saturday 28<sup>th</sup>** – 1.30pm to 4pm JUMBLE SALE, Village Hall, Sutton Courtenay (see advert for details)

## CHURCH DIARY FOR MARCH

**Saturday 7<sup>th</sup>** – 9:30-11:30 Community Brunch in the River Room - **WARM SPACE**. This is a FREE Brunch open to all (although donations are welcome).

19:00 Friends of All Saints' Quiz Night in the Village Hall



[oxford.anglican.org/come-and-see](http://oxford.anglican.org/come-and-see)

**COME  
AND  
SEE**

**Discovering Jesus  
through the Eucharist**

Explore the profound meal at the heart of Christian life - whether you're new to Christianity or have been coming to church for years.



Full Course: 19:30 Wednesday 25 February

4, 11, 18, 25 March & 1 April:

River Room, Sutton Courtenay

or Abridged Course 11:00 Wednesday 25 February,  
11 March & 25 March: 5 Newman Lane, Drayton

## CHRISTMAS THANKS

It might feel a long time ago but we must thank everyone who helped to share the joy and love of Christmas 2025 in All Saints' Church and beyond. It was wonderful to see so many people at all the different services and events – from the dozens of young children who took part in our 'Grumpy Owl and the Joy of Christmas' nativity service on Christmas Eve to the 1300+ people who participated in the Torchlight Procession.

We exceeded our target of 500 crafted Christmas Trees which were distributed around the village – thank you to Bryony Landsbert 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 & take a tree home to hang on their Christmas tree.

We were also delighted to be able to distribute a lot of hampers, as gifts of love, across the village – thank you to Alison Budd and Chris Leake for the shopping (and thanks to Aldi and all their staff in Abingdon and Didcot for being so helpful) and all those who packed them and delivered them. 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 2026 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. The Carol Service, combined with singers from Drayton, was really uplifting and the Singing Saints also toured the village carol singing (thanks to our hosts – Galia in Spring Field Road, Tullis Close residents and the George). Thanks to the Flower Arranging team and Mary Warrington and Alison Budd 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 £917.93 for Helen and Douglas House and £694.28 for the Tower and Bell Appeal – **thank you everyone!**

Thanks also go to David McKenzie for organising the sale of the torches and organising the marshals who keep everyone safe enroute; to the shops (Costcutter, Hari & Esha News & Changes Hairdressers) who sell the torches; 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 (First Aider) and Seanna who helped with all the setting up. And finally, thank you to all those who shared the joy of celebrating the birth of Jesus with us. *Helen*

## 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](mailto:rector@damascusparish.org.uk) or ring the Parish Office on 01235 847179 for more information.



## COMMUNITY BRUNCH

is happening

**9:30-11:30**

in the River Room, All Saints' Church

**Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> 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 - ALL WELCOME!**

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

## 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**

## Community Café in the River Room



Run by the church for the whole community

Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> & 26<sup>th</sup> 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 River Room please 'phone the Parish Office on 01235 847179

## MOVIE MATINEES

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

**Saturday 21st February 2026 – 4pm**

For a full programme to be sent to you please  
email: [admin@damascusparish.org.uk](mailto:admin@damascusparish.org.uk)  
or pick one up from the back of the church  
Entry is **FREE** and refreshments are available.



## YOUR BELL TOWER NEEDS YOU!

8 bells in the church tower

5 regular ringers

3 poor, neglected bells

1 has your name on it...

Come along to practise on Tuesdays 6:30-7:30pm.

Beginners are welcome: tuition is available.

Isn't this something you've always fancied trying?

For further information contact John Napper on 848292

## BARGAINS GALORE!

# Jumble Sale

**Saturday 28<sup>th</sup>  
February  
2026  
1.30-4pm  
Sutton  
Courtenay  
Village Hall**

With tea & coffee available  
Entrance: £1 per person  
Children: FREE



QUALITY BRIC-A-BRAC  
CLOTHES – TOYS – BOOKS –  
FURNITURE – HOUSEHOLD ITEMS –  
CRAFT DE-STASH

Donations on the day  
between 10.30-12:00  
or to arrange collection beforehand  
please contact 01235 847179  
Or email [admin@damascusparish.org.uk](mailto:admin@damascusparish.org.uk)



## DAMASCUS Parish online prayer meeting

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.

