

VOL XXXXXII NO 4

AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 2025

ASTON ROWANT, KINGSTON BLOUNT & CROWELL

# PARISH NOTES



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

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**Copy deadline for the Oct/Nov issue is 20th Sept 2025**

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Information in this publication is, as far as we know, accurate. The Parish Notes however, cannot accept responsibility for the quality of the information, services or items provided by other people or organisations.

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07398 585687

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shine-holly@hotmail.com  
07834 994699

## 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: Hayley Hopwood	07470 441857

## CHAIRMAN'S NOTE

At the time of writing Wimbledon has just wrapped up and the schools are about to break up for the summer holiday. Where has 2025 gone?

As for the content for this issue's Chairman's comment, I want to address several things.

Beginning with the evergreen that is planning, residents will have noticed that the parish has been presented with two new applications.

The first, for 'Outline planning application (scale, landscaping and appearance reserved) for the demolition of existing equestrian buildings and the erection of seven detached and semi-detached dwellings with access, parking and garaging and amenity space', is at Woodway Farm on the B4009, close to the chicane and entry into Aston Rowant Road.

The council is objecting to this for a number of reasons not least because it proposes a mini estate on the south side of the B4009 where there are presently farm buildings. And in extending the residential footprint of the parish it could prove the thin end of a wedge that leads to the whole of the south side of the B4009 eventually succumbing to housing that obscures views of the Chiltern Hills.

The application is online at SODC: <https://tinyurl.com/y8f29cxd>

The second is for 'a phased development of 1 self-build dwelling' on land at the junction of the B4009 and Aston Rowant Road by the chicane.

Again, the council is objecting to this for similar reasons including the expansion of the village footprint with scope to – potentially – lead to more building on the same field and also on neighbouring green fields, likely access via a busy junction adjacent to a chicane, and prior flooding of the vicinity.

Worryingly, the application divides up a field which previously saw an application for ten dwellings on the whole of the field. That application was dismissed by the Planning Inspectorate in 2019. The inspectorate ruled against the application because of the inappropriateness of the location, lack of sustainability and lack of facilities. Logically, if this application is approved with one house on it then the rest of the field will likely see applications as could the fields between Aston Rowant and Kingston Blount, potentially joining up the two villages.

In the council's view, nothing has changed between 2019 and now.

The application is at <https://tinyurl.com/y88we497> and the 2019 Planning Inspectorate decision is at <https://tinyurl.com/kwvc76nb>.

In both cases, the council leafleted the parish to urge residents to lodge objections with SODC.

In the former, the council organised a public meeting because it viewed the application as new and large given that it was for seven dwellings.

As for the latter, the site had previously been considered so the public view and position was well known.

What is clear though, is that until SODC's 2041 local plan is approved, hopefully by the end of the year – but it may not be, the whole parish is under threat as it is

entirely surrounded by green fields.

If we do not wish to suffer the runaway building that has occurred in Chinnor we all need to be concerned about substantial applications that harm the character of the parish.

Ultimately, as my late father commented, those who don't take part in an election – even to spoil their paper – cannot complain about the government. Similarly, if villagers who have a view on an application do not make their opinion known to SODC then they ought not to be surprised at the outcome when applications are decided.

I want to make plain at this juncture that while council has more councillors living in Aston Rowant – compared to Kingston Blount or elsewhere - it is agnostic to location when considering applications; it considers the good of the whole parish and will promote or defend all in equal measure.

Notably, the representation disparity has just moved further toward Aston Rowant with the resignation of Helen Birks.

Just as Jo Hunt, who also recently resigned, did great work in liaising with the Hillwerke Recreational Trust so Helen, along with Laura Purse and the committee, worked a miracle in raising funds to revamp the play area in Kingston Blount.

This means that there is a vacancy for a councillor.

Anyone with a little time to give to help shape the parish they live or work in is welcome to apply. And while the co-option process ignores the candidate's location in the parish, it would be good to see other parts of the parish represented.

Those interested should contact the clerk by sending an email to [clerk@astonrowantparishcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@astonrowantparishcouncil.gov.uk).

Lastly, I have had a complaint about the flying of a drone over someone's property; the resident felt it noisy and invasive to his privacy.

The law allows drones to flown over private property in the UK as long as the owner complies with Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) regulations, such as maintaining safe distances from people and respecting privacy rights.

On the former, there is case law to suggest that flying at close to roof height might be trespass while flying at 60 metres might not.

