

SUTTON COURTENAY NEWS

VOLUME 55 No. 5

JUNE 2026



Photo: James Franks

SUN 31 MAY	DUCK RACE (p 7)	Ginge Brook	14:00
VILLAGE DIARY FOR JUNE			
Tue 2	Parish Council Meeting (p 3)	Village Hall	19:00
Every Wed	ADYP Drop-in	Village Hall	18:30
Thu 4 & 18	WeCare2 (p 11)	River Room	11:15-12:30
Fri 5 & 19	Bridge Afternoon (p 10)	River Room	14:00-17:00
Fri 5	Troy Story (p 10)	River Room	19:00
Sat 6	Community Brunch (p 9)	River Room	9:30-11:30
Every Sat	The Abbey Café (p 5)	The Abbey	10:00-14:00
Sun 7	Garden Party (p 7)	East West	12:30-15:30
Thu 11 & 25	Community Café (p 9)	River Room	10:30-12:00
Thu 11	Together in Stitches (p 10)	River Room	19:30-21:00
Sat 27	Movie Matinée (p 10)	River Room	16:00
Sat 27	Ship Ahoy! (p 11)	The Church	19:00
Sun 28	George Orwell Afternoon (p 6)	River Room	14:30-17:30

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

JULY/AUGUST 2026 SCN DEADLINE – WEDNESDAY 17TH JUNE 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:	07875 649008
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 in Milton, **PLEASE NOTE: the Post Office has moved to 7b, Signal Yard, Park Square, Milton Park OX14 4RR.** Temporary opening times are; Mon-Tue 9:00-17:30, Wed-Thu 8:30-17:30 & Fri 8:30-16:00. It is closed on Saturday & Sunday. Final collection times are; Mon-Thu 16:45 & Fri 15:30. Further afield there are Post Offices in Didcot (TG Jones, 188 The Broadway OX11 8RN) & in Abingdon (5-13 West St. Helen Street OX14 5BL).

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.





2025-26 Parish Council Accounts available for inspection

Every smaller authority in England that either received gross income or incurred gross expenditure exceeding £25,000 must complete Form 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return at the end of each financial year and publish this information.

Sutton Courtenay Parish Council's unaudited Annual Governance and Accountability Return is now available on its website and on the three noticeboards across the parish. In addition, on the website you can view the supporting documents.

The Annual Governance and Accountability Return needs to be reviewed by an external auditor appointed by Smaller Authorities' Audit Appointments Ltd. As it has yet to be reviewed by the appointed auditor, it is subject to change as a result of that review.

Any person interested has the right to inspect and make copies of the accounting records for the financial year to which the audit relates and all books, deeds, contracts, bills, vouchers, receipts and other documents relating to those records must be made available for inspection by any person interested. For the year ended 31st March 2026, these documents will be available on reasonable notice by application to the Clerk (contact details below) commencing on Wednesday 3rd June 2026 and ending on Tuesday 14th July 2026.

Litter Pick

It was great to see young families and some very community-minded teenagers join parish councillors in a village litter pick on Saturday 18th April. There was also the opportunity to get to know fellow villagers over some refreshments afterwards. Here is a picture of the litter collection in a two-hour session.



Thank you to all who came and also to many of you who quietly litter pick on your walks around the village.



Planning

A fair amount of the parish council's planning working party's time is spent on studying and responding to the planning documents issued to discharge the planning conditions associated with the HIF1 project. In particular the focus has been on the high-level Construction Traffic Management Plan. Sutton Courtenay and Appleford have been working together to ensure minimal disruption to the villages resulting from a closure of the B4016 section between Sutton Courtenay and Appleford, and HGV construction traffic being routed through Sutton Courtenay along Drayton Road and Church Street. County Councillor Peter Stevens has been very supportive. There is still a long way to go but there is now a forum where we can have more detailed discussions about impact and any possible mitigations.

Another important step forward is in requesting the County Council to review the way minerals and waste planning applications (FCC and Heidelberg in our case) are processed so that delays are kept to a minimum and the closure dates for operations and restoration are not continuously extended.

Councillor Vacancy

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 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 A full list of meeting dates is published on the noticeboards located outside Hari & Esha News, High Street; near Costcutter, Bradstocks Way; and on the open space at Skylark Fields.

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.



As we approach the end of this half term, there is a real sense of pride and momentum across the school. Children in every year group have shown remarkable growth — not only in their learning, but in their confidence, resilience and independence.

