

SUTTON COURTENAY NEWS

VOLUME 55 No. 4

MAY 2026



VILLAGE DIARY FOR MAY

Fri 1 & 15	Bridge Afternoon (p. 4)	River Room	14:00-17:00
Sat 2	Community Brunch (p. 10)	River Room	9:30-11:30
Sat 2 -10	South Oxfordshire Artweeks (Artweeks.org) ←	See website	
Every Sat	The Abbey Café (p. 6)	The Abbey	10:00-14:00
Tue 5	Parish Council Meeting (p. 3)	Village Hall	19:00
Every Wed	ADYP Drop-in	Village Hall	18:30
Thurs 7 & 21	WeCare2 (p. 10)	River Room	11:15-12:30
Tues 12	SCN AGM (p. 4)	Village Hall	19:00
Thurs 14 & 28	Community Café (p. 9)	River Room	10:30-12:00
Thurs 14	Together in Stitches (p. 11)	River Room	19:30-21:00
Tue 19	Ladies' Tuesday Club (p. 12)	River Room	19:30
Sat 23	Movie Matinée (p. 11)	River Room	16:00
Mon 25	Vicar's Fun Day (p. 10)	Village Green	12:00-16:00
Wed 27	Community Sports Day (p. 13)	Recreation Ground	17:30

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

JUNE 2026 SCN DEADLINE – WEDNESDAY 20th MAY 2026

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

VILLAGE CONTACTS

Parish Council:	Clerk, 07496 924 685 info@suttoncourtenay-pc.gov.uk
Stay & Play Toddler Group:	Facebook page: @SCstayandplay
Friends of All Saints'-Chair:	Sue Jenkins 07885 437454
Matrix Music School:	847264
The Abbey:	847401
Village Hall – SC:	scvillagehallbookings@googlemail.com
Cricket Club:	drb71@hotmail.co.uk
Nordic Walking Group:	Graham Wells 847322
Churchmere Carp Synd.:	Andy Barrett 07717 662039
DAMASCUS Youth Project:	07956 038022
SC Local History Society:	John Talbot sclhs.org.uk enquiries@sclhs.org.uk
SCIDS (Drama Society):	Sally Dubock, 847707 sallydubock@gmail.com
Sutton Courtenay Singers:	Kathy Harrop-Griffiths, 848230 secretary@suttoncourtenaysingers.org www.suttoncourtenaysingers.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 www.gov.uk/report-smell
Thames Water (leaks):	0800 71 46 14
Thames Water Customer Service:	0800 316 9800
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
Office: 01235 847179 Home: 01235 848297
Mobile: 07443 524216 rector@damascusparish.org.uk

Assistant Curate: The Reverend Dov Whittle
07586 969985 curate@damascusparish.org.uk

Assistant Priest: The Reverend Rosie Bruce
07707 087131 rosie-bruce@hotmail.co.uk

Churchwarden & Pro-Warden: Alison Budd alison@pbudd.me
Pro-Warden: Mary Warrington contrary63@gmail.com
Parish Administrator: Alison Bampton. 01235 847179
admin@damascusparish.org.uk

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 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 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.





Welcome to our new Councillor Christopher Campbell

At its April meeting the Parish Council co-opted Christopher Campbell to a vacant seat. (There is one further vacancy.) The

Parish Council consists of 11 Councillors who all live in the parish, the role is unpaid and they collectively make decisions at Parish Council meetings which are open to the public. There is always a public session at the start of a meeting when residents can raise matters.

The Parish Council employs the Parish Clerk, Assistant Clerk, and utilises contractors to provide services in the community and maintain Parish Council owned assets that are for the benefit of the village.

Didcot and surrounding areas major infrastructure scheme (HIF1)

Project update from Oxfordshire County Council:

The Didcot and surrounding areas major infrastructure scheme will provide vital transport infrastructure to reduce congestion and enable more reliable journey times, improve pedestrian and cycling connectivity, and support new employment sites and housing in and around Didcot.

The project includes four highway sections that incorporate improvements to existing roads, the construction of new roads, new walking and cycle routes, and will help to facilitate new and enhanced bus services.

Project timeline

Planning approval granted	December 2024
Compulsory purchase & side roads orders confirmed	July 2025
Enabling works	Autumn 2025 – Spring 2026
Construction begins on site	Spring 2026
Construction works completed	Autumn 2028

How can I stay up to date?

The project webpage is updated regularly.

www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/didcot

If you have any questions about the project email:

hif1project@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Councillor Vacancies

Sutton Courtenay Parish Council can have a maximum of 11 Councillors. At present there is one vacancy and the Council is looking to fill the position by co-option. Individuals who are on the electoral register and who live or work in the parish or within 3 miles of the parish can be considered for co-option. If you are interested in working in a small team to contribute to local life, taking forward projects which benefit people across the parish, then please contact the Clerk.