Drone owners must obtain the landowner's permission to take off or land the drone on their property, as doing so without consent could be considered trespassing. Additionally, if the drone is equipped with a camera and collects personal data, the owner must adhere to privacy laws, including informing individuals and complying with data protection regulations like GDPR.

Regardless, for the sake of simplicity, I would ask drone owners to use common sense and have an eye to how they would feel if a drone flew over their home when they might be in the garden.

**Adam Bernstein**

Chairman, Aston Rowant Parish Council

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

# PARISH COUNCIL & LOCAL CONTACTS

## Parish Website

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

## Parish Clerk

Tracy Lambourne  
clerk@astonrowantparishcouncil.gov.uk 01844 353989

## Parish Councillors:

Chairman Adam Bernstein  
adam.bernstein@astonrowantparishcouncil.gov.uk 07785 905120  
Councillor Helen Birks  
helen.birks@astonrowantparishcouncil.gov.uk 07921 840360  
Councillor Deborah Chaplin  
deborah.chaplin@astonrowantparishcouncil.gov.uk 01844 354648  
Councillor Matthew Day  
matthew.day@astonrowantparishcouncil.gov.uk 01844 351300  
Councillor Hayley Hopwood  
hayley.hopwood@astonrowantparishcouncil.gov.uk 07515 774871  
Councillor Richard Payling  
richard.payling@astonrowantparishcouncil.gov.uk 07801 764019  
Councillor Trelawney Hill  
trelawney.hill@astonrowantparishcouncil.gov.uk 01844 353051

## District Councillors:

Ali Gordon-Creed ali.gordon-creed@southoxon.gov.uk  
Ed Sadler ed.sadler@southoxon.gov.uk 07842 602398

## County Councillor

Kate Gregory kate.gregory@oxfordshire.gov.uk  
Georgina Heritage georgina.heritage@oxfordshire.co.uk

## MP

Freddie van Mierlo freddie.vanmierlo.mp@parliament.uk

## Police Community Support Office

tel: 101 ThameHPT@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk

## Village Hall Hire/Bookings

Hayley Hopwood 07470 441857 bookings@kbvh.org

## Play Area

Tracy Lambourne 01844 353989 clerk@astonrowantparishcouncil.gov.uk

## Aston Rowant Cricket Club Chairman

Josh Smith 07894 201929 chairman@astonrowantcc.com

# ASTON ROWANT PARISH COUNCIL NOTES

Parish Council meetings were held on Wednesday 18th of June 2025 and Wednesday 16th of July 2025 where the planning applications detailed below were discussed. The next meeting of the Council will be held on Wednesday 10th of September. (There is no August meeting)

## PLANNING APPLICATIONS:

**P25/S1516/HH** Proposed demolition of existing flat-roofed detached garage and its replacement with a 2.5m x 2.5m wooden summerhouse at The Old Village Hall Pleck Lane Kingston Blount. **NO OBJECTION.**

**P25/S1493/DIS** Discharge of condition 4 (Tree Protection) on planning application P24/S3223/HH – Lower Farm House, Stert Rd, Kingston Blount. **FYI ONLY, NO DECISION REQUIRED.**

**P25/S1671/O** Development work at: Land at Woodway Farm Chinnor Road Aston Rowant. Outline planning application (scale, landscaping and appearance reserved) for the demolition of existing equestrian buildings and the erection of seven detached and semi-detached dwellings with access, parking and garaging and amenity space.

A public meeting was arranged to gauge reaction before submitting our response. **OBJECTION.** Not infill, unsustainable location giving rise to more light, traffic and adverse impact on B4009 at busy junction, poor public transport links with services under threat from subsidy withdrawal, links to London and airport buses over a mile away with no footpath or lighting forcing pedestrians onto the road, not supported by emerging SODC Local Plan 2041 where smaller villages are not suitable for development.

**P25/S1831/HH** Retrospective application for replacement of existing gate and fence, and widening of driveway/dropped kerb at Little Spinney Chinnor Road Aston Rowant OX49 5SH. **OBJECTION:** Materials and appearance (fence too high, materials used, creates a fortress-like appearance along B4009), plus agreement with SODC Tree Officers opinions on potential tree damage to protected trees.

**P25/S1830/PIP** A phased development of 1 self-build dwelling on land at junction of Aston Rowant Road and Chinnor Road Aston Rowant OX49 5SN. **OBJECTION:** sustainability, drainage, lack of infrastructure and public transport, dangerous junction to B4009, pollution of stream on site which feeds into Aston Park lake, SODC Local Plan 2041 has no requirement for smaller villages to take development.