This has been especially evident in Year 6. Their SATs week became a powerful reminder of how far they have come. They approached each day with determination, humour and maturity, supporting one another and showing the kind of character that cannot be measured by a score. Teachers reflected on how their progress shines through in the way they handled challenge: calm, focused and ready to give their best. A heart-dissection workshop led by a consultant from the John Radcliffe Hospital added an exciting scientific highlight, and our post-SATs picnic — generously supported by families — was a joyful way to celebrate their efforts.

Across the school, children have been preparing for Sports Day while deepening their understanding of growth mindset. They have been learning how to challenge themselves, manage nerves and celebrate others, recognising that progress often comes from moments that don't go perfectly. Our collective worship assemblies have echoed these themes, helping children see courage and perseverance as part of everyday learning.

Nursery children enjoyed a wonderful Teddy Bear Picnic trip to Sutton Courtenay Environmental Education Centre. They were fortunate to have a dry, sunny day, and the leaders there ensured the experience was rich with play and discovery. The children created ponds for their bears, searched for minibeasts as a food source, and learned about deforestation through a lively game where the “bears” had to find shelter as the number of “trees” slowly disappeared. They climbed, explored musical instruments, built dens and shared lunch in the woods with their bears. In the afternoon, they mixed herbs to make “bear smoothies” and ended the day with an exciting bear hunt using binoculars. It was a day full of imagination, teamwork and joy.

Our Year 1 and 2 pupils had an equally memorable Forest Explorers adventure at Hill End. They began with a peaceful woodland walk before diving into imaginative play — climbing trees, building shelters and working together with natural materials. A sudden burst of heavy rain (and even a brief spell of hail) didn't dampen their spirits; instead, it became part of the adventure. The children explored a stream, tried pond dipping and continued their shelter building with enthusiasm and resilience. Some of the photos from the day were taken by the children themselves, giving us a lovely glimpse into the experience through their eyes.

Safety and responsibility have also been key themes this month. Year 5 and 6 pupils took part in Fire and Road Safety workshops, followed by Bikeability, developing confidence and awareness that will stay with them long after primary school.

As we look ahead, the final weeks of term promise plenty of celebration — Sports Day, enrichment activities and the small but meaningful moments that make school life special. One Year 6 pupil summed it up beautifully: *“When things feel hard, it doesn't mean I can't do it. It just means I'm learning.”*

For regular snapshots of school life, including photos from trips and events, please follow our Facebook page: www.facebook.com/suttoncourtenayprimary

Raluca Chende

Headteacher, Sutton Courtenay CofE Primary School
office@sutton-courtenay.school
Telephone: 01235 848333



THE ABBEY, SUTTON COURTENAY

Saturday Talks at the Abbey

Join us at the Abbey on Saturday 6th June, from 11am to 1pm, to discover the ancient Christian practice of Lectio Divina ('sacred reading'). Through a four-step, meditative approach to scripture, open yourself to deeper spiritual insight. Led by former Abbey trustee Adrian Rance-McGregor, this workshop invites you to reconnect with Christianity's rich contemplative traditions.

On Saturday 13th June, we will be pleased to welcome for the first time Vimla Chendriah, who lives in Sutton Courtenay, for an engaging and interactive talk exploring the foundations of Ayurveda, the ancient holistic healing system. This session offers practical insights into how we can better understand ourselves, our health and our connection to the natural world. Vimla is the founder of VedaSante Health, speaker, published author, Ayurvedic and Mindfulness practitioner, a former NHS health clinician and corporate professional.

You need to book for these two events on Eventbrite. You will find more details on our website and social media pages.

We're open to approaches too, so please contact us if you have an idea for a suitable talk. These events will be held in the Library from 11am to 1pm on Saturdays.

Summersong at the Abbey

Join us for an uplifting afternoon of harmony singing in the stunning Great Hall.

After three sold-out events, we're thrilled to welcome back **Emily Marshall, Elena Harris and Holly Taylor-Zuntz**: three local choir leaders with different musical flavours joining forces to share songs they love. Together they'll create a rich and varied session of harmony singing.

All songs are taught **by ear in the Natural Voice tradition**, so there's no need to read music. Whether you're a seasoned singer or completely new to group singing, everyone is welcome to join this relaxed and inspiring afternoon of shared song.

Please check how to book on our website.