Please note the role is unpaid, as a minimum you would be expected to attend monthly meetings and check your Council email account at least once a week. You would be asked to take an active role in a couple of areas of the

Council's work across recreational amenities, the cemetery, planning policy, community infrastructure (defibs, benches, bins), community events and representing the Parish Council at meetings with local charitable and commercial organisations.

Council meetings and contact details

Members of the public are welcome to attend Council meetings. The dates of the next meetings are Tuesday 5th May, 2nd June, 7th July and 1st September 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 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), Christopher Campbell, 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, Innovation Centre, 99 Park Drive, Milton, OX14 4RY, info@suttoncourtenay-pc.gov.uk 07496 924 685. Alternatively, you can contact Councillors directly, their email addresses are on the website.



MILTON MANOR HOUSE

A hidden historic gem!



Open to the Public

16th to 31st May 2026

2pm to 5pm

Milton, Oxfordshire OX14 4EN

A family home with a pleasant, relaxed and informal atmosphere, fascinating history and interesting grounds.

Tour of the house and access to the grounds:

Adult £10 Child £3

Grounds only: Adult £5 Child £1

N.B. Cash only

Tea room. Free parking.

Sorry - no dogs

See www.miltonmanorhouse.com for details



Spring is a beautiful time across the constituency, with warm sunshine at last, and so many roadsides and woods enhanced by daffodils and bluebells.

In recent months, I have been engaged in many local community campaigns, including the sudden closure of East Hagbourne Post Office. During a visit to the East Hagbourne Community Shop, I met with the shop's dedicated volunteers. They explained that the post office closure limits residents' access to essential services and risks the future of the community shop. This small establishment brings so much value to the community; its loss would be significant. Having already met with the national Post Office organisation directly, I will continue to work with the East Hagbourne community and raise this case with government ministers to find a solution.

Trump's illegal military actions in Iran have caused significant death and global disruption to gas and oil supplies, and which rural areas have felt the brunt of these events. Many constituents have expressed concerns over tripling oil prices and the need for urgent support for rural communities, many of whom are dependent on heating oil for warmth. I signed an Early Day Motion to introduce a three-month zero rating of VAT and price caps to help alleviate some of this financial burden. The government must take further action to protect rural residents who are vulnerable to sudden price rises.

In Parliament I raised concerns about local government funding, road safety, and improving women's health. In a debate on the condition of rural roads, attended by MPs representing dozens of counties all frustrated by the state of their roads, I spoke about the need for better approaches to road design, maintenance, and repair across the country. Funding to maintain our roads must be spent both on fixing

potholes, and on long-term, preventative work, such as drainage improvements and surface dressing.

Back in the constituency, I have spent time with some incredible community organisations, education facilities, and local businesses. I had a beautiful tour of the nature reserve at the Sutton Courtenay Environmental Education Centre, near Milton Park, run by the Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, and Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust (BBOWT), which educates the community about protecting nature and local wildlife. In addition, I answered questions from Year 12 Politics students at Wallingford School.

I had a fascinating visit to Moderna Innovation and Technology Centre, a biotechnology company based on Harwell Campus which manufactures vaccines, and learnt about Infinis, based in Sutton Courtenay, which is turning gases from landfill sites into renewable energy.

After an excellent lunch at the White Hart in Harwell, I spoke with the publican about ongoing pressures on the local hospitality industry. I have joined Liberal Democrat colleagues in calling for a 5% VAT cut for hospitality, and against government policies on business rates and employer national insurance contributions, which are making life very difficult for our hospitality sector. I also joined Wantage and Grove Street Pastors on an evening patrol, engaging with the local community.

These constituency activities help me understand the day-to-day challenges faced by people and organisations in the local area, and I will continue to hold the Labour government to account and push for change at a national level.

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

Olly Glover, MP for Didcot and Wantage



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

Notice of Annual General Meeting

Notice is hereby given that the AGM of the
SUTTON COURTENAY NEWS
will be held on Tuesday 12th May at 19:00 in the
Committee Room, Village Hall

Nominations for Chairman, Editor, Advertising
Manager, Treasurer & Administrator should be sent
together with details of the proposer and seconder, to

Jayne Franklyn scmail836@gmail.com

The SCN is created by the community for the
community



We returned from the Easter break with a renewed sense of purpose and excitement for the term ahead. The first morning back was filled with warmth as we welcomed new children and families into our community. Those early moments at the classroom door - the smiles, the reassurance, the buzz of anticipation - remind us how important these beginnings are and what a privilege it is to guide each child's journey.



