

ASTON ROWANT, KINGSTON BLOUNT & CROWELL

PARISH NOTES



Illustration by Christopher Stockley



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

Email: sallyparishnotes@gmail.com

Copy deadline for the Feb/Mar issue is 15th Jan 2026

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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With special thanks to our team of distributors, for their continuing hard work.



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For Residents of the Parish of Aston Rowant

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Main Hall (8am–midnight)	£15.00 per hour
Committee Room only	£8.50 per hour
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Monday–Sunday & Bank Holidays

Main Hall (8am–midnight)	£16.00 per hour
Committee Room only	£9.50 per hour
Whole Day Hire (8am–11pm)	£225.00

Bar Licence (if required) will incur an additional charge of £20

To make a booking, email bookings@kbvh.org,
phone **07470 441857** or visit our website www.kbvh.org
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KINGSTON BLOUNT VILLAGE HALL DIARY

Harmony Pilates

Tuesdays: 9am-10am
saracroker@hotmail.com

Kid's Party

Friday 12 December 5.30pm

Pub Night

Friday 12 December 7.30pm

USEFUL PHONE NUMBERS

CAB Local office www.adviceguide.org.uk	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 adam.bernstein@mac.com	01844 350440
Oxon County Council www.oxfordshire.gov.uk	01865 792422
Police-Thame (Thames Valley)	101 or 999
Poor's Hillock Allotments: Francesca Musaeus francesca.musaeus@hotmail.com	
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

Litter

It's all very parochial, but as we barrel towards the new year, I want to express my thanks to those that helped with the recent litter pick at the start of November.

On each day we had six collectors – a perfect number.

They picked a variety of litter, and it's this variety that is both interesting and worrying. Collectors found a large flat screen TV, an angle grinder, a car battery, discarded signs, pieces of car bumper, as well as 'general' litter such as glass bottles, crisp packets, beer cans, vapes and food cartons – and more.

Worse, again, collectors came across building waste dumped on the Upper Ridgeway along from Kingston Hill.

I recognise that lighter items can be whipped out of bins by the wind, but larger and heavier pieces of litter are distinct and are being wantonly discarded.

I would ask anyone seeing litter being discarded to note the offender and report it to SODC via <https://tinyurl.com/5fkrfhy2>. This page has links to fly tipping and dumped waste, abandoned vehicles, litter and bins, graffiti, dog fouling and dead animals.

Lastly, the council would request that residents do not put adverts for businesses or the like around the parish, on for example, telegraph poles; please use the **KBAR** Facebook page or the Parish Notes.

FTTP

Three years ago, the parish council put much effort in trying to get FTTP – (full) fibre to the premises broadband - to residents in the parish. The plan was to secure funding for a build using the government's Gigabit voucher scheme. We were so close and almost crossed the line when funding was withdrawn because FTTP was planned to come to the parish via commercial means.

It's true that a few have FTTP via Trooli, Gigaclear or Openreach because they happen to be in the right place, but for the majority it's still only a copper wire service.

However, it looks like FTTP may soon become a reality for all. The Openreach fibre checker - <https://www.openreach.com/fibre-checker> - indicates that the company is building in the area with regular activity from engineers.

Keep an eye on that website or register for updates.

SID

A new Speed Indicator Device – SID – has now been installed on an OCC-partially funded pole on the B4009, down from the Cherry Tree heading toward the crossroads. While the parish would have preferred the location to be nearer the crossroads, ultimately, it's the county council's Highways officers who determine the locations of such poles.

Even so, it is hoped that the new SID will help calm traffic as it heads towards the M40.

Again, the parish council wants to recognise the civic-minded resident who paid half the cost of the installation.

Dates for the diary

It's a while off but please diarise the next Duck Race, down by Fiveways Corner – 1400hrs on Sunday 15 February. It's a great afternoon for children and families to race (plastic) ducks down the stream. And best of all, it's free.

Also, the Spring litter pick will run again close to the end of March and start of April; the date is yet to be confirmed as it's dependent on SODC. As before, many hands make light work.

And finally...

...the parish council would like to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a peaceful and Happy New Year.

