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# PARISH NOTES



Carol Cross

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hard work.

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(Hillwerke Recreational Trust Reg Charity No. 279656)

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or visit our website [www.kbv.org](http://www.kbv.org) where you will also find a full  
description of the facilities we can offer plus details of activities  
currently taking place in the hall.



## USEFUL PHONE NUMBERS

CAB Local office <a href="http://www.adviceguide.org.uk">www.adviceguide.org.uk</a>	01844 214827
Chinnor Village Centre	01844 353733
Church Tower, Aston Rowant: R Newton	01844 352926
Dial-a-ride (for people with mobility problems)	01869 327048
Highways Pothole Hotline	0845 3101111
Highways Street Light Hotline	0800 317802
Library-Chinnor	01844 351721
Oil Syndicate <a href="mailto:adam.bernstein@mac.com">adam.bernstein@mac.com</a> .	01844 350440
Oxon County Council <a href="http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk">www.oxfordshire.gov.uk</a>	01865 792422
Police-Thame (Thames Valley)	101 or 999
Poor's Hillock Allotments: Francesca Musaeus <a href="mailto:francesca.musaeus@hotmail.com">francesca.musaeus@hotmail.com</a>	
Porch: S Thompson	01844 351334
Porch: J Rooksby	01844 352320
Post office-Chinnor	01844 351214
Schools:	
Aston Rowant C of E School	01844 351671
Icknield Community College Watlington	01491 612691
Lord Williams School Thame	01844 210510
Mill Lane School Chinnor	01844 352106
St Andrew's C of E, Chinnor	01844 351353
SODC Main Customer Services	01235 422422
SODC Refuse/Recycling	03000 610610
SODC Planning	01235 422600
Reporting Fly-tipping	03000 610610
SODC Environmental Department	01235 422403
Chinnor u3a [Chair]	07711 337243
Village Hall Hire/Bookings: Andrea Tinson	<a href="mailto:kbvhall@gmail.com">kbvhall@gmail.com</a>

## PARISH NOTES

Please get in touch if you have anything you think we could feature in future issues of the Parish Notes: If you have a new neighbour, or would like to announce any births, marriages or deaths. Maybe you have an interesting story about the area or someone who lives in the area. It would also be great to feature photos and illustrations – I'm always looking for pictures to add to the pages! All ideas welcome.

If you have anything you'd like to see in the next issue please get in touch.  
**Copy deadline for the December/January issue is 10th December.**  
Email: [sallyparishnotes@gmail.com](mailto:sallyparishnotes@gmail.com)

# PARISH COUNCIL & LOCAL CONTACTS

## Parish Website

[www.astonrowantparishcouncil.gov.uk](http://www.astonrowantparishcouncil.gov.uk)

## Parish Clerk

Tracy Lambourne

[clerk@astonrowantparishcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@astonrowantparishcouncil.gov.uk)

01844 353989

## Parish Councillors:

Chairman Matthew Day

[matthew.day@astonrowantparishcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:matthew.day@astonrowantparishcouncil.gov.uk)

07940 752446

Vice Chairman Adam Bernstein

[adam.bernstein@astonrowantparishcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:adam.bernstein@astonrowantparishcouncil.gov.uk)

07785 905120

Councillor Helen Birks

[helen.birks@astonrowantparishcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:helen.birks@astonrowantparishcouncil.gov.uk)

07921 840360

Councillor Deborah Chaplin

[deborah.chaplin@astonrowantparishcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:deborah.chaplin@astonrowantparishcouncil.gov.uk)

01844 354648

Councillor Jason Clark-Hodgson

[jason.clark-hodgson@astonrowantparishcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:jason.clark-hodgson@astonrowantparishcouncil.gov.uk)

07901 790749

Councillor Trelawney Hill, Aston Rowant

[trelawney.hill@astonrowantparishcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:trelawney.hill@astonrowantparishcouncil.gov.uk)

01844 353051

Councillor Joanne Hunt

[joanne.hunt@astonrowantparishcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:joanne.hunt@astonrowantparishcouncil.gov.uk)