Our partnership with All Saints' Church continues to enrich our worship and strengthen the sense of belonging at the heart of our school. Before the holiday, we ended the term with one of our most cherished traditions: our Key Stage 2 walk to All Saints' Church for the Easter service. The church was alive with music, reflection and joy, and our choir once again impressed everyone with their confidence and harmony.

We remain committed to offering rich, ambitious learning experiences. Last term, Year 4 explored tropical habitats at the Living Rainforest and later attended a performance by the RET (Ridgeway Educational Trust) Orchestra at Didcot Girls' School. Their curiosity, enthusiasm and exemplary behaviour made us extremely proud, and these experiences continue to spark ideas and conversations back in the classroom. We also enjoyed a fantastic Eid celebration with parents, children and staff - a joyful reminder of how important it is to honour every child, their family and their heritage.

This term brings even more opportunities. A wide range of trips, workshops and visitors will support our Personal Development curriculum, helping children grow not only academically but as confident, compassionate and ambitious young people. We are especially proud of our pupil voice: recently, Headteachers and Deputy Headteachers from across Ridgeway Education Trust visited Sutton Courtenay to speak directly with our Year 6 pupils. They chose our school as an example of excellent pupil articulation of day-to-day practice, and our children spoke with clarity, confidence and maturity about our vision and values, British Values, keeping safe and their roles as pupil leaders.

We are already looking forward to a number of exciting enrichment opportunities ahead: The Roving Bookshop will be with us this Friday, offering an impressive display of books that our whole school community loves exploring. Swimming lessons for Year 4 and Year 6 continue to build confidence, resilience and essential life skills. Year 6's visit to the Houses of Parliament will deepen their understanding of democracy and citizenship. Year 1 and 2's day trip to Hill End will provide rich outdoor learning, teamwork and nature exploration - a perfect extension of our Personal Development curriculum.

We are delighted to invite families to our Nursery Open Day on Tuesday 19th May at 4:00pm. Our Nursery offers a nurturing, child-centred start to school life, with strong relationships, a rich indoor and outdoor environment, and a curriculum that encourages curiosity, independence and confidence.

Families choose our Nursery because we offer a warm, family-like atmosphere where children feel truly at home, supported by experienced and caring practitioners who tailor learning to each child. Our rich indoor and outdoor environment — including Forest School and local trips — encourages curiosity, independence and creativity. We maintain strong communication with families through weekly updates and photos, and place a strong emphasis on emotional wellbeing, resilience and social development. Above all, our inclusive practice ensures that every child, whatever their background or need, can flourish.



We regularly share updates, photos and celebrations on our school Facebook page. Follow us here:

www.facebook.com/suttoncourtenayprimary

Raluca Chende

Headteacher, Sutton Courtenay CofE Primary School

office@sutton-courtenay.school

Telephone: 01235 848333

THE ABBEY, SUTTON COURTENAY

ARTWEEKS

After the great success of Artweeks 2025, we are welcoming back a talented selection of local artists for Artweeks 2026 on 2nd to 10th of May.

Each day between 11am and 6pm, you will be able to visit and enjoy a vibrant selection of paintings by seven unique and innovative artists: Emma Waddleton, April Jones, Liza Widdowson, Sarah Walton, Felix Wilkinson, Rose Lyons, Graeme Jones and Emma Woodford.

All are warmly invited to come along, meet the artists, and enjoy a rich display of abstract and figurative paintings in this beautiful and historic setting.

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 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 and 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.

(find more information at www.heartfulness.org.uk)

We'll be taking part in the **Vicar's Fun Day**, so look out for our stall!

EMMA WOODFORD LIZA WIDDOWSON SARAH WALTON EMMA WADDLETON

ROSE LYONS APRIL JONES GRAEME JONES FELIX WILKINSON

SUTTON COURTENAY ABBEY ARTISTS
2nd-10th May 2026
11am - 6pm
The Abbey, Sutton Courtenay, OX14 4AF
OXFORDSHIRE **ART WEEKS**

Please contact us at: welcome@theabbey.uk.com or by phone: +44 (0)1235 242 283 if you have any questions. You can also visit our FB page "The Abbey Sutton Courtenay" or our Instagram account @theabbey Sutton Courtenay

THE ABBEY OFFICE opening times: - 9am - 1pm weekdays

THE ABBEY
A place to stop, think and simply be

RECONNECT & RECHARGE

HOLISTIC STRUCTURED WRITING RETREAT

- Writing Sessions
- Yoga Sessions
- Nutritious Vegetarian Meals
- Nature Walks

3-DAY retreat
All included
Limited spaces available

20-22 July, 2026
The Abbey
Sutton Courtenay

For more information,
please contact Pascaline
+44 (0) 1235 242 283
welcome@theabbey.uk.com

www.theabbey.uk.com

HOW CAN SUTTON COURTENAY (NATIONAL POWER) TRUST HELP YOU?