Holistic Structured Writing Retreat

Following the success of our first writing retreat, we're excited to announce a second edition from Monday 20th July to Wednesday 22nd July 2026. You don't need to be an academic or a professional writer to attend. This structured writing retreat is open to all and combines yoga sessions, nature walks and delicious vegetarian meals, all designed to provide you with an opportunity to write in a supportive, beautiful, peaceful and productive environment.

The retreat will be facilitated by Alison Eardley and Tina Cartwright. Alison is an academic and a trained writing retreat facilitator who has been running structured writing retreats for 9 years. Tina is a qualified yoga instructor and is also an academic. Her yoga practice is based on Hatha Yoga. Yoga sessions at the retreats will suit everyone from absolute beginners to regular practitioners. More info on our website.

Labyrinth Day

We have a very special afternoon coming up on 4th July, welcoming two distinguished musicians, Richard Boothby and Kristiina Watt, both celebrated for their medieval, Renaissance and Baroque repertoire. We will also be exploring the meaning and significance of labyrinths, including:

- the story of the Abbey's own labyrinth
- the labyrinth as support for contemplation
- the geometry of labyrinths
- an 18th century musical reflection on labyrinths

Please join us for a fascinating day of "world-class music" (Richard Boothby is co-founder of the internationally acclaimed viol ensemble Fretwork) and an exploration of the labyrinth, both as a global phenomenon and as a facet of the Abbey's own story.


The Abbey Café

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

We are open every Saturday from 10 am to 2pm. The café may occasionally close due to scheduled retreats. We recommend you check our website and social media for any updates.

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



THE ABBEY Office Opening Times: - 9AM - 1PM weekdays



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

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



This last month has been full of interesting constituency visits, advice surgeries with constituents, and busy days campaigning for change in Parliament.

Speaking in debates helps create change for local people and our community. I attended two e-petition debates that a significant number of constituents had signed to represent their views and concerns on maternity services and animal testing. At Prime Minister's Questions I challenged Keir Starmer on social and affordable housing, as new developments in the constituency continue to price out local people and young first-time buyers. The Government needs to support local councils to deliver truly affordable homes, alongside vital infrastructure. In addition, I spoke about the many cases of delayed licence renewal and medical assessments, calling for improvements to the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA).

I was proud to represent the Wantage-based charity SUDEP Action in my debate on sudden and unexpected death in epilepsy (SUDEP) prevention. Founded by five women, the charity works tirelessly to support bereaved families and raise awareness. Multiple other MPs attended the debate, sharing their own constituents' stories and highlighting the difficulties families have faced. The minister responded by promising to meet with me, and I look forward to discussing the next steps the Government needs to take.

At a Wantage Chamber of Commerce event, local Wantage businesses raised the impact of changes to business rates, soaring energy costs and changes to employment legislation on their viability. Two weeks later, I made their voices heard to the treasury minister in parliament and will continue to push for a fairer deal for our local businesses.

I also had the pleasure of visiting RAW Workshop, a social enterprise manufacturing high-quality furniture. The organisation channels their profits into their youth training schemes, supporting young people facing mental health and educational barriers, and adults re-entering the workforce. On a sunny day in Wallingford, I attended KatieFest, an inclusive rugby tournament for children and adults with special educational needs and disabilities, chatting with wonderful charities and parents. At the Didcot Powerhouse Fund Impact event, we celebrated the fantastic work of local groups and organisations for Didcot and the surrounding areas. It is a pleasure to spend time with so many people making a meaningful contribution to their neighbours and our communities.

This month, my hardworking team and I passed the milestone of 15,000 individual cases handled since I was elected. 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.

Ollly Glover, MP for Didcot and Want

SC (NATIONAL POWER) TRUST



Sutton Courtenay (National Power) Trust
REGISTERED CHARITY 1075049

TAKE A LOOK - Website Launched!

The Trust has recently launched its first website www.scnpt.org.uk/ making it easier to find out more about the Trust and to enquire about applying for a grant.

The Trust can make grants for the benefit of people living in Sutton Courtenay or for projects which benefit Sutton Courtenay. The grants may be made for charitable purposes including to those experiencing financial difficulties; help where there is illness; advancing education and much more.

You can still request a callback from the Clerk 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, by emailing Clare at clerk.scnpt@gmail.com.

All enquiries will be treated in absolute confidence.

George Orwell Afternoon

Sunday 28th June 2026



Cream Teas - 2:30-5:30pm.

£5 per person

**3pm - Act of Commemoration at
the Grave of Eric Arthur Blair with
the Orwell Society**

**The River Room
All Saints' Church**

Sutton Courtenay, OX14 4AE

All welcome!