07825 789251

## District Councillors:

Ali Gordon-Creed

[ali.gordon-creed@southoxon.gov.uk](mailto:ali.gordon-creed@southoxon.gov.uk)

Ed Sadler

07842 602398

[ed.sadler@southoxon.gov.uk](mailto:ed.sadler@southoxon.gov.uk)

## County Councillor

Kate Gregory

[kate.gregory@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:kate.gregory@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

Nigel Champken-Woods

[nigel.champken-woods@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:nigel.champken-woods@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

## MP

John Howell

01491 612852

[howelljm@parliament.uk](mailto:howelljm@parliament.uk)

## Police Community Support Office

tel: 101

[ThameHPT@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk](mailto:ThameHPT@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk)

## Village Hall Hire/Bookings

Andrea Tinson

07391 139707

[bookings@kbvh.org](mailto:bookings@kbvh.org)

## Play Area

Tracy Lambourne 01844 353989

[clerk@astonrowantparishcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@astonrowantparishcouncil.gov.uk)

## Aston Rowant Cricket Club Chairman

Josh Smith

07894 201 929

[chairman@astonrowantcc.com](mailto:chairman@astonrowantcc.com)

## LETTER FROM JOHN HOWELL MP

Just as schools were due to return, and the sunshine that many had been longing for came, we hit the problem of the safety of school buildings due to concerns over reinforced autoclaved aerated concrete (RAAC). The potential disruption to education and the timing of the problem caused inevitable and understandable frustration. The Department for Education had been working to identify buildings which may have RAAC over the last year but the problem escalated with cases that came to light over the summer and at the end of all establishments with buildings with RAAC confirmed by a surveyor were advised to take the affected space out of use until suitable mitigations have been put in place. I think that this was a sensible precautionary step to protect the safety of everyone whilst adequate mitigations are being put in place. Whilst the concern was widespread thankfully once the list of affected places was published I was relieved to see that no schools in this constituency were affected.

Following the media coverage of the introduction of Ultra Low Emission Zones (ULEZ) I received a number of emails from constituents raising concerns on what is being seen by some as a war on motorists. I appreciate that a number of residents in this area do travel to London on a regular basis. The ULEZ in London means that for those who do not have a compatible vehicle there is now a charge of £12.50 a day to drive in these zones. As we have seen in the High Court challenge the size of the zone and the unavoidable negative economic impact on some residents makes the scheme contentious. The decision to introduce the scheme was entirely that of the Mayor of London and media reports of him seeking to hide research from Imperial College that questioned the beneficial environmental impact of the scheme simply led to the claims that it is nothing more than an anti-motorist cash cow.

From early days as an MP I have been very clear that in a rural area such as the Henley Constituency a car is not a luxury; it is an essential means of transport both locally and indeed for longer journeys where practical alternatives do not exist. Whilst we can argue for more public transport the geography and nature of people movement will always make it a challenge to provide an efficient and economic system that meets the diverse travel needs. We need, as always, to find a balance and do our best to bring people with us on change. Sadly when measures are introduced that seem to be excessive it leads to other more genuine measures being challenged too. Tackling air pollution is nothing new. The most recent Government Clean Air Strategy 2019 complements the Industrial Strategy, the Clean Growth strategy and the 25 Year Environment Plan. However the whole strategy is not just aimed at motorists, it is much wider.

If there is a particular issue that concerns you, please do share your thoughts. My contact details are on my website - [www.johnhowell.org.uk](http://www.johnhowell.org.uk).

**John Howell MP**

# LOCAL CHURCH CONTACTS

## Rector to the United Parish

The Rev'd Dr. Jacky Barr  
The Rectory, Chinnor OX39 4DH  
01844 352027 07769 825 305  
revd.jackybarr@gmail.com

## Parish Administrator

Tricia Prescott csarc@btinternet.com  
Chinnor Church Office, OX39 4PG 01844 352472

## Associate Clergy:

### Aston Rowant

The Rev'd Des Foote 01844 355945  
The Rev'd Dr. Brian Griffiths 01844 355953

### Crowell

To be appointed

## Churchwardens

Aston Rowant: Richard Boarder 07795 681263  
Crowell: Maggie & Andy Warman 01844 351909

For arrangements for Baptism, Confirmation and Marriage please contact the Parish Administrator (see above).