The Trust was set up in 1999 by the parish council from funds given by the then National Power (now operated by RWE) for the benefit of the Sutton Courtenay community. The Trust fund is managed by a board of trustees which is assisted by a clerk. The trustees are appointed from the elected parish councillors at any one time. Their role as a trustee is totally independent and separate from their role as parish councillor. The clerk is not a parish councillor.

The Trust can only make grants for charitable purposes for the benefit of people living within Sutton Courtenay or for projects which benefit Sutton Courtenay.

In recent years the Trust has:

- helped a number of people in the village experiencing financial difficulties;
- made a contribution to the improvement of the play areas at the recreation ground;
- assisted purchasing extra curricular books for the primary school's library;
- made grants towards an accredited online educational qualification;
- facilitated a defibrillator training course at the village hall.

If you would like to find out more about how the Trust may be able to help you personally or help with a project which will benefit Sutton Courtenay, please email Clare at clerk.scnpt@gmail.com to request a call back. All enquiries will be treated in absolute confidence.



Flexicare Community Walk
Sunday 17th May 2026



Walk, run or cycle your choice of circular routes across the Ridgeway. A range of lengths to choose from. Wheelchair and buggy routes available. Dogs on a lead are welcome. Delicious refreshments provided!

Starting at Snells Hall, East Hendred
OX12 8LA from 8.30am

Raising funds to support Flexicare, an Oxfordshire based charity providing a free, specialised sitting service for families with a severely disabled child.

 Register at
www.flexicare.org/news-events

 Donate at
www.flexicare.enthuse.com/donate#

Flexicare (Oxford and Abingdon) | Registered Charity no 1172635
www.flexicare.org | 01865 321881 | admin@flexicare.org



Garden Opening for Flexicare



Sunday 7th June 1pm-5pm
10 Eynsham Road, Botley, OX2 9BP

Entrance free but donations to Flexicare

Teas, cake and sale of plants in aid of Flexicare

Beautiful organic garden, wildlife pond and bee habitat

Disabled access (with car)

 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. Scan this QR code to donate, or visit https://flexicare.enthuse.com/donate#



FLEXICARE (OXFORD AND ABINGDON) REGISTERED CHARITY NO. 1172635



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

During May, the church celebrates Pentecost. This is the day when the Holy Spirit was sent by God. It is an incredible event recorded in the book of Acts (written in around the late 1st century) when the room the Apostles were meeting in was suddenly filled with 'a sound like the rush of a violent wind' and 'divided tongues, as of fire... rested on each of them'. The Apostles were then able to speak in many different languages. When they left the room, all who heard them were amazed and asked, 'what does this mean?'. Peter provided an explanation that told the people listening all about how Jesus was God's rescue plan.

It is a rescue in that, by Jesus dying and rising back to life, each of us can reconnect with God, our creator. We believe this to be true because we have the Holy Spirit dwelling in and around us which allows us to know and see God's presence in our lives and in the world. This gives us comfort, strength and wisdom to live the life that God would have us live and to face life's challenges. More than that, it gives us hope for what is to come beyond this life.

With all that happens in life and is happening in the world, it seems to me that holding onto hope is very important. Otherwise, it can be difficult to find the inspiration and courage we so often need. This is what faith and our worship of God can help us with.

Pentecost, despite not being as big a festival as Christmas and Easter, is a really important moment in the church calendar. It is a wonderful time to give thanks to God for the hope that we have through what Jesus did and for the presence of the Holy Spirit. If you would like to know more about the hope of Pentecost, you are warmly invited to our Pentecost service on Sunday 24th May or any other of our Sunday and mid-week services around the Parish.

With prayers and best wishes,

The Reverend Dov Whittle, Assistant Curate

Services of Worship

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

Holy Baptism

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

Edward Tomasz Elliott DUNCALF (22nd March 2026)

Rest in Peace

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

David John Broadbent (25th February 2026)

See obituary on page 15

CHURCH DIARY FOR MAY

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 2nd – 9:30-12 noon Community Brunch in the River Room – FREE - all welcome.

Sunday 10th – 10.30 (NB EARLIER START TIME)
DAMASCUS Parish Confirmation Service – please come and support our confirmation candidates – service followed by a Bring and Share Lunch in the River Room – all welcome!

Monday 11th – 19:30 DAMASCUS PCC Meeting in Steventon

Thursday 14th – ASCENSION DAY - 10.30-12noon Community Café – come for coffee/tea and cake. 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. 19:30 Holy Communion for Ascension Day in Appleford.