DISTRICT & COUNTY COUNCILLOR

Firstly, please accept my apologies for not providing an update last month.

Since my last report, I have been in close dialogue with Thames Water on a number of issues. The sewage spill from Abingdon Sewage Treatment Works into the ditch next to Peep'o'Day Lane has been cleared up, and I met the environmental expert to check the water. I seconded a motion at district council to request more targeted consultation on the new mega-reservoir (SESRO aka White Horse Reservoir) where insufficient analysis and information has been provided to date; particularly on the potential impact of the structure on local flooding, the, potentially massive, impact of any emergency discharge, and the impact of over ten years of construction on our local daily lives. The motion was universally carried.

On the other hand, Thames Water have agreed a solution to reinstating Hobby Horse Lane byway between Sutton Courtenay (after the National Cycle Route 5 junction to Didcot) and Appleford, which they and FCC have agreed to repair, and I am hopeful that the work will be completed this summer in the dry months, before it becomes a bog again next Autumn. This would be fantastic as it has taken many years to find and agree a solution.

Preparatory work has started on the new HIF1 road, which will run from A34 Milton interchange bypassing Didcot and crossing the Thames at Culham, around Clifton Hampden and up to the Golden Balls roundabout, relieving pressure on the existing Thames River crossing and enabling much easier access to the A34, thus reducing the rat runs through our villages. The build will take two years, as crossing a flood plain and the river is complex. I am working closely with the project team to minimise any disruption and mitigate any road closures. Our MP, Olly Glover is also helping with any issues. I am hoping that we can secure extra train and bus services, particularly for Appleford.

On local government reorganisation, a decision is expected around July, to whether the new unitary council will be Oxfordshire or Ridgeway combined with West Berkshire. Whichever way, it will mean all council services are delivered by one body with one locally elected representative which will reduce confusion about who is accountable for what services.

Given all the work locally for the new road, the Bridge Farm quarry, the waste facilities, and local solar and battery applications, I am pressing the council to brush off the vision for our local area for its restoration after the work has completed to make sure the environment is better and stands to gain in biodiversity, walking, cycling and leisure facilities after 2030. An independent review has been agreed prompted by our parish councils to prevent restoration timings being allowed to drift out any further.

Lastly, I am pleased to say that we have found budget and resource for installing a new zebra crossing at the Appleford and Abingdon Road T junction next to the Sutton Courtenay bridge, which will make life much safer for the many children and parents who use this route daily to reach Culham Nursery, Europa School and beyond. I am pressing for this work to be completed this financial year after the work at the top end making the Tollgate Road A415 junction safer for pedestrians and cyclists.

That's it for now, best regards

Peter Stevens, Councillor

THE FRIENDS OF ALL SAINTS' CHURCH

THE FRIENDS' GARDEN PARTY

SUNDAY 7th JUNE 2026

VENUE: East West, All Saints' Lane
Sutton Courtenay OX14 4AG



Contact Sue Jenkins at sjenkins33@aol.com or ring
07885 437343 for further details



DUCK RACE

31st May
Sutton Courtenay

- 14.00 Ducks go on sale £3
- 15.00 The Race!
- Small prize for the top racer ducks
- Cake stall

FIND US HERE!



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

'If you want to know how well a person understands Christianity, find out how much they make of the thought of being God's child & having God as their Father.' (JI Packer, *Knowing God*)

This month we celebrate the importance of fathers on Father's Day. This is often overshadowed by the commercial explosion of 'Mother's Day' earlier in the year. And, unlike Mothering Sunday, this doesn't have a distinctly Christian origin. However, it does provide an opportunity to celebrate God's Fatherhood and what it means for us.

I am very fortunate to have my Father still alive aged 89, and he is always one of my biggest supporters and encouragers. Whilst human fathers may not be perfect and some of us may have difficult relationships with our own fathers the relationship between God and Jesus is something we can all aspire to and learn from. At His baptism, when Jesus came out of the water we are told by the Gospel writer, Matthew that: *'heaven was opened, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on Him. And a voice from heaven said, 'This is my Son, whom I love; with Him I am well pleased.'* So, what do we learn about Jesus' relationship with His Father, our relationship with God and the role of fathers?

The Father's presence

When Jesus was baptised, the Father was present in the Holy Spirit. It's the Spirit who enables us to address God as daddy ('abba', Galatians 4:6) in an intimate way. God is present with us and understands our joys and sorrows, fears and trials. Ideally Dads should relate to their children like this.