Adam Bernstein

Chairman, Aston Rowant Parish Council

adam.bernstein@astonrowantparishcouncil.gov.uk

KINGSTON BLOUNT VILLAGE HALL



Help Needed!

We need a new Booking Clerk

Can you spare upto 2 hours a week to take on the role of Bookings Clerk? It involves processing bookings, generating invoices, confirming payments and answering queries relating to the hall.

This is all done online so a computer is a must, all training will be provided plus support from the committee when needed.

APPLY NOW!

Email Hayley at kbvhbookings@outlook.com
or Andrea at kbvhall@gmail.com

PARISH COUNCIL & LOCAL CONTACTS

Parish Website

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 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

James Robinson chairman@astonrowantcricket.co.uk

ASTON ROWANT PARISH COUNCIL NOTES

Parish Council meetings were held on Wednesday 8th October 2025 and Wednesday 12th November 2025 where the planning applications detailed below were discussed. The next meeting of the Council will be held on Wednesday 10th December.

PLANNING APPLICATIONS:

P25/S2406/PIP Redevelopment of Paddock Cottage and equine facilities to form 3 to 4 dwellings at Aston Park Stud Aston Rowant. A Permission in Principle application, not yet a full application, with reduced response time (required by 25/Sept)

RESPONSE SUBMITTED 24/SEP – we have reservations, but not able to comment further until full application is submitted.

P25/S2833/HH Addition of a bespoke garden room to rear elevation at Chiltern View Farmhouse Kingston Stert. Response due: 7/Oct.

NO OBJECTION (Neighbours have made no comment either)

P25/S3101/DA - ASR Appeal reference : APP/Q3115/C/25/3374155 deposited with the District Council as Local Planning Authority re: Land at Town Farm Cottage Brook Street K/Blount. Alleged breach: Without planning permission, the formation of an access onto a classified road in the approximate location shown between points A and B on the Land (the Access) by the infilling of an existing drainage ditch, the removal of a section of existing hedge row and erection of a five-bar gate. (SE21/293). Unclear how this differs from previously advised appeal outcome: (APP/Q3115/C/24/3336385, see previous edition of The Parish Notes) but our original objection is maintained as the work was done without seeking Planning Permission.

WITHDRAWN APPLICATIONS: None.

PLANNING DECISIONS OF SODC:

P25/S1830/PIP Permission in Principle for a phased development of 1 self-build dwelling on land at junction of Aston Rowant Road & Chinnor Road Aston Rowant. GRANTED.

P25/S2833/HH Addition of a bespoke garden room to rear elevation at Chiltern View Farmhouse Kingston Stert. GRANTED.

P25/S2406/PIP Redevelopment of Paddock Cottage and equine facilities to form 3 to 4 Dwellings at Paddock Cottage Aston Park Stud Aston Rowant. GRANTED.

PLANNING DECISIONS MADE SINCE THE LAST MEETING:

None.

PLANNING APPLICATION APPEALS:

See P25/S3101/DA - ASR above.





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CHRISTMAS TREES

The spectacular British grown Christmas trees will be on sale from the beginning of December along with fantastic Waterperry hand-finished Christmas wreaths.

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Help Santa find his friends lost all around the gardens and win a prize!



£4.50 per child*
*Children must be accompanied by an adult paying garden entrance fee.

JANUARY 2024* Enjoy winter walks and see the gardens turn into a spectacular vision as the frost spreads across the grasses and trees and the mist winds around the garden and the Riverside Walk. The garden is at its most dramatic state in January as it is cut back for the winter and prepares to burst into new life with Snowdrops in February. Don't forget to book onto one of our many courses in January and February too.



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

YOUR VILLAGE HALL NEEDS YOU!

The Village Hall committee are looking for a new Chair to help run the Hall and lead the meetings. If you are interested and want to know what is involved please contact Andrea Tinson on kbvhall@gmail.com

We are a friendly group of people who volunteer to help run the Village Hall. We meet formally four times a year and use email to contact each other outside of those times. One perk of the role is that you have two free hirings a year.