**P25/S0193/HH** Revised plans for erection of a first floor rear extension, single-story side extension and associated works at 10 The Green, Aston Rowant. New plans and designs much more in keeping with surrounding properties and area in general; opinions of objectors have been taken on board and we no longer object on that basis. **NO OBJECTION:** provided existing hedge at front is retained, to reduce appearance of parking at the front (permitted development).

**WITHDRAWN APPLICATIONS:** None.

## PLANNING DECISIONS OF SODC:

**P25/S0999/DIS** Discharge of conditions 5 (Tree Protection) & 6 (Construction Traffic Management) on planning application P24/S1444/HH (Two-storey front >>



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**SUMMER HOLIDAYS: until 1st September**  
– FAMILY ORIENTEERING TRAIL, GARDENS

**OPERA: 8th-17th August** – WATERPERRY OPERA  
FESTIVAL, HOUSE/AMPHITHEATRE/WORKSHOPS

**THEATRE: 23rd August** – CINDERELLA,  
IK PRODUCTIONS, AMPHITHEATRE

**THEATRE: 30th August** – AS YOU LIKE IT,  
WHAT YOU WILL THEATRE, AMPHITHEATRE

**FESTIVAL: 5th-7th September**  
– OXFORD STORY TELLING FESTIVAL

**GARDENS: 16th September** – NGS OPEN DAY

**EXHIBITION: 20th September until 2nd November**  
– THE PRINTED GARDEN - FREE TO ENTER IN GALLERY

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extension, two storey side/rear extension, single storey rear extension, new flat roof over the existing single storey elements and material alterations and fenestration alterations to the existing house) at Chiltern House, 5 Plowden Park, AR – **FYI ONLY, SODC HAVE ALREADY APPROVED.**

**PLANNING DECISIONS MADE SINCE THE LAST MEETING:**  
None.

**PLANNING APPLICATION APPEALS:** None.

**APPLICATIONS IN NEIGHBOURING PARISHES (which may affect Aston Rowant Parish)** None.

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

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*Sam Hunt*

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# THE UNITED PARISH TEAM

## Rector

Rev'd Dr. Jacky Barr 07769 825305  
rector@unitedparish.church  
01844 352027

## Associate Priest

Rev'd Joan DeVal 01844 353404

## Licensed Lay Minister (L.L.M)

Margaret Poole 01844 281042

## Retired Priests

Rev'd Des Foote 01844 355945

Rev'd Dr. Brian Griffiths

01844 355953

Rev'd Tony Whittaker

01844 352472

## United Parish Office

Tricia Prescott 01844 352472  
office@unitedparish.church

## Parish Safeguarding Officer

Jane Tucker 07890 346781  
safeguarding@unitedparish.church

## Churchwarden at Aston Rowant

Richard Boarder 07795681263  
Vacancy

## Churchwardens at Crowell

Andy Warman 01844351909

Maggs Warman 01844351909

# CROWELL CHURCH

Normal evening services on 2nd and 4th Sundays at 18:00. 'Hymns and Pimms' is at St Mary's Sydenham this year on Sunday 31 August. Please do join us.

Soul Space has a solid following which is pleasing to see. 3rd Sunday at 16:00 but not in August. (See the article below for July's meeting.)

We hosted the funeral service for Serena Hutton, a retired priest and local resident of Kingston Blount. She often led services at Crowell and loved the little church. There is a family grave at Crowell.

The churchyard has been completely trimmed and cleared – thank you so much to whoever did it. The clearing of the grass spoils is so important. We are most grateful as we have been totally committed elsewhere. Our rare pyramid orchids appeared again and have multiplied – what a joy! Work parties continued on the 2nd Saturdays at 10am, with only the wardens attending – which is very disappointing. The next work party is 14 September. Wardens will be working around the churchyard at other times.

We were expecting the stain glass window to be refitted in June. Sadly it hasn't and still no firm date.

Outstanding jobs for which help or sponsorship/donations would be gratefully accepted:

1. Stained glass window repair (insurance job) needs to have a protective screen fitted when back in position. Need to consider a screen for the other stained glass window.
2. 2 x churchyard walls rebuilt and or removed. (Some ongoing talks re one and tendering in progress)
3. Bell Cote and Bell restored. (Some sponsorship already received)
4. South West Buttress wall base rebuilt. (Tendering in progress)
5. Altar furniture and linen. (Some sponsorship already received)
6. Remove dead trees on B4009 and replant with native species.
7. Open up the view on exit from the car park. (Done but needs more work.)

