



Issue No 533 March 2023

## Village Survey on its way

At last! It has finally arrived: your chance to say how you would like Stonesfield to grow over the coming years.

In the first few days of March, the Village Survey will be delivered to every household in the village. In it you will be asked what developments in housing, transport, infrastructure and the environment you would like to see - for yourself, and for future generations.

### Why now? And what happens to your answers?

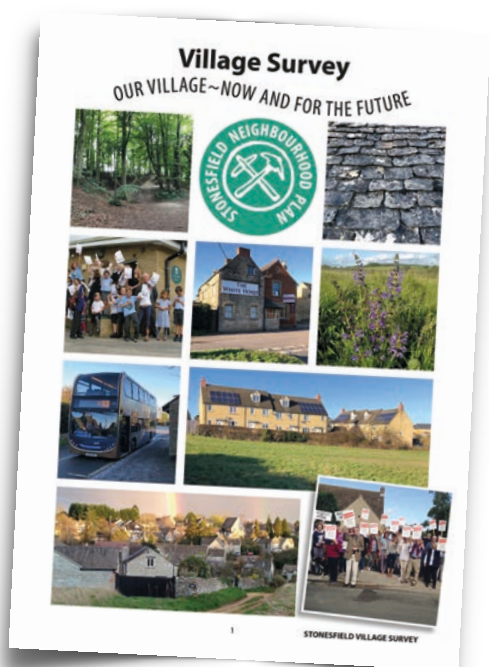
A Parish Council steering group is preparing a Neighbourhood Plan for Stonesfield. Once approved by village residents and the District Council, it will form part of the West Oxfordshire Development Plan. All planning applications must be determined with regard to the Development Plan. The Neighbourhood Plan will therefore give Stonesfield residents a chance to influence the policies on which planning decisions are made. We need evidence upon which to base the policies. An important source of the evidence will be your answers to the survey. The steering group will use your answers in drafting the Stonesfield Neighbourhood Plan.

### What's it got to do with me?

Your answers will stand as your statement of how you want Stonesfield to develop.

- The government is pushing for more houses: what sort do you think we need, and how should they look? What infrastructure do you think is needed to support them?
- The environment is under threat: which green spaces would you like to protect? Do you care about the state of the river?
- There is a danger the S3 bus service could be cut: do you want to keep it?
- Would you like dedicated cycle paths?
- Would you welcome back the pub?

Continued on page 5



## Do you want to send in an article but have no email?

Just call the editor (see below) who can arrange to collect your handwritten copy.

## Do you want to advertise?

An advertisement in *The Stonesfield Slate* starts from as little as **£3 per month**.

Please email **slate-ads@stonesfield.online**, or call the Publishers on 01993 898841, for full details of availability, sizes, requirements and cost. We can also help with design if required.

Any new advertisements, or changes to existing advertisements, should be emailed to **slate-ads@stonesfield.online** **by 10th of the month**.

All advertisements must be **paid for in advance**.

## Disclaimer

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Articles are solely the responsibility of the writers and their opinions do not necessarily accord with those of the editors or publishers.

Whilst we strive to ensure all information is correct, we are not responsible for anything that happens as a result of you using the information. If you find any errors or omissions then please contact the Publisher and we will endeavour to correct them.

Dates for your diary are always subject to change. Please check with event organisers.

The editor and the publishers reserve the right to edit, shorten or omit any article submitted.

### **Publishers**

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**Deadline for next issue 15 March**  
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### **Printer**

Windrush Press, Witney  
  
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### **Advertising:**

**Deadline for next issue 10 March**  
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Current and past copies of the *Slate* are available at [www.stonesfield.online](http://www.stonesfield.online)