Saturday 16th – 9.30am-12 noon Churchyard Gardening Party – please come along if you would like to help keep our churchyard tidy

Wednesday 20th – 19:30 DAMASCUS Parish Annual Parish Meeting & Annual Parochial Church Meeting at St Blaise, Milton

Saturday 23rd – 16:00 Movie Matinee in the River Room

Monday 25th – Vicar's Fun Day – see advert for details

Thursday 28th – 10.30-12noon Community Café

Sunday 31st – 10:30 DAMASCUS Parish Holy Communion Service at St Blaise, Milton – all welcome
17:00 Farewell Service for Bishop Steven, the Bishop of Oxford at Christ Church Cathedral



You are Invited!
Helen's Farewell Service
All Saints' Church
Sutton Courtenay
10:30am
Sunday 30th August 2026
Followed by a Bring-and-Share
Lunch in the River Room

Come and help us say thank you and goodbye to the Reverend Canon Helen Kendrick as she retires from full-time parish ministry, after over 23 years in Sutton Courtenay with Appleford and the DAMASCUS Parish.

Everyone is welcome to attend both the celebratory service and the lunch, but to help with catering please RSVP to Alison Budd at alison@pbudd.me or The DAMASCUS Parish Office, All Saints' Church, Sutton Courtenay, Abingdon, OX14 4AE. 01235 847179

If you would like to contribute to Helen's leaving gift then donations can be made online:

Account Name: The DAMASCUS PCC
 Sort Code: 40-52-40. Account Number: 00031419.
 Reference: Helen

Or in cash / cheque (payable to The DAMASCUS PCC) via the Parish Office (address above). Thank you.

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



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

A New Rector for the DAMASCUS Parish

As Helen's ministry draws to a close (please see details of the arrangements for her leaving service above), a team of people are already working on finding her successor.

We would really appreciate thoughts and ideas from the wider Parish on what qualities and skills a new Rector should have.

What are the needs of the Parish?

What would you like their Ministry to look like?

Please respond to Alison Budd – Churchwarden
alison@pbudd.me

or post a response to Alison Budd, c/o The DAMASCUS Parish Office, All Saints' Church, The Green, Sutton Courtenay, Abingdon, OX14 4BD.

Thank-you.

And HOLD THE DATES for

Friday 5th June – 7pm A documentary and talk about Troy by Film Producer Jonathan Drake – with refreshments

AND

Saturday 27th June – 7pm An Evening of Nautical Fun with Kennington Chorale

AND

Sunday 28th June –George Orwell Afternoon. Cream Teas served from 2-5pm. 3pm Act of Commemoration at the grave of Eric Arthur Blair with the George Orwell Society

All three of these events are in aid of:



Community Café in the River Room



Run by the church for the whole community

Thursday 14th & 28th May

from 10:30-12:00 all welcome!

Why not drop by for coffee or tea & delicious homemade cake & conversation and to browse the books or jigsaw puzzles on offer?

Open to all – a good place to meet with friends or make new ones. If you need transport to and from the River

Room please 'phone the Parish Office on 01235 847179

**HELP NEEDED WITH VICAR'S FUN DAY
(Monday 25th May) PLEASE!**

1. Help with setting up from 8.30am
2. Help with clearing up from 4pm
3. Donations of Raffle Prizes
4. Someone to coordinate the raffle prizes
5. Donations of unwanted gifts / nearly new items
6. Volunteers to help run the different stalls on the day

Please contact admin@damascusparish.or.uk if you can help in anyway. And we look forward to seeing as many of you as possible on what will be Helen's last Vicar's Fun Day.

Let's make it better than ever with your help!



**BANK HOLIDAY
MONDAY
25th MAY
VICAR'S FUN DAY
12-4pm**

Bringing the Community Together
and raising money for
All Saints' Church



- Tea & Cakes
- Bouncy Castle & Children's Games
- BBQ & Food served all day at the George and the Swan
- Stalls and Games
- Books & Jigsaws
- Nearly New Plants
- Bottle Tombola & more!
- Abbey Brass
- Raffle
- Abingdon Town Crier
- Sutton Courtenay Village Green (by kind permission of the Parish Council)

If you would like to help please ring the parish office and speak to either Helen or Alison on 01235 847179 or email: rector@damascusparish.org.uk



The next
COMMUNITY BRUNCH
9:30-11:30

in the River Room, All Saints' Church
Saturday 2nd May

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)

**SHIP
AHOY!**



An evening of NAUTICAL fun with
KENNINGTON CHORALE
in support of the All Saints' Tower and Bell Appeal



7pm on Saturday 27th June

All Saints' Church, Sutton Courtenay

- Stanford's Songs of the Fleet**
- G&S Pirates, Maids & Policemen**
- The Mermaid & Drunken Sailors**

FREE ENTRY - DONATIONS ON THE DAY

Feel free to dress up and bring your parrot!