Interested? We meet on-line every Tuesday at 07.45 - 08.15

Please contact: [DAMASCUSonlineprayer@gmail.com](mailto:DAMASCUSonlineprayer@gmail.com)



"they raised their voices together in prayer to God... After they prayed...." things began to happen!

Acts 4:24,31

## Vicar's Fun Day 2026

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 25<sup>th</sup> May 2026.**

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.

**We need ideas and practical, hands-on, help.**

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](mailto:rector@damascusparish.org.uk) or phone the parish office on 01235 847179.

## 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!

## KNIT AND NATTER



Afternoons of chat and craft

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

**Every 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday of the month 2:00 – 4:00pm**

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

Tel: 01235 847179 for more information

**In its 10th year, SCIDS proudly presents...**



## FRIENDS OF ALL SAINTS'



### FRIENDS OF ALL SAINTS CHURCH ANNUAL

**QUIZ EVENING SATURDAY 7<sup>TH</sup> MARCH AT 7.30PM  
IN SUTTON COURTENEY VILLAGE HALL**

**We invite you to take part in our annual Quiz evening**

**Table of 8 £12 per person to include supper**

**Prizes for Winners & Runners Up**

**Please contact:**

**Sue Jenkins 07885 437454 or  
SJJenkins33@aol.com to book a table**

## COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES & INFORMATION

### BRIDGE AFTERNOONS

Come and play bridge on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Friday afternoons in the River Room from 2-5pm with a cup of tea & 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.



### WeCare2



This is a small and gentle group welcoming people with dementia, their carers and those older members in the village who live alone and would enjoy an hour in company.

We meet in the River Room, All Saints' Church, Sutton Courtenay on the first and third Thursday each month, from 11.15 to 12.30. Transport can be arranged if needed.

The group has a cup of coffee/tea and we try varied armchair exercises and then finally sing together some well-known traditional songs.

Music is recognised as being so beneficial to positive mental activity.

If you are interested and would like more information please phone/contact

Morna 07787 521039/morna28whitlock@gmail.com

### Ladies' Tuesday Club

Every third Tuesday @ 7:30 pm

River Room

All welcome –

Come and see your friends and make new ones

Next meeting 17<sup>th</sup> February



### Milton Minors Playgroup

Every Wednesday  
- including school holidays  
9:30 until 11:30 am

Come along and join us  
£4 per family, refreshments included

Milton Methodist Church Hall,  
Milton High Street OX14 4EJ

### WANTED

#### Tour Guides for Milton Manor

Are you interested in historic homes and the lives of those that lived in them?

Milton Manor is a beautiful Georgian home in its own grounds in Milton. It has a fascinating history and interesting architecture and artefacts.

The house is open in the afternoon for only 30 days/yr. Join a happy and supportive team and help to make local history accessible to a wide range of visitors.

For more information contact:

Kathy - 07946 474238/khgriffiths@hotmail.com  
Morna - 07787 521039/morna28whitlock@gmail.com

### Save the Date

Sutton Courtenay Singers  
29<sup>th</sup> March in All Saints' Church

Mozart's  
Requiem & Vesperae solennes de confessore  
[suttoncourtenaysingers.org](http://suttoncourtenaysingers.org)

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

I had just returned home, happy to have spent a joyful New Year's Eve filled with fun, music, and dancing, when, at the same moment, a devastating tragedy was happening in Valais, Switzerland. A blaze broke out at the bar **Le Constellation** during the New Year's Eve celebrations in Crans-Montana, leaving 40 people dead and 116 severely burned. The large majority were teenagers and young adults under the age of 25. The fire is thought to have been caused by a dangerous combination of sparklers placed on champagne bottles and inflammable acoustic insulation on the ceiling of the bar. So many lives and families were shattered in such a short time by lack of vigilance; it is horrifying. The thought that people died in this way fills me with terror and profound sadness.