## Dates for your diary:

### March

1	Parish Council meeting	Stonesfield Primary School	7pm
1,2,8,9,15,16	Hanna Bathe HITT Class	Village Hall	7-8pm
1,8,15,22,29	Gatehouse Pilates	Village Hall	9.30-10.30am
1,8,15,22,29	Folk dancing	Village Hall	7.45-10pm
2,6,9,13,16	Taekwondo	Village Hall	5.30-6.30pm
2,9,16,23,30	Book Break	Library	12.30-2pm
3,10,17,24,31	Baby & Toddlers Group	Village Hall	10am-12noon
4	Community Café	Village Hall	10am-2pm
4	Repair Café	Village Hall	11am-2pm
4	Upcycling Workshop	Village Hall	11am-2pm
6,13,20,27	Monday Coffee	St James' Centre	8.45-11.30am
7	North Leigh History Society talk	N. Leigh Memorial Hall	7.30pm
7,14,21,28	Zumba	Village Hall	7-8pm
7,14,21,28	Zumba Strong	Village Hall	8.15-9.15pm
7,14,21,28	Winter Warmer	Village Hall	5-7.30pm
7, 21	Carers Café	Village Hall	10am-12noon
10	Witney Music Society Concert	Methodist Church, Witney	7.30pm
13	Gardening Club talk	St James' Centre	7.30pm
20,23,27,30	Taekwondo	Village Hall	5.30-6.30pm
22,23,29,30	Hanna Bathe HITT Class	Village Hall	7-8pm

### STONESFIELD VOLUNTARY TRANSPORT SCHEME

Our volunteer drivers are available to take you to local medical appointments or to the hospitals in Oxford and Banbury.

We make no charge but welcome a donation towards expenses

- see separate item under Notices & News.

COVID safety precautions are still in place.

Please call Viv Kendall (01993 891803) to book transport in March.

# Notices & news

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## **Tony Rowlinson**

We would like to thank all those who sent their condolences to us at this sad time. It has been a great comfort to us all. Tony will be sadly missed by us.

Stonesfield is a wonderful village with all its friendly residents. We settled here in 1974 and have had a good life with all that Stonesfield has to offer.

Jill Rowlinson and family

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## **Debbie Gambier**



Debbie Gambier

David and his daughter, Daniella, would like to thank all their friends in Stonesfield for their love, support, prayers, and kind words following Debbie's sudden and unexpected death from a heart attack on 14 January at the age of 65. David and Debbie lived in Hunts Close from 1989 to 2021, and Daniella was born in 1992.

Debbie made friends working through the years with other mums at playgroup, then outside the school gate as the kids moved on to the village school, and from there to all the numerous parents' evenings that followed at The Marlborough. She always enjoyed the short walk over to the village shop and meeting all its different owners over the years. David and Daniella are both still devastated at the loss of a beloved wife and wonderful mother, but as Debbie would have wanted, are carrying on with life as best they can, blessed as they are with so many happy memories of 39 years of marriage and 30 years of motherhood.

David Gambier (07766 406759)

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## **Tony Scott**

An appreciation of Tony's life and commitment to Stonesfield Library is on page 19, under *I'm a Reader*.

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## **Contributions to The Slate**

The editorial team and publishers are conscious that not everyone has access to email and/or a computer. If you are in this situation and would like to submit something for publication, please get in touch with the Editor in order to make alternative arrangements.

We are happy to collect something handwritten from you or to take it down over the phone. The Editor's name and contact number appear on page 2 of each issue.

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## **Village Survey on its way** (cont)

**Your views are crucial.** Please make every effort to complete and return the survey, so we can record your views and preferences and create a Neighbourhood Plan for the village. It only takes half an hour!

**How do I complete it?** We strongly encourage you to complete it online. It's very simple: instructions are on the survey itself. If you would prefer to use the paper version, you can drop your completed survey off at the shop or the library, from where you can also pick up more copies for your household if needed. If you can't do that, email us at [info@stonesfieldplan.com](mailto:info@stonesfieldplan.com) so we can arrange for someone to deliver / collect it.

### **What's the deadline? 31 March 2023**

The more people who complete the survey, the more accurate will be the picture of how you want the village to develop. So please complete the survey this month, and encourage friends and family to do the same. There will be a prize draw from all completed surveys (on-line and paper) for a £50 Amazon voucher!

If you have any questions or would like further information about the survey or the Neighbourhood Plan go to:

[www.stonesfield.online/neighbourhood-plan/](http://www.stonesfield.online/neighbourhood-plan/), or email us at [info@stonesfieldplan.com](mailto:info@stonesfieldplan.com).

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## **Village Hall News**

Hurrah, we can now see little glimmers of spring popping up in the form of snowdrops and crocus, and there are green shoots pushing up through the decaying leaves in the woods so that's always a good sign that spring is in the air!