8. Add gravel to the car park entrance to smooth the surface.

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

### **Maggs reports on Soul Space.**

Soul Space took place as usual on Sunday 20th July. This month's theme was Strawberries and Cream. (Well, we had just had Wimbledon!) The music that interspersed the readings and silences, also had the same theme: 'All Time Coffee' by the group Strawberries and Cream, The Beatles 'Strawberry Fields', 'Strawberries and Cream' The Playfords. The readings included 'IF' by Rudyard Kipling



which contains the two lines "if you can meet with Triumph and Disaster/and treat those two imposters the same..." are inscribed on the Players' entrance of the Lawn Tennis Club. Jacky read a poem sent to Wimbledon by a 12 year old girl called Akiva Broder which was amazing and written to form the shape of a tennis racquet. At the end of the time of words, music and contemplation we went to the altar to receive a bowl of ... you've guessed it .... Strawberries and cream, which we ate in quiet contentment and reflection.

### **Andy & Maggs Warman**

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

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## NEWS FROM ARCC

Firstly, a thank you to all who supported the Rowachella festival. It is very important to the club to see so many parishioners at the event. It further continues our involvement with the community. This is best evident on a Friday night when so many children and parents attend the junior training sessions. I have said it before and repeat it today; it is one of, if not the best, social evening in the parish.

The cricket season is now at the halfway point of the season and whilst the first and second teams are doing well the third and fourth teams are having exceptional seasons. The third team have a 100% record – 11 wins out of 11 – and lead their league by 47 points. The fourth team are second in their league, hopefully both teams will be promoted at the end of the season.

As well as their league form both teams have progressed in their respective cup competitions. The fourth team have reached their cup final which will be played at Fringford CC on the 17th of August. The third team are at the semi final stage and will play away at Kingston Bagpuize on the 3rd of August.

But for all the success of the senior teams the highlight of the season for the club has been the growth of our ladies softball team. This is additional to the girl's team which we covered in May's Parish Notes. We have been trying to start up a team for a couple of years and it is good to see this off the ground. The team had a second training day and softball competition at Wormsley on the 28th June. If you want to join this team please come down to the club and let us know. The team has sponsored team kit and is building towards entry in a softball league next season.

We look forward to seeing you down at the club before the end of the season. For further information and a list of fixtures please go to our web site [astonrowantcricket.co.uk](http://astonrowantcricket.co.uk).

**Steven Sowerby**

[www.astonrowantcc.com](http://www.astonrowantcc.com)



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# ARPC FOOTPATH AND AMENITIES GROUP

It is the middle of July and that is normally a quiet time for the FAAG group, but with the weather we have been having it has not been a normal time. The lack of rain has caused many problems but recent rain will hopefully help to restore normality. Perhaps a hose pipe ban should have been declared earlier as it seems to have rained ever since.

We would like to spend this quiet time by reviewing the list of maintenance tasks undertaken by the Parish Council. These tasks are co-ordinated by the FAAG group and can be found on the Parish Council Website under Policies and Publications or you can find them by using the link:

<https://www.astonrowantparishcouncil.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/Calendar-of-Parish-Maintenance-Works.WEBSITE-.pdf>

If you think anything needs adding to the list, please contact either Tracy Lambourne the Parish Council Clerk or myself. Any suggestions will be looked at during the autumn and added to the list for next year. Please remember these suggestions can only be for public spaces, the council cannot be responsible for the maintenance of private land.

The next FAAG meeting will be in October – date to be announced later when we will be fixing the date for the autumn litter pick.

Finally there has been a case of suspected ash die back in the village. The first signs of ash dieback, a disease caused by the fungus *Hymenoscyphus fraxineus*, include wilting and blackening of leaves, which may then fall prematurely. If you see any signs of this or suspect that the ash tree is showing signs of distress, please contact Tracy or myself.

In the meantime, enjoy the time you have recovered by not spending so much time watering the garden.

## Steven Sowerby

Chair of Footpaths and Amenities Group  
stevensowerby@hotmail.com 07802 81425.