I grew up in these mountains and celebrated New Year many times in Verbier—another ski area just a 1.5-hour drive from Crans-Montana—when I was a teenager. Those moments were filled with joy, pleasure, and intense camaraderie, and youth made them even more playful and light-hearted. The tragedy that took place in Crans-Montana is immeasurable. How can a single moment of pure joy transform into such a disaster? Even though none of my close loved ones were directly affected by this accident, I feel deeply saddened and in solidarity with those who were. I grew up in Valais, and I am a Swiss citizen by adoption. I feel like a member of this community, sorrowful and pained by what has happened.

This event reminds me how attentive we must be at all times because life can be transformed for the worse in a fraction of a second. We should always remember how fortunate we are to be surrounded by people we love—family and friends—even though relationships can sometimes be complicated. And last but not least, in these difficult and turbulent times, life should be lived fully, as if every moment were the last.

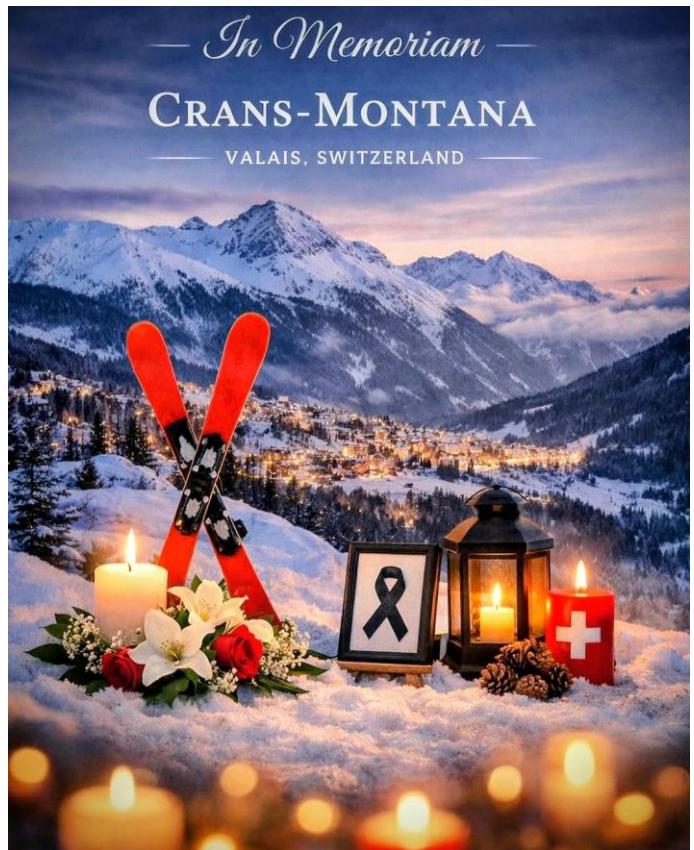
I followed the national ceremony held at Martigny on Friday the 9<sup>th</sup> and observed the minute of silence as proposed by the Swiss authorities. I wished I could have been there. From the depths of my heart, I hope that the individuals and families affected by this tragedy will find the strength to overcome this ordeal, rebuild their life, and one day find peace.

I will close this tribute with words from memorial songs written this week, honouring those whose laughter vanished far too soon: "We will remember them, standing side by side, hand in hand. They still live in our sky, and they are the light we carry forward—even in our darkest moments, even in the deepest pain."

"Today, we hold onto the memory of the love that was taken from us so unfairly, leaving a void that stretches far beyond our reach."

"Switzerland mourns, [and] it rises together. We will never forget that night, nor the voices lost in the flames, for in our hearts they continue to shine—like stars after the darkest tragedy."

Virginie Lacroix



This letter was sent in by Michael Lacey who found it in an old family Bible. The article is from 1937.

**Baptisms.**

Anthony Thomas Blake.  
Graham Gardner.  
Muriel Violet Hyatt.  
June Mary Carter.  
Leyland Michael Denton.  
Rachel Irene Lacey.  
Marina Rosemary Ellen Pointer.