The Father's love

The Father described His Son as *'beloved'*; like us, Jesus was the subject of God's unconditional love. Dads should strive to assure their children of their unconditional love.

The Father's pleasure

The Father tells Jesus that He is *'well pleased'* with Him, as He embarked on His public ministry. We need to hear this as well, especially when we feel that we are disappointing God or letting Him down. We should also be aware of the effect of our words spoken to our children. Dads should be using every opportunity to encourage, affirm and demonstrate their pleasure in their children.

So, this Father's Day let's celebrate and give thanks for our Dads and make sure they know how much we appreciate them and all that they do for us. And also remember to pray for those who have difficult relationships with their Fathers and those who are unable to be part of their children's lives.

With love and prayers, Helen. The Reverend Helen Kendrick, Rector of the DAMASCUS Parish

CHURCH DIARY FOR JUNE

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.

Friday 5th – 19:00 A special screening of TROY STORY – the truth behind the myth of the Trojan War – FREE ENTRY – Donations for the Sutton Courtenay Tower and Bells Appeal

Sunday 7th – 12:30-3.30pm Friends of All Saints' Church, Garden Party. Tickets (£15 adults, £5 children) from sjjenkins33@aol.com

Monday 15th – 19:30 Sutton Courtenay Local Church Committee

Saturday 27th – 19:00 Ship Ahoy! An evening of nautical fun with Kennington Chorale FREE ENTRY – donations to the Sutton Courtenay Tower and Bells Appeal

CHURCH DIARY FOR JULY

Sunday 19th – 18:00 Hymns and Pimms on a Summer's Evening – ENTRY FREE – donations welcome to the Sutton Courtenay Tower and Bells Appeal – you choose the hymns and we all sing them!

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:

Charlie Judd BOURTON (3rd May 2026)

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:

Malcolm ROSS (16th March 2026)

See obituary on page 14

And the following whose ashes were interred in the churchyard:

Megan Elizabeth DEW (17th April 2026)

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 elsewhere in this magazine), 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.



**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 fulltime 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 by

31st July to:

Alison Budd

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 on line:

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) by **21st August.**

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



Image by Freepik

Image by pressfoto on freepik

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

Community Café in the River Room



Run by the church for the whole community

Thursday 11th & 25th June

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



The next
COMMUNITY BRUNCH
9:30-11:30

in the River Room, All Saints' Church
Saturday 6th June

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)

BRIDGE AFTERNOONS

Come and play bridge in the River Room from 2-5pm with a cup of tea & a piece of cake - £5

Next sessions: Fri 5th & 19th June 2026

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.

Please Note: There will be no Bridge Club in July and August

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!

MOVIE MATINEES

The next Movie Matinee in the River Room is on **Saturday 27th June 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.

Hymns and Pimms

on a Summer’s Evening



Join us for a delightful evening of favourite hymns and refreshing Pimms

Date: Sunday 19th July 2026



Time: 18:00

Venue: All Saints’ Church, Sutton Courtenay



Entry is free, but donations welcome towards the Tower and Bells Appeal, helping to upgrade the interior of the church tower and to restore the bells for generations to come.

Bring your friends and family—everyone is welcome!

You will be invited to drop the number of your favourite hymn into a hat and to wait and see if it is picked and then sing along with gusto. Or you can just enjoy the music, soak up the summer atmosphere, and raise a glass for a good cause. More information from admin@damascusparish.org.uk



A special screening of...

River Room

All Saints’ Church

Sutton Courtenay

FREE ENTRY

Refreshments available

Donations welcome



Is there truth behind the myth of the Trojan War?

Troy Story explores the latest archaeology and science on one of history’s most enduring mysteries: did the Trojan War really happen?

In 1874 Heinrich Schliemann announced he had found the legendary city of Troy and caused a sensation. More than 150 years later, what can we now say is the truth behind the myth?

Series Creator, Executive Producer and Sutton Courtenay resident Jonathan Drake, just happens to have had a lifelong obsession with the subject of the Trojan War in legend and history...and will be presenting the series (2 episodes of 45 minutes each) along with a Q&A.