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

Keeping phones out of the classroom

Mobile phones are ubiquitous, and bring many benefits in life, but they also create real problems, particularly within schools. Most schools will have some kind of “phone-free” policy; but how effectively these are enforced varies hugely.

Last month I met with teachers and governors from several schools at Aureus Secondary School to talk about their approach to banning phones in school. They have adopted a particular system, using lockable pouches, but there are other methods used by schools, such as lock boxes.

For most of us a mobile phone is a useful - sometimes indispensable - addition to our lives, but during the school day they distract pupils, disrupt classes, and can lead to poor discipline and lower attainment. There are a number of perceived barriers to implementing a proper phone-free policy in school - phones connected to medical devices, and those used by young carers, for example - but the experience of schools that have embraced a proper ban shows that these problems can be overcome. The benefits of removing the distraction can hugely outweigh the costs, reducing disruption, truancy and bullying.

I’ve already been in touch with other schools to discuss how we can spread best practice to all schools in Thames Valley and will hopefully be launching a new project later this year.

As well as increasing the number of neighbourhood police officers locally, as part of my Education Strategy, every secondary school in Thames Valley now has a named school police officer - and primary schools also have access to local support. The important role these officers play can be both dealing with incidents involving children - as either victims or perpetrators; and also working with teachers to educate children, and parents, about some of the risks facing them.

Matthew Barber
Police and Crime Commissioner



THE FRIENDS OF ALL SAINTS’ CHURCH

THE FRIENDS’ GARDEN PARTY SUNDAY 7th JUNE 2026



The Friends of All Saints’ Church have great pleasure in announcing the date of their annual Garden Party which will be held on Sunday 7th JUNE from 12.30am - 3.30pm in the beautiful garden of East West, All Saints’ Lane, Sutton Courtenay.

We welcome all members of the Sutton Courtenay Community and beyond. There will be a Jazz Band playing and entertainment will be arranged for Children.

A buffet lunch will be served during the afternoon.

Tickets £15 adults £5 children

(Family ticket for two adults & 2 Children £35)

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

MOVIE MATINEES

The next Movie Matinee in the River Room is on
Saturday 23rd May 2026 – 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.

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!

SUTTON COURTENAY TUESDAY CLUB

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 19th MAY**

**Contact us via email at kathyhead809@gmail.com
Or 07766076599**



The events for May are:

- Mon 18th May: AGM & Members' Evening (7.30pm River Room)
- Sun 31st May: Otmoor walk

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 free for under-16s. This gets you the talks and walks above, 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.

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

RAINBOWS

RIVER ROOM

'We play loads of fun games, do activities and challenges and sometimes get badges'
Matilda

Rainbows
Sutton Courtenay Village Hall
Term time Mondays 5-6:15pm

Girls play, learn and have tons of fun
for ages 4 to 7

At Rainbows, we welcome all girls to play, learn and have fun in a creative, safe space for all abilities.

Registered charity number: 309016

Join a local Rainbows group girlguiding.org.uk/joinus

The River Room

Looking for the perfect place for a group meeting, private party, art or exercise class, case conference or team away day?



The River Room is an attractive, light and modern room suitable for any get-together. There is an adjacent well-equipped kitchen, entrance foyer and two WCs (one of which is accessible). It has capacity for 40 seated to 80 standing, and there is a projector, complete A/V system and digital piano.

FOR HIRE

Enquiries: 01235 847179 or admin@damascusparish.org.uk
All Saints' Church, Sutton Courtenay OX14 4AE

The Abingdon DAMASCUS Youth Project

Registered Charity 1098966



Youth & Community Acting Together

Community Sports Day

Wednesday 27th May

5:30pm @ The Recreation Ground

- **Egg and Spoon Race**
- **Obstacle Course**
- **Sack Race**
- **Penalty Shootout**
- **Running Race**

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 & 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.

Lilac near Culham Lock



**HAVING THE BUILDERS IN PART 1:
HOW TO FIND A RELIABLE BUILDER**

So, you've secured planning permission, had construction drawings and a schedule of works prepared, and obtained Building Regulations Conditional Approval. The next step is to get quotes and appoint a builder. At design stage, I always recommend obtaining a budget cost estimate before submitting a planning application. This gives you a benchmark to compare tender prices and negotiate more effectively.

Start by compiling a shortlist of builders through recommendations from friends, family, or neighbours who have undertaken similar projects. Look for contractors with experience in extensions and alterations and who understand UK Building Regulations. Cross-check recommendations with the Federation of Master Builders (FMB), NHBC, and Companies House to confirm the business is registered, financially sound, and has a good trading history. Online platforms like Checkatrade, Rated People, and MyBuilder can help identify names, but use them cautiously. Their checks are limited, they don't assess financial stability, and reviews can be misleading. Always dig deeper by searching online with the contractor's name alongside terms like "complaints", "court case", or "scam".