The monthly meeting of the Women's Institute took place in the Village Hall on Thursday, March 18th. Miss Cartwright presided.

A very interesting Demonstration on Leather-work was given by Miss Roberts, who brought several beautiful specimens of her work.

An Exhibition of "Things from Abroad" brought an interesting and varied collection. Tea was provided by Mrs. Hyatt and Mrs. C. Skinner and helpers, and games organised by Miss C. Sinclair filled the Social Half-hour.

Mrs. Carver very kindly offered a prize of 10s. 6d. for the most tastefully decorated house of an Institute member on Coronation Day.

Entries for the Competition which will be judged during the afternoon of May 12th must be sent to Miss Cartwright before May 1st.

## OBITUARY

### 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:

**Roy Francis MASON**, who died on 13<sup>th</sup> November 2025, was born on 13<sup>th</sup> November 1933 in Portsmouth to his mother Florence and his father, William. He grew up with his sister Bet, who was three years older than him, and to whom he remained close all his life. During the war the family were evacuated from Portsmouth to Sutton Courtenay, to escape the bombing, and they moved into a cottage just behind what is now Hari and Esha's Store. Roy came to love the village of Sutton Courtenay and remained here for the rest of his life.

Roy attended the old school and had many memories of war time – especially the hardship of rationing. He and Bet used to play games with the other children in the village, frequently role-playing the key players in the war, and Roy used to be General Montgomery, which led to the nickname of Mont, which eventually stuck with family too. Whilst at school he worked on the Milk Round for the Allens and on leaving school he did everything from grave maintenance to gardening. He always loved being outdoors but the majority of his working life was spent with British Leyland in Cowley as the Storeman in charge of supplies for the car factory.

He was an intelligent and hardworking man – even though his spelling was always atrocious! He married his first wife, Dorothy, in 1958, in her home village of Long Wittenham, and they moved to Harwell Road in Sutton Courtenay where they went on to have two daughters, Jenny and Tracey. Sadly, Dorothy developed cancer and died in 1975. Roy was left to bring up Jenny and Tracey on his own. They remember him as a fairly strict parent who set firm boundaries. But he was also very loving and protective - caring and perceptive and would cheer them up when they felt sad. Roy met all the challenges of being a single-Dad with the support of his sister, his Mum and their wonderful neighbours in Harwell Road. Once his girls were grown-up he started dating again and, being such a charming man, with a twinkle in his eye, proved to be popular with the ladies. He met Annette and, along with her three boys, they became a blended family.

Roy was an enthusiastic fisherman from an early age and always a great gardener and liked nothing better than being in the open air tending his flowers and vegetables. His sister Bet always said that when he wasn't gardening, he was fishing. He would often give away seedlings and plants as gifts, along with excess produce from the vegetable plot. He was a very practical man and did a lot of the building work on the house by himself – even installing their first central heating system. He enjoyed dancing and he and Annette won a few trophies in the various competitions they entered and Tracey has fond memories of him jiving with her in the kitchen.

Unfortunately, Annette developed Parkinson's Disease and, once again, Roy became a carer. He looked after her devotedly until she died in January 2016. Looking after Annette took its toll on Roy's own health – both physically and mentally and her death hit him hard. He loved being a Grampy and having the grandchildren and great-grandchildren to visit. He always made sure he had a good supply of biscuits in the house and the grandchildren fondly remember how he always got the tub of biscuits out every time they came to visit. When the great-grandchildren appeared, the same tub of biscuits (replenished with fresh ones obviously) came out, along with chocolate buttons. And there was always a rich tea biscuit on the windowsill waiting for Molly the Dog of whom Roy was always very fond.

Roy died on his birthday, at the end of a long life which was well-lived in loving and caring for his family who will always remember him as someone who was practical, caring, friendly and generous but above all, a loving husband, father and grandfather. His funeral took place in All Saints' Church, followed by burial in the churchyard, on 17<sup>th</sup> December 2025.



### RSPB LOCAL GROUP

Since the last SCN, the local RSPB Local Group (Vale of White Horse) has enjoyed great talks on Turtle Doves (Dec) & Corncrakes (Jan).