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

Sunday 28th September was the date for the Harvest Supper at Crowell. The church was decorated with an Autumn theme and the table groaned with hosting the cheese and biscuits inspired supper. (Many thanks Jacky.) We interspersed hymns and drinks with sampling the goodies on the table. An enjoyable get together.

On 9th November we remembered the fallen from Crowell village with a service of hymns, prayers and poems. The Last Post was played, the 2 minute silence observed and the Roll of Honour called. The church was decorated with poppies and candles



Andy & Maggs Warman

(Church Wardens) 01844 351909 themwarmans@btinternet.com



JOIN US FOR OUR

Christmas
PUB NIGHT

FRIDAY 12 DECEMBER 2025

Come along and celebrate our last pub night for 2025.
There will be food available on the night as well as
normal bar service

Kids party from 5:30 pm
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Bakers Piece, Kingston Blount,
Oxfordshire, OX39 4SW



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meadowviewaesthetics.co.uk

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Seasons Greetings to all associated with the cricket club.

It is a winter of change at the club – we have a new Chairman James Robinson and a new Vice Chairman Tim Hestor. Both of them have worked on the Committee in the past few years and are both Managers of highly successful Junior teams – we wish them well. At the same time, we would like to express our thanks to Josh Smith and Thad Cooper for the work they have done in these posts.

We also have new contact details for the club – the website is now www.astonrowantcricket.co.uk and the contact details for the new chairman are chairman@astonrowantcricket.co.uk.

Also, the club has changed its legal status – we are no longer a Community Amateur Sports Club (CASC) but have become a registered Charity – Aston Rowant Cricket Club Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) Registered Charity 1212786. This has been done for a number of reasons – the old CASC status is quite dated and many organisations have changed into charities. Also, the club turnover has outgrown the CASC status and we were close to the VAT levels. Finally, the charitable status will make us eligible for grants which we have previously been unable to apply for.

The Club's annual AGM will be held on 5th December from 7.30pm at the Lambert Arms, where amongst other items the new committee will be elected.

In other news, repairs to the site screens have started, you may see the scaffolding at the club in the next few weeks, final touches to the bottom pavilion are ongoing, the juniors indoor training started in Oct and continues until Dec 9 (they are keen, last weekend we even had juniors training in the outdoor nets) senior indoor nets will start in the New Year.

I hope you saw and enjoyed Linsey Smith playing in the T20 World Cup for the England team it was a success for her if not the England team. She is now in Australia playing for the Hobart Hurricanes in the Big Bash.

Finally, as ever the club is looking for sponsors for the 2026 season, both for main sponsors and individual players – if you are interested, please contact the Chairman.

Steven Sowerby

www.astonrowantcc.com



Peter Tinson



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The logo for Harmony Physiotherapy & Pilates features a stylized human figure in purple and blue, with a trail of dots behind it, suggesting movement or a path. To the right of the figure, the text 'HARMONY' is in a large, blue, sans-serif font, and 'PHYSIOTHERAPY & PILATES' is in a smaller, purple, sans-serif font below it.

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At Harmony, we aim to inspire and empower individuals to achieve their goals. We are dedicated to creating a welcoming environment where every client feels valued.

For more info:
Email: Harmony.physio@outlook.com
Website: www.watlingtonwellness.com

The logo for Watlington Wellness Centre features a circular emblem with a tree in the center, surrounded by the text 'WATLINGTON WELLNESS CENTRE' in a circular arrangement.Three blue arrows pointing to the right, located at the bottom right of the advertisement.

ARPC FOOTPATH AND AMENITIES GROUP

A Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to all the parishioners who use the footpaths in the parish.

Firstly, can I thank the people who took part in the Autumn Litter Pick over the weekend of the 1st and 2nd of November. It was interesting to see the things that have been fly tipped in the hedges. These included a wide screen TV, an angle grinder complete with plug and various parts of cars including a battery, a front bumper and several hub caps. But the star was a full wooden deck which was left by someone in the layby on Kingston Hill.

Can I ask people to note the date of the Duck Race on the 15th February 2026, details of which will be in the Jan Parish Notes. Also, the Parish Walk on Sunday January 4th the details of which Peter Hetherington put in the last edition of the notes.