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## FIVEWAYS

At the end of May the Black Poplars at Fiveways were in flower and they covered the Ickniel Way with white down – as shown. These trees are one of the rarest trees in Britain only 7000 in total. They like floodplains and one of their main habitats is in Oxfordshire and the Thames Valley particularly. The seeds need to fall onto wet mud i.e. near a river/floodplain in order to germinate. We are lucky to have both sexes – male and female. The females (only 5% are female!) produce the white fluffy seeds as seen here.

As I write Fiveways is very overgrown, this is normal in Summer, particularly when I have been on holiday! I am not getting any younger – so can I appeal for some help: Duke of Edinburgh’s awards or anyone with a few hours to spare. It probably takes four half day sessions a year. Ideally the hedging to the south of the stream should be thinned to let light in to help the snowdrops. I am hoping, when it is cooler, to protect the ends of the new walkway from rotting - as advised by the builder. The steps also need rebuilding – a good DoE challenge.

My wife and I cleared the stream below the middle bridge on a cooler day and I hope it will now be possible to see the fish once again. The water temperature when it approaches 20° is not good for fish – especially cold water species such as trout. The summer flows are not good these days all along the Chiltern chalk streams and it is not likely to improve due to increased demand for water. Also during Summer, when it is dry, the Holbrook waters the fields along its path. This can be seen at Thame where the flow is minimal in Summer. At the moment the fish will likely be in the wild stretch below the dog pool where it is shaded and deeper.



“Snow” in Summer



A waymarker or a stone?

Another interesting task is to re-site the large stone at the top end of Fiveways which “covers” the water pipes – it has no function now. There is a need to replace the two pipe system which was installed a decade ago by the county engineers. Two pipes are cheaper, but the soil between the pipes has now been washed away as predicted. The erosion has accelerated with the flooding and the track itself is deteriorating. I have looked at this stone for a decade and wondered whether it was an early way marker. These were sited at key road junctions. If left it will soon drop into the stream. The hope is to pull it out and display it nearby on its side, if it proves to be of interest. Of course the problems with the surface of Church Lane continue.

There are damsel flies to be seen laying eggs in the Holbrook and also unusually large numbers of butterflies this year. There aren't so many flowers at this time of year but the Monkey Musk produced yellow flowers on the edge of the stream by the bridge. There will soon be a lot of yellow Toadflax over much of the area.

Thanks to volunteers who are watering the Mulberry tree whilst dog walking. Give it a try too and carry some pruners!

**Mike Eaton**

mike.eaton@btopenworld.com

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Alexandra Cawte-McDermid

(PA to Dr Lesley Parkinson)

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# NOTICEBOARD

## WHAT'S GOING ON IN KINGSTON BLOUNT, ASTON ROWANT & NEARBY

### Friday Coffee Mornings

Kingston Blount Village Hall – All welcome!

Come and enjoy a hot drink and a cake or snack.

Everyone is welcome of all ages and we have plenty of toys available for young children.

We will be open for business from 10.15am – 12pm on:

**August 8th, 22nd**

**September 5th, 26th**

**October 10th, 24th**

Come and enjoy a hot drink and a cake or snack. Browse the bookshelf, feel free to select as many as you like. Maybe bring some new ones along to add to the collection.



---

### Thank you from the Village Hall

We wish to thank all who answered our plea for committee members to help run the Village Hall and are pleased to say we have now filled all the posts to continue running the hall in its current form.

We are always on the lookout for more members, so if you wish to come and join us we would be delighted to welcome you too – we only meet four times a year and duties are light. We would also like to send a big thank you to Jo Hunt and Debbie Chaplin, who acted as liaison reps with the Parish Council.

We will be running three pub nights towards the end of the year the dates are:

Friday 31st October - Halloween theme. For children 5pm. Adults only from 7.30pm

Friday 21st November

Friday 12th December - Christmas theme

Look out for notices in the Parish Notes and posters nearer the time.

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### Thank you from the Parish Notes

We would like to give a huge thank you to Julian Knight who has tirelessly looked after the advertising in the Parish Notes for the past 20+ years. Your contribution (not to mention spreadsheets!) is very much appreciated Julian – it couldn't have kept going without your support!

And so... thank you to Rachel Lockwood who has very kindly taken on this important role. If anyone has any queries regarding advertising in the Parish Notes Rachel is your new contact. Her email is [rachel.parishnotes@gmail.com](mailto:rachel.parishnotes@gmail.com)

## Parish Walk

There was quite a disappointing response to the Parish Walk on Sunday 6 July and it wasn't too hot nor wet! There were 10 on the walk including myself but there was only one other person from our Parish – the rest were Ramblers. I will continue leading walks in our area promoted by and enjoyed by Thame and Wheatley Ramblers Members and they will continue to invite our Parishioners onto the walks. But if Parishioner numbers don't increase this relationship will end.