There is just time to submit your Big Garden Birdwatch (23-25 Jan) results and then enjoy our onward programme as below. Membership for the remainder of the 25-26 season is now reduced to £10 for adults (whether or not you are an RSPB member) and is free for under-16s. This gets you access to the talks and walks below, and a quarterly e-Newsletter. If you prefer to attend individual talks, you can do this as a non-member for £5 a time. You can join using the form on our website (under "Contacts"): [www.rspb-vwh.org.uk](http://www.rspb-vwh.org.uk)

- Mon 16th Feb: Filey International, Arrivals & Departures on the North Yorkshire coast (Mark Pearson) (7.30 pm Zoom only)
- Sun 22nd Feb: Radley Lakes walk
- Mon 16th Mar: Bringing a Boom to Middleton Lakes (Katie Thorpe) (7.30pm River Room) (and deadline for photo competition)
- Sun 29th Mar: College Lake walk
- Mon 20th Apr: Wildlife of the Chilterns (Jon Mason) (7.30pm River Room) (and photo competition results)
- Sun 26th Apr: Greenham Common walk
- Mon 18th May: AGM & Members' Evening (7.30pm River Room)
- Sun 31st May: Otmoor walk



## Part-Time Carer/Coordinator for Children and Young People

Hours: 7.5-15 hours per week  
Salary: £16.33 per hour

- Are you looking for a rewarding role working with disabled children and their families?
- Would you enjoy working within a small, friendly and dedicated team?
- Do you have experience of working with children with complex needs? A medical, nursing, childcare background desirable.

### If so this unique and varied role might be for you!

Flexicare is an Oxfordshire based charity providing a home sitting service for families with severely disabled children. A sit typically involves a 2-4-hour period supporting a disabled child usually with their home setting or in the community.

If you are interested in applying for this post, please email a copy of your CV and a covering letter to:

[admin@flexicare.org](mailto:admin@flexicare.org) or call Maureen Tossi on 07342 041388 for an informal chat. A full job description is available on our website at [www.flexicare.org/work-with-us](http://www.flexicare.org/work-with-us)

This vacancy does not have a formal closing date; it will remain open until a suitable candidate is appointed.

**www.flexicare.org**

Registered Charity no. 1172635

IN AID OF FLEXICARE

## NIGHT IN THE MUSEUM 2026

CLASSICAL MUSIC  
CONCERT

### THE IVEL FLUTE TRIO

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



**SATURDAY 7 FOR  
7TH MARCH 7.30PM TICKETS**

**£35\*** INCLUDING  
DRINKS &  
CANAPES

UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY, PARKS ROAD, OXFORD, OX1 3PW



TICKETS £35\* INCLUDING DRINKS & CANAPES  
AVAILABLE FROM [WWW.TICKETSTRIPE.COM/FLEXICARECONCERT](http://WWW.TICKETSTRIPE.COM/FLEXICARECONCERT)  
SCAN QR CODE OR VISIT [WWW.FLEXICARE.ORG/EVENTS](http://WWW.FLEXICARE.ORG/EVENTS)  
\*\*£1.03 BOOKING FEE

YOUR SUPPORT RAISES FUNDS FOR FLEXICARE, A CHARITY  
PROVIDING A FREE, SPECIALIST SITTING AND SUPPORT SERVICE FOR  
FAMILIES WITH A SEVERELY DISABLED CHILD  
ACROSS OXFORDSHIRE



FLEXICARE (OXFORD AND ABINGDON) REGISTERED CHARITY NO. 1172635  
WWW.FLEXICARE.ORG | 01865 321881 | [ADMIN@FLEXICARE.ORG](mailto:ADMIN@FLEXICARE.ORG)

For further information, please contact:  
[www.ticketstripe.com/flexicareconcert](http://www.ticketstripe.com/flexicareconcert)

## RAIBOWS



### Join the Fun: 1st Sutton Courtenay Rainbows are Recruiting!

Does your daughter love to laugh, play, & explore?