We have lots of regular groups running but there is still plenty of weekend space for some fun events, so if you have anything in mind, please do let me know.

**Community Café:** We didn't have a café in February, but the Repair Café is back on Saturday 4 March 11- 2pm to offer you refreshments while the volunteers work their magic taking care of your broken items! If you can let them know in advance at [stonesfieldrepaircafe@gmail.com](mailto:stonesfieldrepaircafe@gmail.com) what you want to bring and what you think is wrong with it, they will try to ensure that they have the right person there to help you.

Community Café slots available for 2023 are the first Saturday of the following months: April, May, July, August, October, November (but we can be flexible). Let me know if you would like to run a café and raise money for a local charity or cause.

**Winter Warmer:** This is a successful initiative with the Stonesfield Food Group hosting a weekly social supper with optional craft activity, book and toy swap. Come along on a Tuesday from 5 pm till 7.30pm, all are welcome and there is no charge for the event. Come on your own, bring your family or bring a friend; it is a fun and social evening with dinner and activities.

Thank you to everyone for your continued support.

Jacqueline Carthew (898919)

Secretary & Booking Clerk for Stonesfield Village Hall

[stonesfieldvh@gmail.com](mailto:stonesfieldvh@gmail.com)

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## **Stonesfield Community Café**

We will be running the community café on Saturday, 4 March with tea, coffee, cake from 10.00am and a light lunch served from 12.00 until 2.00pm.

We're working in collaboration with Oxford Food Hub to repurpose surplus food. This not only stops perfectly good food going to landfill, but significantly helps us keep our costs down, so that any money we make can be channelled towards helping villagers survive the current cost of living crisis. The Village Hall generously sponsors the club room.

We work on a pay-as-you-feel basis, that means you can contribute however you can to the success of our project: donating your time, skills, money, or something even more imaginative! We will have a menu with indicative costs on it so that you can gauge what to give, but ultimately it's up to you.

The Repair Café is running at the same time in the main hall, so do come in while you wait. The Neighbourhood Plan team will also be there to answer any questions you may have about the survey that will have dropped through your letterbox. Look forward to seeing you there.

Susan Rudlin

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## **Stonesfield Repair Café – Don't throw it away!**

Thank you for supporting the Repair Café - so far we have saved over 140kg from going to landfill.

The next Repair Café will be Saturday 4 March, 11am - 2pm in Stonesfield Village Hall. We will look at all electrical appliances, items of furniture, mechanical

items, computers and phones and associated software problems, and tools which need sharpening.

Please bring your items by 1.30pm. It's helpful if you can tell us beforehand what you are bringing and what's wrong, at [stonesfieldrepaircafe@gmail.com](mailto:stonesfieldrepaircafe@gmail.com).

Delicious drinks, cake and lunches will be available, provided by the Community Café.

Mike Sofroniou (07530 958111)  
[stonesfieldrepaircafe@gmail.com](mailto:stonesfieldrepaircafe@gmail.com)

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## **Upcycling Workshop – New from Old!**

Expanding the work of the Repair Café, this month we are running a new venture, also in Stonesfield Village Hall on 4 March, between 11am - 2pm.

Would you like to learn a new skill which will help you transform a worn but treasured item into something you can still use? We can help you turn your old jeans into a bag or your boyfriend's cast-off shirt into a stylish bandana! Contact us to book a space at the Upcycling Workshop. We need your name, contact number, age if under 18, and whether you have an item you want to upcycle or would like help sourcing one. Tell us if you have an idea of what you want to make or if you'd like our upcycling gurus to come up with suggestions.

To register contact us at [stonesfieldrepaircafe@gmail.com](mailto:stonesfieldrepaircafe@gmail.com). The workshop is free but donations are invited to cover costs.

Mike Sofroniou (07530 958111)  
[stonesfieldrepaircafe@gmail.com](mailto:stonesfieldrepaircafe@gmail.com)

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## Scout Treasurer needed

1st Stonesfield Scouts are looking for someone to be the group treasurer. This is a really exciting time for the group as we are celebrating 75 years of scouting in the village and building the new hut. Our treasurer has stood down after four amazing years, but has prepared all the handover documents. The group is in good health, so it would need a few hours a month to help prepare the accounts, attend a few meetings and coordinate the billing. No prior experience is necessary, but some familiarity with accounting and computers would be helpful. Please contact Ben through [chair@stonesfield-scouts.org.uk](mailto:chair@stonesfield-scouts.org.uk) if you are interested.