The next Parish and Ramblers walk will be the New Year Walk on Sunday 4 January so please put that date in your diary.

In the meantime I am leading a walk for the Chiltern Society at 10.00 on Sunday 17 August. You are also invited to join that. Anyone can walk with them and they won't ask you to join the Society until after the first 3 walks. They are a very friendly bunch. This walk is again from the Leathern Bottle and is 6 miles. It is a low level walk with no hills nor stiles. We will set off along Nethercote Lane, the Lower Icknield Way, then continue through our Parish villages and return on the Ridgeway path. On this occasion it is necessary to book with me please.

### Peter Hetherington

Leader for ARPC and Ramblers. 07767 647714 [rphetherington@aol.com](mailto:rphetherington@aol.com)

---

## For Sale

Home exercise bike for sale – £50 ono.

Any reasonable offer considered.

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## Rearranged Rector's Ramble

Saturday 30th August 2025. Meet us at any of the churches to cheer us on or join the walk for any (or all) of the sections:

Gather at St Andrew's 10am

Arrive at Crowell 10:45am. Leave Crowell 11am

Arrive at Aston Rowant noon:

Lunch noon til 1pm: Leave Aston Rowant 1pm

Arrive Sydenham 2:15pm. Leave Sydenham 2:45pm

Arrive St Andrews 4pm



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If you have ever thought of getting involved, do contact us for information on available plots. Please contact Fran at: [Francesca.musaeus@hotmail.com](mailto:Francesca.musaeus@hotmail.com)  
We really look forward to hearing from you.



Illustration by Christopher Stockley

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## LETTER FROM THE HEADTEACHER

Small schools like ours have an important place in the community. Small schools matter because they offer a more personalised learning experience and foster stronger relationships between children, teachers, and the community. This can positively impact a child's self-esteem and overall well-being which in turn leads to improved academic and social-emotional outcomes. But they are not without their challenges.

Finances are one of the biggest challenges we face as a small school. We have to look carefully at how we spend our budget to maximise every penny. We are creative about how we deliver educational impact with limited time and budget and the team has dedicated considerable time over the past six years looking at how we can develop and create additional teaching and break-out spaces and how we can ensure that the school looks fresh, vibrant, welcoming and is a place where children (and staff) are proud to spend their days.

Last year we created the Rainbow Room an additional small classroom for challenge and nurture groups, installed a Trim Trail on our field and installed more energy efficient heating in the main school block. This year we have installed an outdoor gym on the field and we have also just bought a further 30 new laptops for the classrooms and a new interactive whiteboard for the hall.

We have found that as a small school we are often a top choice for parents of children with additional needs. We welcome pupils of all abilities and work hard to ensure we can offer high level support without the additional adult support and budget of a larger primary school.

Following our transition from VC to VA we were successful in securing four separate bids with the Diocese for 90% of the funding for: a new fence along the Moors Path; to repair and insulate the hall roof; to completely re-do the groundworks outside our Reception Class and implement a fully integrated fire system. This significant and much needed funding will enable long term investment in our school and enables us to complete projects that we simply could not do on our own.

The new fence will, I know, not be a change welcomed by everyone. From an aesthetics and 'community feel' viewpoint we understand the difficulty of the change. However, currently we are not compliant with government guidelines which state that schools should have a 2-metre-high secure fence such as metal railings, vertical bar fencing, or welded mesh panels for the boundary of the school. In addition, the school's current perimeter fence presents a safeguarding risk to both our children and staff. Finally, the current school fence has been in a state of disrepair for a number of years with many of the slats broken or missing and many more are rotten. So, the need to replace it is evident and the responsibility to now make it compliant and safe is unquestionable. Receiving the funds for this is both timely and essential.

Less controversial is the new library project, which will be unique, eco-friendly, sustainable and a beautiful reading and working space for the school. It will also in turn enable us to create additional teaching space where our current 'library

corridor' is. Next year we also hope to replace the fascia and soffits on our main teaching block.

Working in a small school is incredibly challenging, yet the rewards are immense for adults and children alike. For me, there is no other school I'd rather lead. We must be doing something right as this year we were oversubscribed for the third year in a row.