Aim to invite at least five or six contractors to tender, knowing that only half may respond. Provide identical tender packs, including the approved drawings, the

schedule of works, and a covering letter. In your letter, ask for a fixed-price quote, copies of insurance certificates, details of trade memberships, and Health and Safety policies. Set a deadline—typically 4 to 6 weeks—and ensure builders can visit the site. Keep a record of who came and when.

When tenders are returned, don't just look at price. Consider timescales, availability, and how carefully they reviewed the project. Exclude any who failed to visit the site. From there, you'll likely narrow it down to two or three contractors. Ask detailed questions about site management, waste disposal, and how they handle neighbour concerns. Carry out financial checks to confirm solvency, and verify Public Liability, Employers' Liability, and Contractor's All-Risk insurance. Request references, visit past projects, and speak directly with clients about workmanship, communication, and reliability.

Once you've chosen your builder, turn to contracts. Many homeowners rely on the tender drawings and schedule of works plus any agreed duration and payment terms as the basis of the agreement. However, you may prefer a formal building contract, such as the JCT Homeowner Contract or one from the FMB, for extra security.

With the contract signed and the builder appointed, you're ready to begin. In my next article, I'll discuss how to manage having the builders on site.

Jan Liberadzki BA Arch (Hons), MSc
JLDA (see advert on page 34)

INFORMATION

What will you find?

- Looking after someone
- Living at home
- Community support
- Money matters
- Help with life events
- Keeping fit and well
- Things to do
- Finding a care home

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More information contact
Kathy 07766076599
Kathyhead809@gmail.com

Rest in Peace

David John Broadbent (Dave) who died on 25th February 2026 was born on 26th June 1947 to Kate and John in Oldham and grew up on Saddleworth Moor, near Manchester, along with his brother Peter. At 18 he attended Trent Part Teacher Training College in London. His first job was Head of CDT at the Abbey School in Berinsfield from 1970-1990 and he loved the school and the pupils. After the closure of the Abbey School, he taught at Gillotts School in Henley-on-Thames in the early 90s and became Head of Year in a pastoral role – something he was very well equipped to do. His last teaching job was at St Birinus.

He and Nikki met at the Abbey School and were married in 1978 in Saddleworth. Their son – also David – was born in 1982. Nikki said that they had the happiest fifty years together and she has so many wonderful memories. Dave was a patient, kind, gentle, caring man with a lovely winning smile. He was devoted and loving to his family – Nikki, David, Emma, Tony and Sarah. He was immensely proud of David and all he achieved and the man he has become.

When they moved to 60 Milton Road in 1983 it was almost derelict but both of them could see the potential and in order to make it into the lovely home it is now Dave learned every skill – plumber, electrician and builder – turning his hand to whatever was needed. Nikki thinks he was interested in learning new skills, but he was also reluctant to pay for

someone else to do it! As Nikki said – ‘He created our own perfect little world.’

Dave loved animals – especially dogs – and was amazed at everything their Golden Retriever, Merlin, got up to, especially when he was naughty and refusing to walk. Both Dave and Merlin were well-known amongst the dog walking fraternity of Sutton Courtenay. At home Merlin would often sit on Dave’s lap and watch TV with him. Dave loved big cars, Formula 1, fiddling around with computers, family caravan holidays in Devon and Cornwall, making furniture and filling up all the sheds with anything and everything ‘just in case’. He could be described as a bit of a hoarder! He liked a variety of music, particularly classical but including Queen, the Phantom of the Opera and Abba and his and Nikki’s special song – Mahogany by Diana Ross.

During the last 15 years he survived many serious and life-threatening illnesses as we have heard. He never complained and was always optimistic and thought he would live forever. His favourite saying was ‘live life as normal until one day you can’t’. He did that right up to the last day.

His funeral was held on Monday 30th March in All Saints’ Church, and this is an edited extract taken from the address given at the service by the Reverend Canon Helen Kendrick. Tributes were also given by Tony Guntrip (brother-in-law), David Broadbent (his son) and Chris Bryan (former head teacher of St Birinus).