As Mike has detailed in his report there has been good work done down at Fiveways and can I add my thanks to the volunteers. Can you also read Peter Tinson's notes about the work in Pleck Wood.

The Parish Maintenance Tasks review was completed and approved at the October Parish Council Meeting; the revised list is available on the Parish Website.

At the November Parish Council Meeting the proposed names for the streams in the parish were accepted in principle. These are:

Holbrook which runs from Aston Lake down to Fiveways (this is an old already known name)

Stadtway Brook, which flows into the Holbrook beyond Fiveways (another known name)

Aston Winterbourne which runs down Aston Rowant Road and Church Lane to meet the Holbrook.

School Brook which rises near the school and forms the small pond on the Lower Icknield Way.

Kingston Brook which runs through Kingston Blount and then to Kingston Stert.

Crowell Brook which rises in Crowell and runs to Kingston Stert.

We will forward these names to the River Thame Trust who are looking at the quality of the water in the River Thame. All of the named streams eventually run into the River Thame via Cuttlebrook in Thame.

Please, can I remind you of the Walks at the Foot of the Chilterns booklet that is published by the Parish Council. This booklet is free to all newcomers to the parish; if you want a copy please contact either Tracy Lambourne the parish clerk or myself. If you want a second copy, they are available for £3 – again please contact either Tracy or myself.

Finally, on behalf of the Parish Council can we thank Simon Coulson who has once again planted up the tubs which do so much to brighten up the entrance into the parish.

Steven Sowerby

Chair of Footpaths and Amenities Group

stevensowerby@hotmail.com 07802 81425.

FIVEWAYS

The photo shows a Brown Trout from the Sheep Brook at Lewknor. It has beautiful markings which is unique to this stream. Note the big tail fin. We used to have them in the Holbrook but we haven't seen any for years. The lower Holbrook and the Crowell Stream could, with work, support trout.

I have seen native fish above Fiveways today but I have also heard that there are very small Koi in the Holbrook. These are obviously non-natives, which are unlikely to survive where there are pike.



We do have Sticklebacks and Miller's Thumbs. I have not seen any Signal crayfish recently in the Holbrook but they are a real problem in Lewknor, where they damage the banks by tunnelling.

The flow of the stream at Fiveways remains poor – despite recent rain. The Holbrook is fed from “reservoirs” of water holding chalk in the Chilterns. Whilst some rain does run off quickly, most enters the chalk and emerges where there is an escape route through the non-porous top soil. The Chilterns are approximately 100 metres higher than at the base and the water travels down at a metre each year; so it can take one hundred years to emerge in springs in extreme cases. Local water movement is studied by Thames Water and retired hydrologists in the Watlington Environmental Group. Given the low levels of water in the Chiltern's aquifers local flooding is less likely this year.

The Fiveways stream sides have been strimmed, except for the lower end and we are one step nearer to duck racing which is confirmed as Sunday 15th Feb at 2 - 4pm ...weather and flow permitting.

Can I thank those who responded to my plea for more help with maintaining the site. It is much appreciated. If you are down there take some secateurs and keep the path safe. I will plant the small trees I have been given now we have had rain.

I am interested in finding someone with an interest in native trees to be a tree curator. We have two Black Poplars – one male and one female, and one “dead” stump – a result of the electricity company wanting to maintain power during the winter. I have a suspicion there are Black Poplar suckers coming up from the “dead” tree! I listened to a BBC podcast on Black Poplars recently, which described the work being done to study the genetics and the family history of these rare and ancient trees. Our local trees are not listed and a recent walk on the footpath to the left of Lewknor Church revealed two more, including a magnificent aged specimen. They are not protected or known on national records and deserve to be. They were a favourite of Constable!

The photo shows the location of the lost hamlet of Penn, which was on both sides of this track from Fiveways going towards Postcombe, just beyond the hedge shown.

The track was the old London to Oxford Road. Nothing remains of what would have been 3-4 wooden houses (see old maps on parish website). The Stadtway's treeline is in the background.

Seasons Greetings.

Mike Eaton

mike.eaton@btopenworld.com



POOR'S HILLOCK GARDEN ALLOTMENT

Thinking about an allotment? Now's the perfect time!