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## Could you be a Scout leader?

If you are interested in helping the group, then please get in touch. We are after people to help run and eventually consider leading a few sessions. We have groups ranging from ages 6-14, and a wealth of experience to help you get up and running. Without you there will be no Scouts in the Stonesfield, so please get involved. Email Ben to hear more. Don't think about it, just do it!

Ben Whitworth  
[chair@stonesfield-scouts.org.uk](mailto:chair@stonesfield-scouts.org.uk)

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## Voluntary Transport Scheme: suggested donations

Sadly, as for most organisations, our costs are going up and so with regret we will have to raise our suggested donations slightly from 1 March. Stonesfield Voluntary Transport Scheme has been providing lifts to medical appointments since 2007 – that's 15 years. For trips to local GP surgeries, our suggested

donations have largely remained unchanged since 2009. Since then we have greatly extended the list of places our volunteer drivers can take you, including the Oxford hospitals and those in Banbury and Bicester.

The new suggested donations have mainly risen by £1-2, and are still rather less than the cost of a taxi. This covers travel both there and back, including waiting while you are at your appointment, and the suggested donation will always be made clear at the time of booking.

Viv Kendall (891803)

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## Now's the time to go by (Stagecoach) bus



With the cost of living being a hot topic, now's the time to travel for less than £2! It's true. You can take a single journey and never pay more than £2. If your current ticket cost is less than £2, don't worry: it'll stay the same price!

The Bus Fare Cap Grant scheme is a Government-funded scheme running on most single (including Child and Student) bus journeys across England and has been extend to 30 June 2023.

Buy your £2 single ticket on the Stagecoach Bus App or on the bus using cash, contactless or Apple/Google Pay. It's that simple!



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## Villager Community Bus



I have been wondering whether it is worth mentioning in the Slate the Villager community bus which goes to Witney every Monday, Tuesday and Friday. It arrives in the village at 9.45am, and leaves Witney again at 11.55am from Sainsbury's and 12 noon from the Buttercross. It is sponsored by Oxfordshire County Council.

I have recently been using it and am often asked by people passing if I am going to Charlbury. Perhaps newcomers to the village are unaware of this service. If we don't use it we could lose it!

Jayne Clapton

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## Tree planting milestones and green corridors



With the support of the Ditchley Trustees and Robert Hobill, who farms the land, the Stonesfield tree planters have planted 68 trees up the footpath from the Ridings, past Ruddy Well and up towards New Barn Farm. This includes some wild service trees generously donated by Ditchley

Estate. The service tree is rare and an indicator of an ancient woodland. Its autumn berries can be used to produce alcohol and until the mid-nineteenth century, supplied pubs. The common name for the tree is 'chequers', giving the name to pubs and inns, and also the Prime Minister's country residence.

We have now planted 337 trees around Stonesfield. Also walking up the Oxfordshire way from the bottom of Laughton Hill, you can see the progress being made with the skill of hedge laying.

We are in advanced discussions with Fawler and Charlbury to improve green corridors reaching out from Stonesfield to Fawler. These will involve planting a wide range of trees for birds and insects to improve the habitat, working in partnership with our neighbours. The corridors will be on Blenheim land farmed by the Stobo family, and we are grateful for their continuing support.

Replacing the dead silver Birch in the new graveyard



Many thanks for the generous support from sponsors, and please get in touch if you would like to sponsor trees.

John Sampson

John.sampson9@btinternet.com



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## **Dumb Waiter, and Celebration from the Stonesfield Players**

### **The Dumb Waiter**

Sally Wainwright (creator-writer of *Happy Valley* and *Gentleman Jack*) directed a chilling production of Harold Pinter's *The Dumb Waiter* at the end of January in Stonesfield Village Hall. It was as ominous as it was funny, a perfect embodiment of Pinter's 'comedy of menace' writing style.