Rainbows is the exciting first step in Girlguiding, offering girls aged **4 to 7** a chance to make new friends and try new things in a safe, fun, and supportive environment.

### How to Register:

We currently have spaces available! We are also looking for adult volunteers to help run our meetings and support the girls-no experience necessary, just enthusiasm! To register your daughter and explore the fun (or enquire about volunteering), please visit the official Girlguiding website and use the unit finder:

Visit: [www.girlguiding.org.uk/information-for-parents/register-your-daughter/](http://www.girlguiding.org.uk/information-for-parents/register-your-daughter/)



Join a local Rainbows group [girlguiding.org.uk/joinus](http://girlguiding.org.uk/joinus)

## WORDSEARCH

The topic is Countries in NATO



Y	Z	U	E	Q	M	B	S	S	D	D	N	M	G	A
Z	J	T	O	S	E	G	P	Q	N	K	E	O	E	I
P	M	N	U	L	T	A	N	A	K	S	T	D	R	R
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M	K	X	A	I	T	A	L	Y	A	N	L	K	Y	U
R	A	Y	E	M	G	N	B	U	M	A	A	D	L	B
C	A	R	M	M	N	R	E	A	O	R	N	E	A	A
Z	R	J	J	H	B	E	E	D	R	F	D	T	T	L
M	F	Q	X	C	D	O	D	E	E	T	S	I	V	B
D	N	A	L	N	I	F	U	B	C	W	D	N	I	A
L	A	G	U	T	R	O	P	R	C	E	S	U	A	N
J	A	D	A	N	A	C	I	L	G	T	I	F	W	I
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ALBANIA	ITALY
BELGIUM	LATVIA
BULGARIA	LUXEMBOURG
CANADA	NETHERLANDS
DENMARK	NORWAY
ESTONIA	PORTUGAL
FINLAND	ROMANIA
FRANCE	SPAIN
GERMANY	SWEDEN
GREECE	UNITED KINGDOM
ICELAND	UNITED STATES

Taken from: [www.puzzlemaker.discoveryeducation.com](http://www.puzzlemaker.discoveryeducation.com)

## SUDOKU

EASY

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

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Taken from [www.puzzles.ca/sudoku](http://www.puzzles.ca/sudoku) (1098)



## Making best use of technology to help cut crime and catch criminals

Just before Christmas Thames Valley Police rolled out a live facial recognition operation in Oxford, aimed as much at explaining the technology to the public as at catching criminals.

The use of live facial-recognition technology can bring great benefits to help cut crime and catch criminals.

Whilst the use of this technology is widely welcomed by most people, there are understandable concerns by some. I have worked closely with the police to ensure that all the necessary safeguards are put in place to protect privacy and that the only people who should have anything to fear from the use of live facial-recognition are criminals seeking to target people and property in our community.

The system does not - and cannot - identify everyone that it sees, but instead is looking for those on a specific watchlist; those who are either wanted by the police or have a warrant issued for them by the courts. Essentially it is very much like the screenlock that many of us will use on our mobile phones. It recognises the people the police are looking for but simply doesn't recognise the rest of us.

It is important that the police explain the use of this tactic and ensure widespread consent from the public. The use of any technology just provides a tool for the police. It is still the men and women of Thames Valley Police who will use their professional judgment to protect the public.

The effectiveness of these operations will continually be evaluated, alongside other tactics the police use. With more officers in neighbourhood policing roles and overall crime falling, it remains important that the police are able to address the issues that matter most to the public. You can play your part by reporting any crimes or suspicious activity you see in your community on [thamesvalley.police.uk](http://thamesvalley.police.uk) or by calling 101.

On the first operation in Oxford eight arrests were made, several for domestic abuse offences. Dangerous people being taken off the streets to prevent crime. *Matthew Barber*

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### PERMITTED DEVELOPMENT

I am often asked by people who are thinking about extending their property and have assumed that, because the extension that they are considering falls within the limits of Permitted Development, no planning approval is required and that they can just get on with it.