As winter settles in and gardens fall quiet, it's a perfect time to think ahead to the growing season. Poor's Hillock Gardens have a small number of plots becoming available, and we would love to welcome growers – experienced or complete beginners.

If you would like to find out more, please contact Francesca.musaeus@hotmail.com
Come and grow with us this spring



NOTICEBOARD

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

Friday Coffee Mornings

Kingston Blount Village Hall.

All welcome!

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

November 28th

December 12th Christmas special

January 16th & 30th

February 13th & 27th

March 13th & 27th

April 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.
Bring some new ones along to add to the collection.

.....

Christmas coffee morning

12th December 10.15 – 12.00

Kingston Blount village hall

Come and join us for this very special seasonal event!

Mince pies, Mulled Cider, Hot spiced Chocolate.

Tree of light.

Optional Picture quiz
and Bingo.

Christmas music.

Children from the Forest
school are coming to sing
a festive song, enjoy a
healthy snack and make
a decoration from our
activity table.

All children are very
welcome.



Used Postage Stamps

Due to modern technology, there are now fewer stamps being used. However, I am still collecting them, so if you have any spare used stamps I would be very grateful if you could either pop them through my letterbox or put them in the small tin inside Aston Rowant Church.

Thank you all for your continued support.

Shirley Smith.

Meadow Vale, Pleck Lane, Kingston Blount.

(The bungalow behind the picket fence.)



Annual New Year Parish Walk

The walk this year will be on Sunday 4 January meeting promptly at 10.00 am in the centre of Stokenchurch on the Green opposite the fire damaged Kings Hotel. The walk is only 4.5m and has been chosen as it is a relatively mud free walk. It offers a varied landscape and with some very pleasant Beech woodland walking on good paths. There are several short inclines on the route. There is plenty of off-road parking on the minor roads around the green. Everyone is welcome. As usual this is a joint walk organised with Thame and Wheatley Ramblers. You don't have to be a Ramblers member or live in the Parish to come along. If you have any concerns, I am accredited leader for Ramblers.

Please wear walking boots or walking shoes. We will have a banana break at the halfway point (other sustenance allowed!) It would be helpful if you could book please.



Peter Hetherington

for Ramblers and our Parish Footpath and Amenities Committee

07767 647714

rphetherington@aol.com

Friends of St Andrew's Church,
Chinnor

CHRISTMAS TREE FESTIVAL

SANTA'S WORKSHOP

Saturday 6th December

to

Sunday 14th December

Open 2pm to 5pm each day

All Welcome

Donation at the Door **£2**

Seasonal Refreshments

Musical Entertainment

Lucky Draw for Christmas
Hamper

All funds raised go towards care and
maintenance of St. Andrew's Church

www.achurchnearyou.com/St-Andrew-Chinnor



LETTER FROM THE HEADTEACHER

Aston Rowant School Shines in SIAMS Inspection

We are delighted to share the wonderful news that Aston Rowant Church of England Primary School has received an incredible SIAMS (Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools) report following its recent inspection.

The report praises the school for living out its Christian vision: “To be a community of courageous life-long learners, who are rooted in God, live out our Christian values and enjoy life in all its fullness” This vision is described as deeply rooted and inclusive, shaping every aspect of school life — from strategic decisions to daily routines and relationships.

Inspectors highlighted the school’s strong sense of community and care:

“Aston Rowant is a small school with a big heart which strives to care deeply for all” and “Leaders have high aspirations for their community. They know and cherish each individual member.”

The report also celebrates the nurturing environment that enables pupils to flourish:

“Pupils are thoroughly prepared and well equipped to leave Aston Rowant as confident individuals who have strong self-belief. They have a true sense of self-worth and “Families frequently highlight how the school goes ‘above and beyond’ to help their children to progress and achieve their full potential.”

Our children are empowered to speak out and take action — whether presenting to MPs, setting up recycling stations, working with the local foodbank or championing causes the children believe in. Our children are learning to be courageous and take action and live with purpose and compassion.