## Helen France

Headteacher

office@aston-rowant.oxon.sch.uk



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# CHINNOR CHURCHES GO WILD! 18TH ANNIVERSARY CONVENTION

On 28th June 2025, Chinnor Churches Go Wild! (CCGW!) celebrated its 18th birthday since its foundation by Bob Sluka and Jo Whitfield in 2007. We wanted to celebrate this milestone by hosting a convention which brought together all the major players and invite them to share what we have learnt over the years and what strategic recommendations there may be for the future.

The day went well with over 30 attending, including parishioners as well as those from further afield. A number of local organisations provided information tables around St. Andrew's Church, with our special thanks going to Rob Thorpe for manning a Fair-Trade table, and to Lauretta Milligan, Jackie Griffiths and teams for providing lunch for the speakers and refreshments throughout the day.

There were many contributions during this 'feedback' session, happy memories of past events and much appreciation for CCGW! in the work it's done locally and encouragement. There was a strong recommendation that CCGW! should continue with its present range of activities and continue to be an active A Rocha Partner in Action.

## MAKING SPACE FOR WILDLIFE WITH JOHN TYLER



With so many ancient habitats disappearing from our countryside each year, even the smallest garden can provide a vital sanctuary for wild plants and animals. We look at a range of simple ways to make a garden more attractive to wildlife (and more interesting for us), including garden design, choosing the right plants, building a pond, establishing a wildflower meadow and managing your garden in a wildlife-friendly way.

Who: All ages

Where: Methodist Church, Chinnor OX39 4PZ

Date: Friday, 12 September 7.30pm

Refreshments served from 7pm

NB No parking at venue

## TESSA WYATT'S COUNTRYSIDE DIARY

Hello dear readers, it's been a while since my last diary. Life rather got in the way, but now things are on a bit more of an even keel, I've found some time to write.

I didn't get out much over winter and spring, but summer has its rewards, not least the appearance of a hedgehog in the garden for the first time in at least six years. A lovely big plump female, who comes and helps herself to dropped birdseeds from the feeder. Those Goldfinches are so untidy! The first I knew about it was one hot night a few weeks ago when we were sleeping (or trying to) with the window open in an attempt to encourage some air current. I was woken from a half sleep by a series of snuffling, snorting, grunting vocals coming from below, so I got up to have a look. There she was, busily helping herself to some nice juicy sunflower hearts. Seated staring at her from a safe distance was Tinker, our dear and very large Maine Coon cat.

Now, one thing you need to know about Tinker is that she is not a natural athlete, nor a committed hunter. If a mouse should (slowly) pass by, she might extend a vast paw and slam the poor thing into the ground and stun it, but as long as there is no further movement, she will lose interest and said mouse will make good its escape once it comes round. Spiders are simply allowed to go their own sweet way, undisturbed.

The hedgehog poses a different dilemma. She is extremely interesting, travelling at an easy trundling pace, with frequent stops for sustenance. She is extremely short sighted so as long as nobody moves she will carry on, oblivious. Movement is another matter however. At this, the first encounter, Tinker decided that a gentle tap on the hog's back might promote an interesting response. It did, but not the one Tinker expected. The paw landed, and was immediately withdrawn as it made contact with unexpectedly sharp prickles, and Mrs H rose up, rather like an old Citroen car on hydraulics, lifted her skirts and shot off like a tiny round rocket, disappearing into the flowerbed. Tinker was too preoccupied by the fear of injury to follow, retreated through the cat flap and came up the stairs to the bedroom, complaining loudly all the way.

Since then, she and the hedgehog have had several further encounters, including one when I caught my fluffy friend gently bowling a rolled up Mrs H into the tomato bed, where luckily, she couldn't be reached. Tinker of course, gave up after a couple of minutes and came in for an easier capture from her feed bowl, leaving the poor lady to uncurl and trundle off back to the birdfeeder where she resumed her interrupted midnight snack. It would appear that the constant supply of Manna from Heaven is worth the occasional interruption, and Tinker is enjoying a summer of entertainment which is distracting her from the mice, much to their relief I dare say.

Meanwhile, the meadowsweet is flowering and throwing its delicious scent into the air as I go by, the willowherb is blushing in the hedgerows and there is a lovely deep blue purple loosestrife on the bank where the Holbrook surfaces by Dashwood Court. Why it's called purple when it is clearly blue I don't know but it is beautiful and I hope it spreads. And that, dear readers, is that. Have a wonderful summer; see you in the Autumn.