Methodist Services – Station Road, Chinnor



# CROWELL CHURCH

August and September services were attended with reduced numbers, along with Soul Space. This was paused for August but resumed in September. Details of all services can be found in the Parish Magazine and on the Parish website.

Please be reminded that as of November the services will revert to 16:00hrs due to it getting dark early.

No views were shared or requests made regarding the timings and frequency of services so they will remain as published for the foreseeable future.

An art class was held at the church which was very successful despite having to dodge showers by those wishing to paint or draw outside.

We've had one wedding and one baptism in the last couple of months.

Work in the graveyard, the carpark and the garden has resumed. The results are pleasing, so far – the enthusiasm has returned and has brought many compliments from locals and walkers alike.

Whilst on that subject, we need to explain to those that protest about the state of the graveyard compared to St Andrew's. St Andrew's is looked after by the Parish Council as part of its obligation. Crowell has no Parish Council so relies on volunteers, namely the Wardens. With some very welcome exceptions, very few of the graves are looked after by the families, despite the fact it is their responsibility. We don't see many turning out for the work parties, especially the protesters.

Crowell is given over to being a wildlife area for most of the year and sadly due to family reasons, commitments and illness has not been cleared as soon as we would have wished. We thank, very sincerely, those who do volunteer to help.

A work party was carried out in September, with three people attending. The carpark was mown and strimmed and the garden had a real haircut, much to the annoyance of the weeds. The next work parties are October and November on the third Saturday. Then a pause until March.

We plead once again for people to use the correct waste bins, place plastic wrappers etc in the black bin and not on the compost heap and to stop using the spoil heap. It is very upsetting for the family of the grave next to the spoil heap.

The Quinquennial Inspection has given us a good bill of health with no major issues for the foreseeable future. Some minor works are urgent. The architect has started the process of getting the damaged west window repaired under insurance and an outline plan for toilet and kitchenette facilities to cost for feasibility.

The church will always be open when the Wardens are working in it or working in the churchyard. Please call if you would like access for private prayer at other times.

Copies of the United Parish Magazine are available in the church porch and inside the church. If anyone would like an e-copy of the monthly United Parish Magazine and/or the weekly on-line service booklet then please e-mail the parish office at [csarc@btinternet.com](mailto:csarc@btinternet.com)

**Andy & Maggs Warman**

(Church Wardens) 01844 351909 [themwarmans@btinternet.com](mailto:themwarmans@btinternet.com)

# THE COUNTRY WORKSHOP



*Sam Hunt*

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## ARPC – CAN YOU HELP US PLEASE?

The parish council has limited funds with which to look after the area we all live in. From time-to-time ad hoc tasks need attention. It's clear that South Oxfordshire District Council and Oxfordshire County Council have less money to play with. Indeed, no doubt you'll have noticed the 'rewilding' of roadsides and elsewhere; this appears to be cover for saving money... by not cutting grass. This means that the parish will have to cover more of their responsibilities.

Parish councillors have a choice when it comes to maintenance:

- We can choose to pay contractors for work to be carried out (but that means less for other things that we need to do).
- We can undertake the work ourselves (with help), or
- We leave the matter unattended (which is less than ideal).

The council doesn't want to increase the precept - which feeds into council tax - any more than necessary. It also doesn't want the parish to go to rack and ruin. That leaves us with only the second of the options – doing what we can ourselves.

### **WHERE YOU COME IN**

The parish council wants to create a network of parishioners who are happy to be called upon to lend an occasional hand. The network will be run via a WhatsApp group. When up and running, a call for help will be put out and those available asked to respond. Residents not on WhatsApp can be called by phone.