**Friday 5th June
19:00**

And HOLD THE DATES for

**Cream Teas in August
(2nd, 9th, 16th & 23rd)**

2.30pm to 5.30pm

£5 per person

The River Room, All Saints’ Church





Victims of romance fraud lost more than £102 million last year, as criminals continue to exploit online relationships to manipulate people into transferring money

Analysis shows people aged 55 to 74 experienced the greatest financial losses, accounting for almost half of the total amount stolen. Although men submitted a higher number of reports overall, women experienced higher individual losses, making up just over 40 per cent of the total value reported.

Romance fraud remains closely linked to online platforms, particularly social media and dating sites, where offenders can create convincing false identities. Investigators are also seeing increased use of AI-generated images and messages to support these profiles. In many cases, it is also linked to fake investment opportunities, including cryptocurrency, increasing the financial risk to victims.

As part of this campaign, we are urging the public to stay cautious when forming relationships online and to recognise the warning signs:

- Be cautious of individuals who develop relationships very quickly or express strong feelings early on
- Be wary of excuses not to meet in person or to avoid live video calls
- Never send money, cryptocurrency or gift cards to someone you have not met face-to-face
- Be alert to requests linked to investments, medical emergencies or travel costs
- Speak to a trusted friend or family member if something feels unusual or pressured

If you think that you have been targeted, please report it to Report Fraud at www.reportfraud.police.uk or by calling 0300 123 2040.

If money has already been transferred, you should contact your bank immediately.



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

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!



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**

The efforts of Sutton Courtney residents, with support from the Nordic Walking Group and Appleford Council, to address the very poor condition of Hobbyhorse Lane (HHL), a public right of way (Byway Open to All Traffic - BOAT), have resulted in an agreement for remediation works. This involves the landowner, FCC (the Waste Management Company), Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) and Thames Water.

At the FCC Heidelberg Materials Community Liaison Group Meeting with Appleford and Sutton Courtenay, 11 May 2026, it was reported that the FCC water management plan has been implemented to prevent water from flowing onto HHL. OCC provided specifications for the BOAT to Thames Water and FCC will remove the mud from the lane and provide drainage gullies to ensure that surface water on the lane can, in future, drain in to the ditch on the south side. Thames Water will then restore the damaged section to OCC specifications. Work is planned for this summer, 2026.

In 2018, Thames Water excavated a concrete strip along Hobbyhorse Lane to install a water pipe but neglected to restore the path. They have now agreed to a programme of reinstatement work with OCC and the landowner FCC. This involves FCC completing surface water management on their land north of Hobbyhorse Lane.

For years, FCC allowed surface water to be discharged directly onto the public right of way. They have now agreed to manage this surface water and prevent further damage to Hobbyhorse Lane.

This will enable Thames Water to restore the path, providing an alternative route for cyclists, walkers and equestrians between Sutton Courtney and Appleford.

This is a much-needed alternative for people travelling between the villages without using cars, particularly given the disruption that will be caused by the HIF1 construction works. Pedestrians, cyclists and equestrians have the right to cross at the Appleford level crossing, it is a public right of way but it is a Bridleway so there is no right to drive a car across the crossing.

Thames Water, having initially ignored complaints in 2018/19, has been very supportive of our efforts to reinstate Hobbyhorse Lane since the issue was raised with them again two years ago.

Regards,
Simon Lazare

10 Top Tips to Help Improve Your Car's Fuel Economy

Worried about the cost of fuel?

Here are some great ways to easily reduce your costs.

Think ahead while driving

A key part of fuel economy is simply down to the way you drive your car. If you are harsh on the accelerator and sharp on the brakes, your vehicle will use noticeably more fuel.

Change to higher gears earlier

Even if you have an automatic car, you can change up manually with the gear shifter or even with paddles on the steering wheel in some cases.

Check your car's tyre pressures are correct

Fuel economy aside, it's a good idea to regularly check your car's tyre pressures to ensure you're not compromising safety by driving around on underinflated tyres.

Don't drive with the windows open

It creates more drag, which essentially means the car has to work harder to get up to speed, thereby using more fuel in the process. The same applies if you have an open sunroof.

Only use air conditioning when needed

Be mindful that using your car's air conditioning or climate control puts a greater strain on the engine and subsequently uses more fuel. The same also applies to other electrical appliances in the car, such as heated seats and demisters.

Empty your car of any unnecessary weight

The more weight in your car, the more fuel will be required to get it up to speed.

Keep your car serviced

A newly serviced car with new oil and clean filters will run more efficiently and mean less fuel needs to be used.

Avoid idling and use stop/start

Keeping your car's engine running while stopped for any length of time is not only bad for the environment, but it also means you will use more fuel too, harming fuel economy significantly.