Permitted development covers the enlargement or alteration of a dwelling, but only if the property is not listed or in a conservation area, national park, Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, or Site of Special Scientific Interest. It also applies only to houses—not flats, maisonettes, or other buildings. Additional restrictions, such as Article 4 directions, may also apply to specific properties.

Front extensions don't fall within permitted development, though some side extensions may. Verandahs, balconies and raised platforms require planning permission, although Juliet balconies (with no platform or external access) are normally permitted development.

Permitted development rights have specific criteria that can be complex. Single-storey rear extensions must not extend beyond the original house's rear wall by more than 3 metres for semi-detached or terraced houses, or 4 metres for detached houses. "Original house" means as first built or as it stood on 1 July 1948. Previous owners may have already built extensions affecting these limits. In 2015, planning legislation increased these limits to 6 metres and 8 metres respectively.

While formal planning approval isn't needed if your extension complies with permitted development limits, you do need

confirmation from the local planning authority that the proposed work is indeed permitted development. For extensions up to 3 metres (semi-detached/terraced) or 4 metres (detached), a Lawful Development: Proposed Use application is required. For extensions under 2015 legislation, a Prior Approval: Larger Home Extension application is needed, which will include neighbour consultation. In both cases, the local authority must be notified before development commences, with supporting plans and elevations.

If the local planning authority decides work doesn't fall within permitted development limits, a Householder Planning Application is required. If an extension is built without a Lawful Development Certificate or Prior Approval Notification, the authority can require a Householder Planning Application. Without planning approval for built extensions, and if appeals are dismissed, the authority can issue Planning Enforcement Notices requiring demolition at the householder's expense.

Permitted development isn't just extensions—it includes solar panels, roof alterations like dormers, chimney alterations or replacements, outbuildings, swimming pools and LPG or oil containers.

As you can see, permitted development isn't as straightforward as it appears. The technical guidance runs to 50 pages! If you're thinking about a project and would like guidance, please get in touch.

Jan Liberadzki BA Arch (Hons), MSc  
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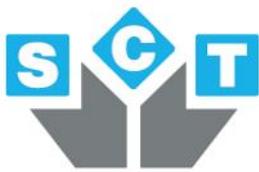
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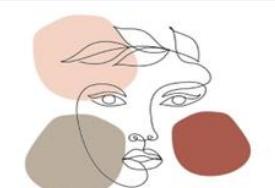
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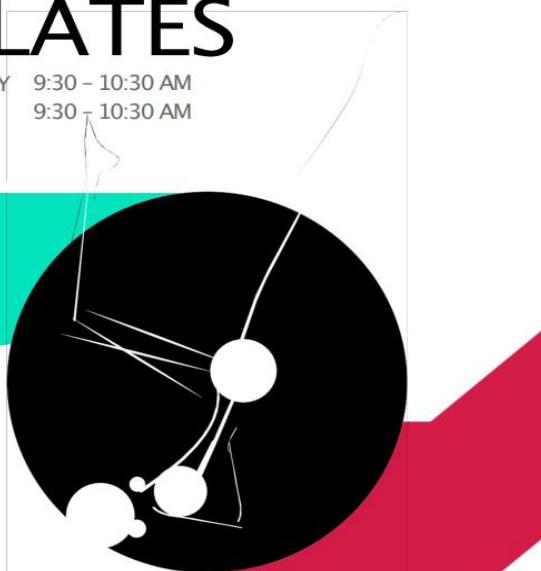


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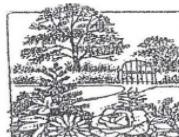
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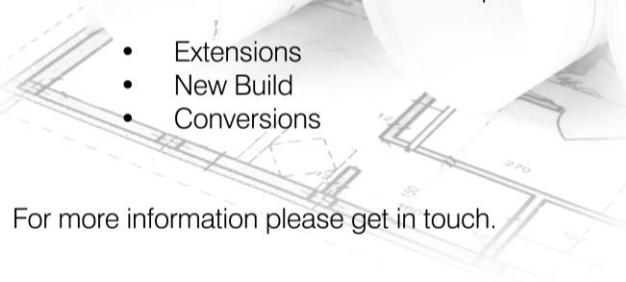


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