It's hoped that we won't need to make regular requests but when one is made there will be no pressure to help.

So, can you help us build a network of community-minded people who have a little time, on occasion, to give to the parish? As long as you're fit and over 16 you'll be welcomed. And if you're new to the parish, it should be a great way to meet others.

If you are interested, please email [adam.bernstein@astonrowantparishcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:adam.bernstein@astonrowantparishcouncil.gov.uk) or call 07785 905120.

**Adam Bernstein**

# ASTON ROWANT PARISH COUNCIL NOTES

A Parish Council meeting was held on Wednesday 13th September where the planning applications detailed below were discussed (there was no meeting in August).

The next meeting of the Council will be held on Wednesday 11th October

## PLANNING APPLICATIONS:

**P23/S2357/HH** Single storey rear extension under existing roof at The Laurel 5 Aston Gardens Aston Rowant. **NO OBJECTION**. (Submitted 4/Aug - see decisions below).

**P23/S2480/DIS** Discharge of conditions 3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,12 & 13 on Application P23/S0337/S73 at Aston Cottage 18 Church Lane Aston Rowant. **FOR INFORMATION ONLY**.

**P23/S2490/LDE** Mixed use of site for residential use workshops and storage at The Storeground, Aston Hill, OX49 5SG. Previous application on same site P22/S2984/FUL was fully residential and was withdrawn by applicant before a decision was made. **NO OBJECTION**.

**P23/S2916/FUL** Construction of new pavilion on Pitch 2 at Aston Rowant Cricket Club. **NO OBJECTION**, reservations over parking and waste removal from site addressed in response to SODC.

## WITHDRAWN APPLICATIONS:

None

## PLANNING DECISIONS OF SODC:

**P23/S0321/FUL** Change of use of land from woodland to residential garden. Erection of home gym and golf practice room on the site of existing partially completed structure with concrete slab and foundations (Amended by plan received 19/Jul to show location of sewage treatment plant) at Warren Farm, Aston Hill, OX49 5SD – **GRANTED**.

**P23-S2357-HH** Single storey rear extension under existing roof at The Laurel, 5 Aston Gardens Aston Rowant OX49 5SY – **GRANTED**

## PLANNING DECISIONS MADE SINCE THE LAST MEETING:

None

## PLANNING INSPECTORATE APPEAL:

**APP/Q3115/W/23/3323268** - 150 Houses North of Chinnor. Appeal Hearing date set (open to the public) - 10/11 Oct in Chinnor Pavilion between 10am – 5pm.

Please note that all Planning Applications for the Parish can be found on the Parish Council Website: <http://www.astonrowantparishcouncil.gov.uk> under 'Parish Council' and then 'Planning'.

All past minutes of Aston Rowant Parish Council (Including the Annual Parish Meeting) can be found under: <http://www.astonrowantparishcouncil.gov.uk>

under 'Parish Council' and then 'Meetings'.

Occasional updates concerning the Parish are added to the Parish Council's website and Facebook pages as well as the Kingston Blount/Aston Rowant (KBAR) Facebook page.

## Tracy Lambourne

Clerk to Aston Rowant Parish Council



# COFFEE MORNING FRIDAYS 10am – 12pm

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**8th December**

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# ARPC FOOTPATH AND AMENITIES GROUP

The main activity in the next few months is the Parish Autumn Litter Pick which will take place on Saturday 21st Oct for Kingston Blount and Sunday 22nd Oct for Aston Rowant. On both days we meet at 10am: Saturday in the Cherry Tree Car Park and on Sunday at the bus stop on the A40 opposite the Lambert Arms. If the weather is as bad as it normally is a warm cup of coffee in the Cherry Tree afterwards will be very welcome.

We have ordered more daffodils to be planted this autumn, the ones we planted last autumn made a show in the spring. Once this next batch are planted we will leave them to spread naturally.

We have been made aware of the Oxfordshire Garden Tree Giveaway, by which households can obtain 2 bare rooted trees. You have to pick them up, but otherwise they are free. Please go to the website of Oxfordshire Garden Tree Giveaway and fill in the form. First come first served.