Photo: Geraint Lewis

We were immediately unsettled by the atmosphere, a singular beam of light casting shadows across a dingy basement. Sally's pacing of the performance kept us tingling with anticipation as the play began with an extended non-dialogue scene, allowing us time to analyse the setting, for the hall to drift away and the basement to absorb us all. This eery claustrophobia was mirrored seamlessly by the performances of Adrian Hunter (Ben) and Mark Saville (Gus) who played two hitmen becoming increasingly tense as they wait for the details of their next assignment. They balanced the high tension and the lighter, comedic moments so naturally, their acting wouldn't have seemed out of place in the Pinter theatre itself.

Ben's exasperation with Gus's restlessness was palpable, ensuring the audience was gripped throughout. Hunter made a menacing Ben, unpredictably brilliant, going from aggressively flicking through

his newspaper and arguing over kettles to a calm and measured final acceptance when his task is confirmed. This range showcased Hunter as a professional performer and the same applies to Saville. In contrast to Ben's hardened exterior and assertiveness, Saville played the tea-obsessed and inquisitive Gus. His anxiety was portrayed marvellously as he applied an awkward, jittery physicality, emphasising his vulnerability. His unravelling at the lack of answers, teamed with his flawless comic timing endeared us towards Gus immensely, making it a real heart-in-mouth moment when we found the task all along was for Ben to kill Gus. Overall Sally Wainwright created an ideal balance of pace, humour and thrilling anticipation... but we were left with one burning question; to light the gas, or to light the kettle?

### **Celebration**

Rebecca Sherlaw-Johnson created an immense buzz in the village hall with her original play, *Celebration*, in memory of the esteemed member of the Stonesfield Players, Steve Searle. The play revolves around an am-dram group, organising a memorial performance for their friend. I bet you any amount of money that there was no straight face in the house during this nostalgic comedy, where the cast reminisced over the plays that Steve was involved in over his thirty-year stint with the players.

Teamed with two musical numbers and a slick choreographed dance, *Celebration* was an unforgettable visual spectacle which oozed fun and affection. Taking on the organiser of the group was Gareth Meager (Hugo) who had exceptional comic timing, while maintaining a sensitivity which was necessary for such a topic.

Alison Richards also deserves a mention for her contagious positive energy, tempting even the most shy members of my friends and family to clap along with her. Rebecca's script contained brilliant self-awareness, with Mark Burniston's character Max, who played an overbearing thespian, trying to bag each role for the memorial performance. His hilarious shamelessness poked fun at am-dram itself, something Steve Searle would have certainly laughed at. Overall, Rebecca's play let off a firework in the Stonesfield village hall, showering colourful light and joy over all of us.

Grace Bartle

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## Combe WI

At our February meeting, members enjoyed a talk by Jane Abbott about alpacas and their fabulous fluff. Together with telling us all about alpacas, Jane demonstrated both wet and dry felting methods and had many impressive items on display that she had made using both methods.

The WI meeting in March is our Annual Meeting, with a bring-and-share supper and is for members only. We look forward to welcoming existing members, potential new members and guests to our April meeting on Monday 11 April, which will be an informal spring-themed craft evening, providing a good opportunity to socialise and find out more about the WI.

WI meetings are open to females over 18 years of age. Non-members are charged £5 per meeting, and guests can attend up to 3 meetings a year before deciding whether or not to join. The annual membership subscription from April is £46. We hold 11 meetings a year and have a varied and

interesting programme of speakers, events and outings. WI meetings are held in the Reading Room, Combe from 7.30 – 9.30pm, on the second Monday of each month.

Julia Sharpe (891058)

Secretary Combe WI

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## Witney Music Society concert

The final concert of Witney Music Society's 2022-23 season will be given by Ensemble Mirage, a sextet comprising string quartet plus clarinet and piano. The programme includes Mozart's Clarinet Quintet and also features works by Prokofiev, Copland and Fibich. The concert is at 7.30pm on Friday 10 March at High Street Methodist Church, Witney.

Tickets (£15 or £1 for under-19s) are available in advance online or at the door from 7pm. For more information, please telephone 01993 898020 or visit [www.witneymusicsociety.org.uk](http://www.witneymusicsociety.org.uk).