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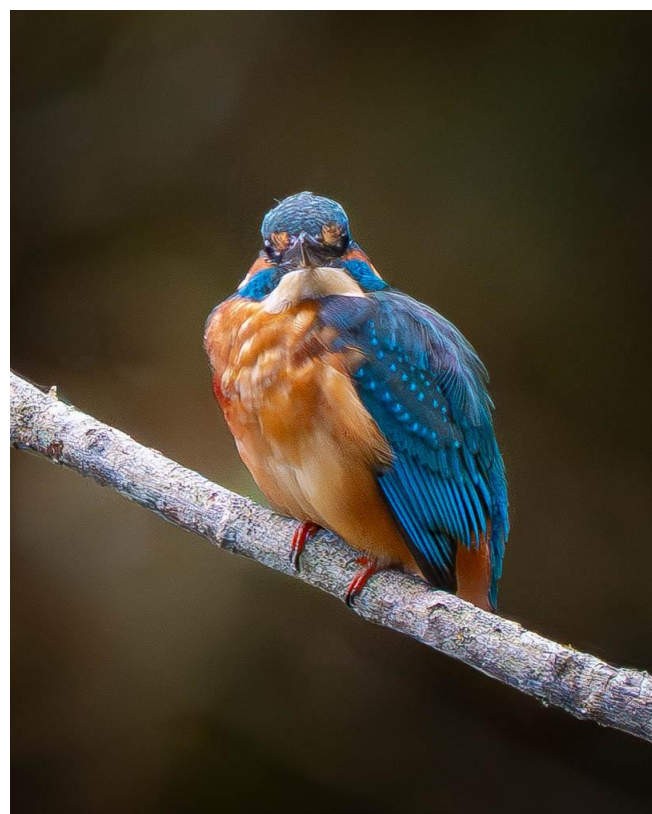
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OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL



A local resident!

Photo of a kingfisher by James Franks

PUZZLES

Word Search Puzzle - Sports

G L L N F S C R C A Z T H E R
 N L O L M O U D Y I E K U S O
 I A N S A G O H P K F I R S U
 F B G M B B N T C T G M D O N
 R T J Y I X E I B S R U L R D
 U E U U X B R S K A S J E C E
 S K M F J C L W A A L R S A R
 F S P I H L D S Q B Y L U L S
 T A O S A S J O D U J A Z I C
 G B I B R A C Q U E T S K K S
 W N T X V T F A F I V E S I S
 O E I E G N I N N U R Z N L G
 N B L I K S W I M M I N G F R
 O I J G K Q B N F K E H C L K
 N T E Z A S W X V T W V U L W

Find the words in the puzzle.

Words can go in any direction.

Words can share letters as they cross over each other.

Baseball

Long Jump

Basketball

Netball

Cricket

Racquets

Fives

Rounders

Football

Rugby

Hurdles

Running

Javelin

Skiing

Judo

Surfing

Kayaking

Swimming

Lacrosse

Tennis

puzzlemaker.discoveryeducation.com

Sudoku

Easy

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

Medium

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

www.puzzles.ca/sudoku



The biennial Dorchester-on-Thames Festival is one of Oxfordshire's leading Festivals, taking place over 10 action-packed Spring days, based in and around the stunning location of Dorchester Abbey.

Since 2005 the Festival has raised £350,000 for Dorchester Abbey and local charities. In 2026 we are partnering with local charity **Be Free Young Carers**. This wonderful charity enables Oxfordshire Young Carers to achieve their full potential by delivering a far-reaching developmental and emotional support network of people and resources in their daily lives, schools and communities.

Highlights in 2026 include **The Kings Singers, Regents Opera, Brian Bilston, the BBC Elstree Concert Band**, the now legendary **abseil down the abbey's 100ft tower, cookery & art workshops, poetry, comedy, folk & jazz nights, a gift & food fair, dog show, fun run** and even a **duck race**.

<https://dorchesterfestival.com>



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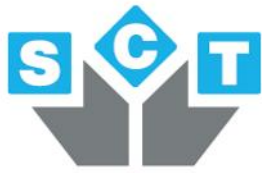
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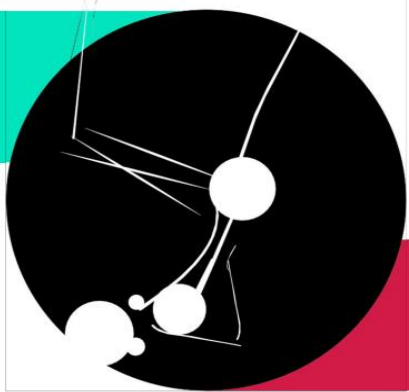
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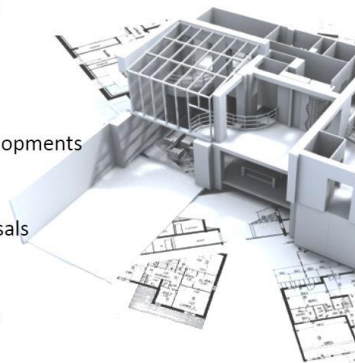


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