Please see Peter H's notes on the walk he has organised for the 15th (see page 25), can I repeat booking is essential please see Peter's note for details.

Also, can I repeat Mike Eaton's notice of next year's Duck Race on Sunday 18th February – put it in your diary now. Last year's was a great success – the more people the merrier. We will be asking for volunteers to assist us in the preparation of Fiveways.

At the next Parish Council Meeting we will confirm the Parish Maintenance tasks and then the list will be published on the Parish Council website.

The next meeting of the group will be on October 17th in Kingston Blount. If you have an idea for a suitable project please feel free to either attend the meeting or contact the group via the parish clerk. The clearing of the Kingston Blount Lanes came from a parishioner at a previous meeting.

The long-awaited repair to the fence on the Permissive Path to Crowell should be completed by the time the notes are published – our thanks to Tracy Lambourne for sorting out our claim with Thames Water.

## Steven Sowerby

Chair of Footpaths and Amenities Group

stevensowerby@hotmail.com

01844 351392



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## AUTUMN AT FIVEWAYS

At the moment it is quite overgrown at Fiveways, but growth is slowing and seed is setting so it is nearly time for an end of season clear up before the winter. It also gets bank clearance started for duck racing which is on Sunday February 18th, 2024 at 2-4pm. When the water was higher Sticklebacks were regularly seen in the dog pool and I did see a Bullhead once.

The top end is covered with yellow toadflax, keen observers will note the blue scabious nearby which again is an introduction and seems to be spreading very slowly. The insects like the toadflax which spreads both by seed and runners. It is a common motorway plant but can suddenly disappear. We have a purple and pink version in our gardens but it has not yet taken to Fiveways. I should mention the nice orange Fox and Cubs near the path close to the bench – I am hoping they will spread as they are a great late season flower

There are a few attractive white and pink geraniums which are probably neophytes escaped from gardens. I have a few also in my garden but they were never planted - I have left them alone as they do not appear invasive.

I am trying again to grow the pretty yellow monkey musk – it is a challenging native plant in terms of its needs because it needs a bog-like environment – under very shallow water or wet soil – then it is vigorous and grows about two feet high. It can shed a lot of seed and the seedlings will grow downstream. Last year no plants survived but I will try again. I need your help – if you have such a spot in your garden get in touch for supplies of this water plant. I may also have quite a few seedlings of native bee orchids if there are any growers out there. These are challenging but they grow wild on my mossy front lawn.

There have been sightings of dead American crayfish on Church Lane but the predator is unknown. Sadly there are otters again in Kingston Blount eating pond fish and unfortunately also in Lewknor looking for endangered brown trout.

The Footpath and Amenities group will be buying wild daffodils for Pleck Wood after a successful trial last year. Fiveways has, after seven years, got to the point where it is self sufficient and has many self sown young plants - an advantage over the more showy cultivated daffodil.

The water level in the Holbrook has been low all year and we have lost a few plants including the lilac which I think was a relic from the long lost cottage(s). The gorse has recovered after looking dead but the white mulberry remains sick. I am uncertain of the cause but our gardens also have had problems.

I am not impressed by the government softening its approach on sewage releases to facilitate house building. More houses inevitably mean more sewage and thus more nitrate and phosphate in our streams. In our area much of our tap water is abstracted from the Chilterns, which reduces natural water flows which dilute effluent – so a double hit.

**Mike Eaton**

mike.eaton@btopenworld.com



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## NEWS FROM ARCC

The 2023 cricket season is now finished – whilst it will be remembered for some fine cricket, I think it is more likely to be remembered as the season when it rained and rained.

We would like to thank everyone who has worked for or supported the club this season, this is the playing membership, the social membership and the people who have supported the bar this season. It is wonderful to see so many local people enjoying the club, it is huge change from the past, long may it continue. A special thanks to the parents who have transported the juniors to their many games this year.