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## Morris / Folk dancing taster

Wychwayz Border Morris and Stonesfield Folk Dance Club are coming together to offer a free taster session demonstrating two different styles of traditional dance. Come and give it a go – in Charlbury Memorial Hall, Browns Lane, Charlbury,



on Saturday 22 April at 2-4 pm.  
Refreshments and cake will be served

Wychwayz Border Morris are a very friendly, inclusive and welcoming group of Morris dancers, dancing the traditional border style of dance with sticks and wearing rag/tatter jackets. We are looking for new dancers and musicians of all ages and abilities to join us. No previous dancing experience is required: the dances are easy to learn and you can make them as energetic as you like. If you can play a musical instrument and enjoy playing simple traditional folk music, we would love to hear from you. We practise on a Tuesday evening in Charlbury but it is not necessary to come along every week. We also enjoy some social time over a drink after practice. For more information contact Teresa on 07881 963328 or email [wychwayzmorris@gmail.com](mailto:wychwayzmorris@gmail.com).

Stonesfield Folk Dance Club has been going for 50 years. The English Country Dance tradition goes back hundreds of years and is far more complicated than your average barn dance or ceilidh, though generally not as energetic. The so-called 'Playford Dances' were collected and published by John Playford from 1650 onwards, and country dancing was popular between 1650 and 1800. In the 20th century folk dance and song saw a revival, inspired by the work of Cecil Sharp who collected and published folk music, country dances and Morris dances. Today there are thousands of English Country Dances for a caller to choose from, including Playford, Contra (from New England) and contemporary. The Stonesfield Folk Dance Club meets every Wednesday from 8-10 pm at Stonesfield Village Hall, and welcomes new members. Unlike Wychwayz Morris they do not dress up or perform for

the public, but just like the Morris they have a lot of fun! For more information contact Janet Sly on 07947 076257.

Teresa Duester

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## **Pink Ribbon Walk**



The Breast Cancer Now Pink Ribbon Walk 2023 event is due to take place on Saturday 13 May, starting and finishing in the grounds of Blenheim Palace.

Money raised from the Pink Ribbon Walk series continues to make a huge difference in developing services for those whose lives are affected by breast cancer and into critical research into the disease. None of this would be possible without local community support of the event.

They are continuing with the route modified from 2022 to keep more distance within the grounds of Blenheim Park. The entire length of the 10-mile route is within Blenheim Park. The 20-mile route now avoids the village of Combe and exits the park three miles after the start. As always, the plan utilises public access footpaths and bridleways wherever possible. All road junctions will also be signed with warning signs for both traffic and walkers and will be marshalled.

Look up Pink Ribbon Walk 2023, to see the stunning walk at Blenheim last year, and to register. The group organising the event is [www.classicchallenge.co.uk](http://www.classicchallenge.co.uk).

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## North Leigh History Society

Grahame Kew will be giving a talk on Tuesday 7 March about Minster Lovell – although it is now in ruins, Minster Lovell has a long and interesting history. Come and find out more at Grahame's talk. We meet at 7.30pm in North Leigh Memorial Hall OX29 6SA; members £18 per year, visitors £4 per talk. Further details are available from Diana Power (01993 882301) or Robert Kyte at kyterobert@gmail.com and 01993 880368.

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## Campaign to Protect Rural England – Trustees wanted for Oxfordshire

Do you care about your local countryside? Do you want to make a difference? Due to retirement of current trustees, we are looking for an Honorary Secretary and a Board Member to join our team.

This is an excellent opportunity to play an influential role in a respected and long-standing environmental charity, applying your experience to make a real difference and to be part of a friendly group that is passionate about the Oxfordshire countryside.

Application deadline is 30 March 2023 in the first instance, but we are happy to receive expressions of interest on an ongoing basis.

For further information, please contact our Branch Director, Helen Marshall, on [director@cpreoxon.org.uk](mailto:director@cpreoxon.org.uk) or 01491 612079. Please see our website for more information: [www.cpreoxon.org.uk](http://www.cpreoxon.org.uk).

## Stonesfield Pre-School & Daycare

We are pleased to announce our 100 Club winners for the February draw.

1st Prize - Number 34- M Carnegie £25.00

2nd Prize - Number 92 - Mr & Mrs M Routledge £10.00

Congratulations to you both.