Consider using cruise control

This helps to keep the car at a constant set speed, helping the engine to run at similar revs, and not forcing any sudden extra power to be needed, which would result in more fuel being used.

Avoid making any trips that could be done by walking or cycling

*Article taken from: The AA
(www.theaa.com/cars/advice/top-tips)*

WORDSEARCH

The topic is:
Types of WINE

T Y E L J M C F A V A C O J P
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 D Q L G J X R X I A A A P J E
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| CHAMPAGNE | PORT |
| CHARDONAY | PROSECCO |
| GRENACHE | RIESLING |
| MADEIRA | SAUTERNE |
| MALBEC | SEMILLON |
| MARSANNE | SHERRY |
| MERLOT | SHIRAZ |
| MUSCAT | ZINFANDEL |

Shutting Down Criminal Businesses

Barber shops with no customers; car washes turning over hundreds of thousands of pounds, nail bars that only take cash - these can be signs of criminal businesses acting in plain sight.

I have long been working on a change in the law to increase police powers to issue closure notices. A closure notice is a legal instrument issued by the police or local authorities prohibiting access to premises for up to 48 hours to cease nuisance or illegal activity. It mandates immediate closure, the breaching of which is a criminal offence. Closure notices are an important tool in disrupting criminal activity on our high streets, but current powers do not go far enough.

With the support of the Shadow Policing Minister and Members of the House of Lords, I drafted an amendment to the Crime and Policing Bill which would have strengthened the powers of the Police, local councils and the courts to shut down criminal businesses. This would have seen the time limit attached to closure notices extended to 7 days and give the courts the power to shut businesses participating in criminal activity indefinitely. Disappointingly, this amendment was blocked by the Government despite cross-party support. The Crime and Policing Bill has now received Royal Assent and become law, but without this change it is a real missed opportunity.

There is a ray of hope, however. Although not enough MPs backed my amendment, the Government has agreed to consult on implementing similar changes in the future. I have written to the Policing Minister to urge her to act swiftly to put more power in the hands of the police to tackle illegal activity and stand up for law-abiding businesses.

This is about delivering more than temporary disruption. By increasing police powers, we can more effectively tackle criminality; clearing up our high streets and ensuring local communities are protected.

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

Rest in Peace

Malcolm Ross who died on 16th March 2026 was born on 31st August 1942 and grew up in Elland, Yorkshire, along with his two sisters, Ann and Kathleen. He had a full and rich life – highlights of which his son, James, shared at his funeral - a life of love and service to his family, the world of nursing and the wider community. Malcolm passed the 11+ which enabled him to go to Grammar School. Rather than going onto Sixth Form he did a variety of jobs before becoming a Student Nurse at a Psychiatric Hospital in Sussex. It was there he met Brenda and they were married in 1964. He was a hands-on Dad to his two children, James and Alison, and eventually became a proud grandfather of six grandchildren. The family moved to Abingdon, and he rose to be the Chief Nursing Officer for Oxfordshire – a position he held for many years – during which time he worked with Oxford Brookes University to move all nurse training to a degree course to ensure that nurses would have the same professional recognition as other professions. His contribution to Nursing was recognized by the award of an OBE and a Fellowship of the Royal College of Nursing.

From an early age, inventing shows with a friend who had a toy theatre and puppets, Malcolm had a love of the theatre. He first appeared on stage was with the Brighthouse Children's Theatre and he appeared as Eliza Doolittle in Pygmalion whilst at school! He became a mainstay of Abingdon Drama Club – where he spent many years playing the romantic lead and, later, several Dames, including one memorable occasion when he wore a pink tutu. He went on to direct a number of plays and worked backstage for many, many productions, as well as being Treasurer for the Club. He was a skilled at sewing and knitting and could turn his hand to almost any practical skill required. Brass band music was a life-long passion, and he was heavily involved in Abbey Brass. He loved teaching individuals to play. In later life he learnt how to cook – making legendary cakes and puddings – and found real joy in cooking for his family and friends.



Brought up as a Methodist, Malcolm's faith was re-awakened when he and Brenda began attending All Saints' Church. After Brenda's death from dementia, Malcolm continued to attend, did an Alpha Course and the church became an increasingly important part of his life as he became actively involved – as the website designer, the local cashier (counting all the collections) and during lockdown using his technical skills to help us record and livestream our services. All this alongside all his other activities and interests – from birdwatching to the Freemasons – from playing golf to supporting Leeds United. He was unwaveringly kind and generous with his time and his talents – whether in the mastery of technology or finance – from knitting to mending – he would see a need and offer to fulfil it. He was very much a man of action and deeds, not just fine words.