The first team finished in 4th place in the premier league which will qualify for next seasons National Knock-out Cup, both the second and fourth teams finished mid table. Pride of place to the third team who finished second in their league and will be promoted if the ground facilities are up to the Cherwell League standards.

The club is now focusing on the planning application for the wooden pavilion on the bottom field which will satisfy the league's requirements, the application is now live, P23/S2916/FUL, but the date for comments will have passed by the time the parish notes are published. The target decision date is October 24th so we will hopefully be starting work before Xmas. We would like to thank the Parish Council and Town Farm for their support.

At our recent annual end of season ball and presentation night the following awards were given

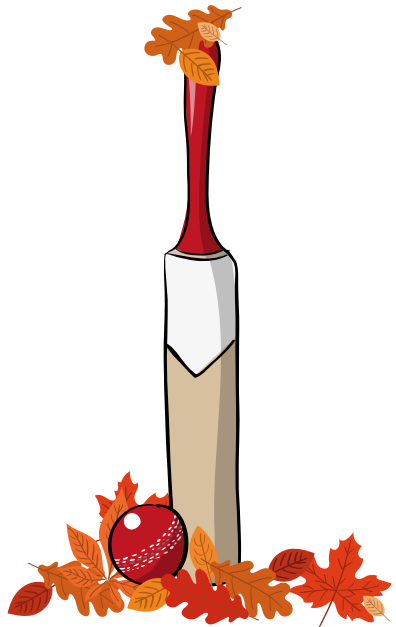
- 1st Team player of Season Ben Le Bas
- 2nd Team player of Season Thad Cooper
- 3rd Team player of Season Ben Knowler
- 4th Team player of Season Paul Plumridge
- U19 Player of Season Carrick Dunbar.
- Team of Season Third Team.

This is not the full list which is available from the club.

Finally congratulations to Lynsey Smith and Maia Bouchier who as part of the Southern Vipers team won the Rachael Heyhoe Flint Cup, the professional Women's Cricket 50 over competition on Sunday.

**Steven Sowerby**

Aston Rowant CC  
[www.astonrowantcc.com](http://www.astonrowantcc.com)



# MARK LORD, LOCAL PHOTOGRAPHER

Many of you may have met Mark during his doorstep project in 2020 when he photographed the residents of Kingston Blount & Aston Rowant to mark 75 years since VE Day. In all Mark photographed 75 households on their doorsteps during lockdown 1 & last Summer. The images will be on display in the village hall soon. Mark has lived in Aston Rowant for almost ten years & is often seen out with his camera photographing his clients using our lovely local countryside as a backdrop. Book Mark to photograph your family & you will meet at his home in Aston Rowant before walking down towards Fiveways. A relaxed family shoot, the walk helps everyone unwind, interact & Mark will capture some beautiful images which your family will treasure for years to come. After the shoot you will receive a secure online gallery from which you can choose digital files, prints or he also has some stunning wall products to choose from. Portrait shoots from Mark's home are £25, or a shoot can be arranged at your family home if you prefer.

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# LETTER FROM THE HEADTEACHER

Once again October marks the start of Black History Month – a time to celebrate and remember African and Caribbean heritage peoples’ achievements and contributions to the British economy, culture and history. It’s a chance to tell the stories of those lesser well-known Black Britons who we might forget if we don’t showcase them.



There is an argument that Black History should not have a month dedicated to it but that it should, rightly, be remembered all year round. This is certainly our aim at Aston Rowant School. However, Black History Month, like many other national and international events, provides us with an additional opportunity to remember individuals and events that might not be included even in a racially inclusive national curriculum and might remain forgotten to the annals of time if not celebrated at moments such as these.

The theme of Black History Month UK 2023 is ‘Before Windrush’. Each of our classes will be exploring different lives and stories of Black Britons who were living in the United Kingdom before the arrival of Empire Windrush in 1948.

Our Reception children are going to look at the general concept of racism and meet nurse Mary Jane Seacole.