Zena Rozee

Administrator, Stonesfield Pre-School  
[stonesfieldpsAD@outlook.com](mailto:stonesfieldpsAD@outlook.com)

## We are looking for a home in Stonesfield / Charlbury

Are you, or any of your neighbours, thinking of selling a 3+ bedroom house / bungalow in Stonesfield / Charlbury?

If so, we would be very grateful if you can get in touch with us.

We can be very flexible with timings – moving immediately or in some time.

**Niki & Roger**

[niki@hernshaw.eu](mailto:niki@hernshaw.eu)  
01608 811933  
07713 654209

# Politics & local affairs

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## Stonesfield Parish Council

Notes from the 1 February meeting:

**Old Jail / Lock up:** The Council is still trying to obtain legal ownership. In the meantime it will deal with the weeds at the site.

**Roads etc:** The Council continues to ask residents to report drain issues, pot holes and overgrown areas via Fixmystreet ([www.fixmystreet.com](http://www.fixmystreet.com)), as this is the best way to call out District and County Councils.

The clerk has asked OCC for permission to put a sign up next to the directional sign for the Village Hall, to include the Social Club.

The clerk has raised with OCC and Thames Valley Police the issue of frequent accidents at Ditchley gate and the A44 junction at the Duke of Marlborough pub. It has been requested that it is monitored, as this is not in the village but does affect us.

**Neighbourhood Plan:** The Parish Council has received a grant of just over £5,000 to assist with funding of the Neighbourhood Plan. The Council welcomes this and the NP group have items allocated to use this money.

### Planning Applications:

4 Limbeck Way - Stonesfield - no objection or comment.

The Cottage at the Cross - Council supported the roof repair work but objected to Stonesfield slate roof material

being changed to replica, as this goes against the heritage of the area. As a Council we expect this work and all remedial work on properties with Stonesfield slate to be repaired using Stonesfield slates. This issue was taken back to WODC.

Parish Clerk

Stonesfield Parish Council

[clerk@stonesfieldpc.uk](mailto:clerk@stonesfieldpc.uk)

[www.stonesfield.online](http://www.stonesfield.online)

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## News from West Oxfordshire

### Voter ID - What you need to do for



### the May 2023 elections.

From May 2023 if you want to vote in person, you will be required to produce an accepted form of photographic ID to prove your identity before you will be issued with

a ballot paper. This change will apply for the local elections on 4 May 2023.

The most commonly used IDs include:

- Passport issued by the UK, any of the Channel Islands, the Isle of Man, a British Overseas Territory, an EEA state or a Commonwealth country
- Photographic driver's licence
- European Economic Area (EEA) photographic ID Card
- UK Biometric Residence Permit
- An identity card bearing the Proof of Age Standards Scheme hologram (PASS card)
- A Blue Badge
- A concessionary travel pass.

You can still use your photo ID if it's out of date, as long as it looks like you. For more information visit

[www.electoralcommission.org.uk/voterID](http://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/voterID) or call the helpline on 0800 328 0280.

If you do not have one of the accepted forms of photo ID, you can apply for a Voter Authority Certificate, which can be obtained free of charge from West Oxfordshire District Council, or online at [www.voter-authority-certificate.service.gov.uk](http://www.voter-authority-certificate.service.gov.uk). Anyone applying must already be on the electoral register. For more information please call 01993 861410 or email [elections@westoxon.gov.uk](mailto:elections@westoxon.gov.uk).

Voter Authority Certificates do not have an expiration date and can be used in future elections, so are worth keeping if you apply for one.

The deadline for applying for a Voter Authority Certificate for elections in May 2023 is 5pm on Tuesday 25 April 2023.

The ID requirements will not affect postal votes, so if you want to vote by post you can apply via:

[www.electoralcommission.org.uk/i-am-a/voter/apply-vote-post](http://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/i-am-a/voter/apply-vote-post).

## **West Oxfordshire's four-year plan**

West Oxfordshire District Council has approved its new four-year plan which sets



out how the Council will deliver for residents, and what it will be focusing on to improve West Oxfordshire.