**Tessa Wyatt**



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We would like you to be available for two sessions per week, either mornings or afternoons or for a whole day. We offer a rewarding, flexible and supportive working environment. You'll also learn new skills and meet new people in the course of your volunteering.

If you would like to discuss these volunteering roles, please email: [volunteer-recruitment@caox.org.uk](mailto:volunteer-recruitment@caox.org.uk) and one of our team will contact you.



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## CHURCH SERVICES

August 2025	TIME	CHURCH	SERVICE	LED BY
Sunday 3 <sup>rd</sup> August	8am	St Andrew's, Chinnor	Holy Communion (No hymns)	Jacky
	9am	Aston Rowant	Morning Prayer	Margaret
Trinity 7	1030am	St Andrew's Chinnor	Holy Communion	Jacky
	1030am	St Andrew's, Chinnor	Holy Communion	Joan
Sunday 17 <sup>th</sup> August Trinity 9	1030am	St Andrew's, Chinnor	Holy Communion	Tony, Tessa +Jo
	6pm	Sydenham	BCP Evensong	Margaret
Sunday 24 <sup>th</sup> August Trinity 10	9am	Aston Rowant	Holy Communion	Tony
	1030	Marquee Service at White's Field	Café Church with Methodists and CC	Jacky
5 <sup>th</sup> Sunday 31 <sup>st</sup> August Trinity 11	9am	Crowell	Holy Communion	Jacky
	4pm	UNITED PARISH SERVICE SYDENHAM	Hymns and Pimms Songs of Praise	Ministry Team
<b>No Soul Space at Crowell</b>				
September 2025	TIME	CHURCH	SERVICE	LED BY
Sunday 7 <sup>th</sup> September Trinity 12	8am	St Andrew's, Chinnor	Holy Communion (No hymns)	Jacky
	9am	Aston Rowant	Morning Prayer	Margaret
	1030am	St Andrew's Chinnor	Holy Communion	Jacky
	6pm	St Andrew's Chinnor	Taizé	Tony and Monica
Sunday 14 <sup>th</sup> September Trinity 13	9am	Aston Rowant	Holy Communion	Jacky
	1030am	St Andrew's, Chinnor	All Age Worship	TBC
	1030am	Sydenham	Harvest Festival	Joan
	6pm	Crowell	Holy Communion	Tony
Sunday 21 <sup>st</sup> September Trinity 14	8am	St Andrew's	Holy Communion	Jacky
	9am	Aston Rowant	Harvest Festival	Brian, Richard +Pam
	1030am	St Andrew's, Chinnor	Harvest Festival With Methodists	Jacky
	6pm	Sydenham	BCP Evensong	Margaret
Sunday 28 <sup>th</sup> September Trinity 15	9am	Aston Rowant	Holy Communion	Tony
	1030	St Andrew's Chinnor	Holy Communion	Joan and Margaret
	6pm	Crowell	Harvest Supper + Hymns	Jacky
<b>Soul Space at Crowell runs on Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> Sept 4pm</b>				

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# QUIZ NIGHT

Saturday 20th September  
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# HARVEST FESTIVAL

The United Parish of Chinnor,  
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Crowell

TRADITIONAL THANKSGIVING SERVICES:

Sunday 14th September 1030 Sydenham church  
SUNDAY 21st September 9am Aston Rowant  
SUNDAY 21st September 1030 St Andrew's  
*(a joint service alongside Chinnor Methodists)*  
Sunday 28th September 6pm:  
Harvest Supper (with hymns) at Crowell church  
*(all welcome, Ploughman's style fare, bring your own drinks)*  
*If you are able, please bring non-perishable goods to these services that will be donated to the Sharing Life Trust (our local food bank and The Porch (a homeless charity in Oxford)*

Sharing Life  
The Porch

## PARISH NOTES

PLEASE do get in touch if you have anything you think might be of interest for future issues of the Parish Notes. Plus I'm always looking for pictures to add to the pages. All ideas welcome.  
Email: [sallyparishnotes@gmail.com](mailto:sallyparishnotes@gmail.com)  
**Copy deadline for the Oct/Nov issue is 20th Sept 2025**



## ADVERTISING IN THE PARISH NOTES

The Parish Notes are an excellent and affordable way to advertise locally. They are published every two months and delivered to every household in the area. Please email Rachel Lockwood if you are interested in advertising:

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