Our Key Stage 1 children will study famous and notable Victorians such Sara Forbes Bonetta (Goddaughter of Queen Victoria) actor Ira Aldridge, composer Samuel Coleridge-Taylor and explorer Ndugu “Kalulu” M’Hali.

Our Lower Key Stage 2 children will study Roman times - the Aurelian Moors, the first recorded group of Africans living in Britain as soldiers in the Roman army. The class will also touch on ‘Ivory Bangle Lady’ - a rich mixed woman whose skeleton was found in York adorned with expensive luxuries.

Our Lower Key Stage 2 will be looking at the Abolition of slavery. From the Haitian Revolution to the Act for the Abolition of the Slave Trade signed in 1807 by King George III banning the trade of enslaved peoples throughout the British Empire and the abolitionists, such as Olaudah Equiano, who fought so hard to achieve this.

Black History is embedded in our National Curriculum, but Black History Month reminds us to dig deeper and think bigger, to celebrate and honour the all too often forgotten and undervalued contribution of Black Britons across the UK and throughout history. We know that it is going to be an exciting time of discovery and learning.

**Helen France**

Headteacher

# CHILTERNSWALKING FESTIVAL

We are delighted to announce the 12th Chilterns Walking Festival will take place 14-29 October and would be grateful if you could publicise. It will feature a programme of over 50 walks and events throughout the Chilterns. A chance to enjoy the autumn splendour, the golden beech trees and hedgerows bursting with colour. Here is a flavour of what's on offer:

- Coffee, cake & chat....many of the walks take in a café, pub or farm shop, some of them in tucked-away scenic locations. A chance to try some great local produce and enjoy a welcome rest-stop.
- History & Heritage...Explore the First World War trenches at Marlow Common, Arts & Crafts architecture in Amersham and Chesham, iron age hillforts or the former rural industries around High Wycombe. Discover and walk some of the ancient routes which criss-cross the Chilterns, exploring Drovers routes (and inns!), or take the Chinnor & Princes Risborough railway and see some of the industrial heritage in the surrounds, providing a fascinating glimpse of the past.
- Wildlife and Nature...see the woodlands at their autumnal best, enjoy the crunch of the beechnuts underfoot, and the trees and hedgerows bursting with colour. There are walks taking in nature reserves and the special landscapes and views of the Chilterns, led by knowledgeable guides. Find out about the management and conservation projects in these special places.
- Health and wellbeing walks...immerse yourself in the great outdoors and have a go at Nordic walking, forest bathing or a mindfulness walk, helping you tune into all your senses and relax in beautiful surroundings.

...plus map reading courses, walking/painting workshops, historic garden tours and much more.

Listings have been live on our website since 16 September 2023:

[www.chilternsaonb.org/walkingfest](http://www.chilternsaonb.org/walkingfest)

To keep updated join our Chilterns Walking Festival facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/ChilternsWalkingFestival>.



# CHILTERN BEECH WOODS AND AUTUMN TINTS WALK

I am leading a walk for the Chiltern Conservation Board Autumn Walking Festival. Called 'Chiltern Beech Woods and Autumn tints', it is on Sunday 15 October at 10am. 4 miles, 3 hills but no stiles and will be at a leisurely pace. Park in side roads in Stokenchurch on the grass area alongside the Kings Hotel HP14 3TA. Booking essential either online through the Board website or by phoning me on 07767 647714 Suitable for accompanied children over 10 and dogs on leads.

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Are you hoping to go to university or college in 2023? Will your child be moving up to secondary school in 2023? Is there a school trip you can't afford or are you looking at doing the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme? Grants are available to help with these costs.

For more details or to apply please contact the administrator:

## Peter Lambert

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# DISTRICT COUNCILLORS COMMUNIQUÉ


Dear residents; We are hopeful that you have enjoyed the summer – August has been a very busy month with the District Council, with three Planning Committee meetings and an Extraordinary Council meeting to debate a key aspect of the HIF1 project (Housing and Infrastructure fund) with the controversial proposal to build a new highway north of Didcot. We have also been involved in the consultation around the new proposed scheme for housing around the edge of Oxford. The planning consultants are engaging with us to produce a sustainable neighbourhood, their key deliverables focusing on; renewable and low carbon technologies, protecting ecology and biodiversity, creating suitable homes for all, cultivating a thriving community, designing for greener travel, long term stewardship and embodying excellent design and local heritage.