After Brenda's death from dementia – having been lovingly cared for by Malcolm - it was through church that he met and subsequently married Alex in December 2024. He once said how immensely fortunate he was in finding such great joy in true companionship with two such amazing women in his life. Malcolm and Alex had some extremely happy – if brief - years together. Malcolm will be greatly missed by Alex, his family and all the many friends he made along the way who filled All Saints' Church on Monday 27th April 2026 for his funeral. *This is an edited extract of the tribute given at his funeral by his son James and the address given by the Reverend Canon Helen Kendrick.*



Photo: James Franks

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

Garden Opening for Flexicare



Sunday 7th June 1pm-5pm
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Entrance free
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Taken from www.puzzles.ca/sudoku (1098)

**HAVING THE BUILDERS IN PART 2:
MANAGING THE JOB**

You've chosen your builder, signed a formal contract, and agreed the price, duration, payment schedule, and start date. Even with everything in writing, construction projects are rarely straightforward. Delays and unexpected problems are almost inevitable, but good planning and management can help keep things on track.

Before work begins, your builder should prepare a construction programme—ideally a bar chart showing the project timeline. Go through this in detail, discussing how the work will be managed, any potential disruptions, and safety measures. Clarify responsibilities to avoid confusion, and build in extra time for weather delays. Confirm which areas of your home will be worked on, when utilities may be disrupted, and whether parts of the property will be uninhabitable. Check your home insurance to ensure it covers building work.

Good preparation should also consider safety and dust control. Temporary partitions, doors, or barriers can separate construction zones from living areas, keeping dust contained and preventing children or pets from entering dangerous areas. Clearly mark off-limits spaces and insist that access points are kept closed when not in use.

Protect your belongings. Move furniture and valuables completely out of work areas—dust sheets are not enough. Store small valuables and documents off-site or in a locked safe. If builders will be working in your home while you're

away, limit access to keys, consider installing security cameras, and change the locks once the work is complete.

Expect disruption once the job begins: builders, plumbers, and electricians will be coming and going, noise, and dust will be everywhere. Large projects can be less stressful if you move out temporarily—perhaps into a rented static caravan if space allows. This gives builders space to work efficiently and spares you the daily upheaval. Help progress by clearing space for material storage, skip access, and deliveries.

You are entitled to expect professionalism. Builders should arrive on time, work to the agreed schedule, and keep the site tidy. Good tradespeople minimise disruption and deal with problems quickly and face to face. Hold regular progress meetings—weekly or fortnightly—to review the programme, adjust schedules, and resolve issues early. Treat the construction schedule as a living document—flexible enough to adapt, but firm enough to keep work on track. When milestones are reached, recognise the builder's hard work and efforts—it helps keep morale up and motivation high.

At completion, inspect the work thoroughly. Check everything against the agreed standards and specifications, and deal promptly with any snags. Once satisfied, make the final payment, update your home insurance, and enjoy your transformed home.

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





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Phone Florence Hayden on 847422 with questions or to arrange viewing (in the village)

(Apologies: incorrect phone number published last month!)



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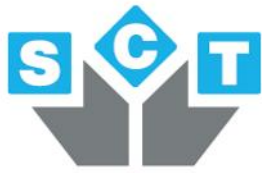
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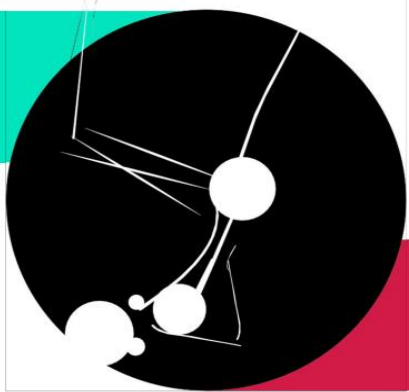
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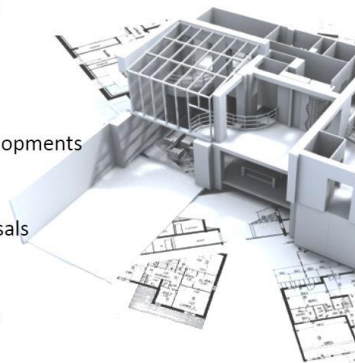


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