This captures the heart of what makes Aston Rowant School. This reflects a culture of care and commitment that ensures every child is supported to thrive academically and personally. It’s not just about academic success—it’s about nurturing resilient, compassionate learners who are ready to make a positive difference in the world.

This glowing report is a testament to the dedication of our staff, governors, clergy, and families who work together to create a school where every child is cherished and encouraged to thrive.

We hope that you enjoy celebrating this achievement with us and continue to support Aston Rowant as we live out our vision in the heart of our community.

Helen France

Headteacher

office@aston-rowant.oxon.sch.uk

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Contact Alexandra Cawte-McDermid (PA to Dr Lesley Parkinson) to arrange a complementary initial consultation. Tel: **07958 198214** or Email: **pa.brainhealthclinic@outlook.com**

Pleck Wood is the area of woodland adjoining the playing fields in Kingston Blount. Over the past few years some minor work has been carried out to maintain the wood for the benefit of both wildlife and parishioners of all ages. To date, this work has largely been restricted to coppicing a number of the hazel trees on the south side of the wood.

Coppicing has been practiced throughout history to provide a regular supply of wood for a variety of uses. In the past, coppiced woodland would provide wood for manufacturing charcoal, small timber for building houses and carts, and to provide bark for use in tanning leather. Hazel trees were coppiced to provide stakes and shoots for wattle fencing. Coppicing also has the effect of increasing the light reaching the woodland floor which in turn should encourage wildflowers such as primroses and bluebells to colonise the area.

When the hazels were planted in the year 2000, the intention was that they would be regularly coppiced. Unfortunately, there were a number of years when coppicing did not take place with the result that many of the trees now have substantial growth. The programme of work being carried out aims to address this – once the height of the hazel trees has been reduced it is intended to coppice the hazels on a rolling basis so that there is a mix of established and young growth. This year the focus will be on removing the outward growth from the hazel trees on the north side of the park (south side of the Wood) to encourage more vertical growth (and hence straight wood for staves). If there is enough time, some of the hazel trees on the Crowell side of the wood will also be coppiced.

The branches removed that are suitable for fencing/plant support (i.e. those reasonably straight and roughly 1cm – 2.5cm in diameter) will be made available for parishioners to collect and use. Larger branches (over 2.5cm in diameter) will be trimmed for parishioners to take and dry for firewood. Please note that any wood taken for burning should be left for at least two years before being burnt. Any material that does not fall into these two categories will be added to the ‘dead hedge’ located within the wood near the central footpath. A dead hedge is an area where woody cuttings are woven between stakes to form a tangle of cuttings to provide an environment for birds, insects and small mammals to shelter. Typically dunnocks, wrens and robins will make use of a dead hedge to nest and forage.

Finally, there were three entrances to the Wood from the playing fields. The path through the entrance on the western side has become overgrown with brambles and is no longer passable. The brambles and other growth will be cleared back from the pathway to reopen the route into the Wood. If anyone would like to assist with this work, please contact Peter Tinson via email at p.a.tinson@btinternet.com.



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10am-noon
- Sat 6th Dec** Sydenham Christmas Fayre noon-2pm
- Sat 6th - Sun 14th Dec** St Andrew's Christmas Tree Festival 2pm-5pm
- Sunday 15th Dec:** Seven Lessons and Carol service: 4pm Sydenham church tbc
- Friday 19th Dec** 7pm Carols@Crowell (with readings)
- Sunday 21st Dec:** Nine Lessons and Carol service:
4pm Aston Rowant Church
6pm St Andrew's, Chinnor
- Wednesday 24th Dec** Crib Services:
4pm Aston Rowant
4pm Sydenham
5pm St Andrew's Chinnor
- Wednesday 24th Dec** Midnight (in Bethlehem) Mass:
9pm St Andrew's, Chinnor
10pm St Mary's, Sydenham
- Christmas Day** Holy Communion:
10:30am St. Andrew's, Chinnor
9am Aston Rowant



PARISH NOTES

PLEASE do get in touch if you have anything you think might be of interest for future issues of the Parish Notes. Email: sallyparishnotes@gmail.com

Copy deadline for the Feb/Mar issue is 15th Jan 2026

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