**Electric Vehicles and World EV day** (9th September 2023) is an annual event aiming to highlight the progress in e-mobility and promote the shift to electrified transport. This year, to celebrate World EV Day, the electric vehicle charging point companies offered deals – including free charging – for drivers across Oxfordshire. There was also the chance to join the county-wide EV car club scheme, with significant deals during World EV Day saving you money on membership and hire fees. Since last year's World EV Day, global electric vehicles sales have increased 39%: in July 2023, 48% of newly registered vehicles in Oxfordshire were purely electric.

**New application for a new SODC Office Building in Didcot:** South Oxfordshire District Council has submitted a planning application for new offices, and the plans are available to view online. Planning Application P23/S2621/FUL ([southoxon.gov.uk](http://southoxon.gov.uk)) We have drafted a Q&A of the typical questions raised about the proposed plan which we would like to share with you.

**So why a new office?** The original SODC offices were destroyed by fire in 2015. The then Administration moved the council into very costly temporary offices (£100k/year). The subsequent Administration activated the break clause in the lease and moved the council to their current location at Abbey House in Abingdon, where they share the costs and premises with Vale Council.

**Why not stay at Abbey House?** The building is not fit for purpose. In its current layout, the building is unable to host council meetings.

**Why Didcot?** The proposed site is already owned by SODC. Many people still need to be in the office and essential activities still take place – the proposed council office is, however, significantly smaller than the former at Crowmarsh. The ground floor will have public space, a square, a café, meeting spaces, and accommodate the public-facing areas of the council. Above will be the more private offices, and above that commercial office space to generate income for the council, which will save money for the council in the longer term. The plans have been carefully assessed by finance officers and will be continually checked as the project progresses. Opponents often quote the outline cost but omit the insurance money (about £6m), which 



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will be used for this purpose, as well as any capital gained from the old Crowmarsh site. The saving in rent and energy costs (about £1m p/a), and the future income generated from renting out part of the building. Regeneration of this site into the SODC council offices will be a much-needed boost for Didcot and a much called for plan to redevelop a part of Didcot that has become a local embarrassment, because it is the place passengers see upon arrival at Didcot by train. The alternative is to leave the site derelict or sell it to a developer for yet more housing.

**Cllr Ali Gordon-Creed**

Ali.Gordon-Creed@southoxon.gov.uk  
07770 935579

**Cllr Ed Sadler**

ed.sadler@southoxon.gov.uk  
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# DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

## OCTOBER

- 10 Harvest Lunch, Aston Rowant Church, 12.30pm (p18)
- 11 Parish Council Meeting, Kingston Blount Village Hall, 7:30 pm
- 13 Coffee Morning, KB Village Hall, 10-12pm (p14)
- 13 Big Quiz Night, KB Village Hall, 7pm (p19)
- 15 'Chiltern Beech Woods and Autumn tints' walk, 10am (p25)
- 21 Crowell Churchyard Work Party (p9)
- 21 Litter Pick, Kingston Blount, 10am (p15)
- 22 Litter Pick, Aston Rowant, 10am (p15)
- 27 Coffee Morning, KB Village Hall, 10-12pm (p14)

## NOVEMBER

- 8 Parish Council Meeting, Kingston Blount Village Hall, 7:30 pm
- 10 Coffee Morning, KB Village Hall, 10-12pm (p14)
- 18 Crowell Churchyard Work Party (p9)
- 24 Coffee Morning, KB Village Hall, 10-12pm (p14)

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If you have anything you'd like to see in the next issue please get in touch.

**Please Note that the copy deadline for the December/January issue is 10th December.**

Email: [sallyparishnotes@gmail.com](mailto:sallyparishnotes@gmail.com)