Its five broad priorities are:

1. Putting residents first
2. Enabling a good quality of life for all
3. Creating a better environment for people and wildlife
4. Responding to the climate and ecological emergency
5. Working together for West Oxfordshire

Under each priority is a set of actions which are based on the feedback from residents gathered in a consultation during Summer 2022. The Council will be setting an action plan to deliver on the goals and will report back on progress at regular intervals to the public.



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## **From our MP, Robert Courts**

### **Sewage pollution**

Like other residents, I have been increasingly angered by the number of sewage releases being conducted by Thames Water from Witney Sewage Works.

Following reports of frequent, unacceptable discharges taking place over recent months, I wrote to Sarah Bentley, CEO of Thames Water on two separate occasions to reaffirm my strong opposition to any sewage releases. In these letters, I called for Thames Water to take urgent action to start the much-needed local infrastructure upgrades to resolve these long-standing issues that residents in West Oxfordshire have been facing.

I welcomed Thames Water's recent confirmation following my campaign that expansion works to increase capacity at the Witney Sewage Treatment Works by 50 per cent will begin this month, and reach completion by March next year. I was also encouraged to receive further confirmation of investment to sewage treatment works across West Oxfordshire.

While recent progress being made locally by Thames Water to address these issues is encouraging, I will continue to hold Thames Water to account on delivering these infrastructure upgrades over the coming weeks and months.

In the context of sewage pollution, Robert Courts refers to the Government's Water Action Plan, which includes the following action points:

- record fines to make polluters pay, with fines ring-fenced to go into infrastructure improvements

- the largest ever criminal and civil investigations into sewage discharges, as a result of increased monitoring
- the Storm Overflows Reduction Plan which already aims to: 'set stringent new targets to protect people and the environment. This will require water companies to deliver the largest infrastructure programme in water company history.'

### **Botley West Solar Farm**

I recently met representatives from Blenheim and PVDP (Photovoltaic Development Partners) about their plans for a Botley West Solar Farm.

This is a planning application that will, because of its size, be decided not by the local Council but by a panel of Planning Inspectors and later the Secretary of State for Energy, Security and Net Zero. It is your views, as residents, that must be heard.

Phase two of the consultation will be launched in Spring 2023, with more detailed design proposals being provided for consideration. Please do make sure to complete this, and you can do so either online at [www.botleywest.co.uk](http://www.botleywest.co.uk) or by email to [info@botleywest.co.uk](mailto:info@botleywest.co.uk). This will ensure that your voice is heard directly.

It is of paramount importance that residents engage with the consultations to ensure their views are heard and taken into account.

I will be following these plans very closely and will continue to engage with Blenheim and PVDP on this.

Robert Courts  
[robert@robertcourts.co.uk](mailto:robert@robertcourts.co.uk)



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## Neighbourhood Watch



There has been an increase in burglaries throughout West Oxfordshire in recent weeks. Could we please remind you to lock all outbuildings, sheds – including those on allotments – and garages, and remove all valuable items to a safe location.

Police and community support: our PCSO is now Helen Duffield. For information or advice on security concerns, please contact [woodstockNHPT@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk](mailto:woodstockNHPT@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk) or call 101.

Information on Neighbourhood Watch is available at: [www.ourwatch.org.uk/](http://www.ourwatch.org.uk/)  
Anyone interested in joining the Neighbourhood Watch Scheme may find details and register at: [www.member-registration.neighbourhoodalert.co.uk/30/Join](http://www.member-registration.neighbourhoodalert.co.uk/30/Join). Clicking on 'Join a scheme' and selecting 'Stonesfield' will complete the request.

Deanna Asplundh  
Stonesfield Neighbourhood Watch  
Coordinator

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## Police and community support

For information or advice on security concerns, please call 101 or contact [woodstockNHPT@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk](mailto:woodstockNHPT@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk)

# Stonesfield Pre-School & Daycare

*Making the most of each and every moment*

We have a fully extended childcare provision running from Pre-School.  
Here is what is currently available:

## **Breakfast Club**

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday & Thursday; 7.30 – 8.50am  
(£6.00 per session) Cereal, toast and fruit juice included

## **Pre-School Sessions**

9am – 3pm daily for children aged 2–4 years (£17.00 per session)

## **After School Club**

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday & Thursday; 3.15 – 6pm  
(£16.00 per session)

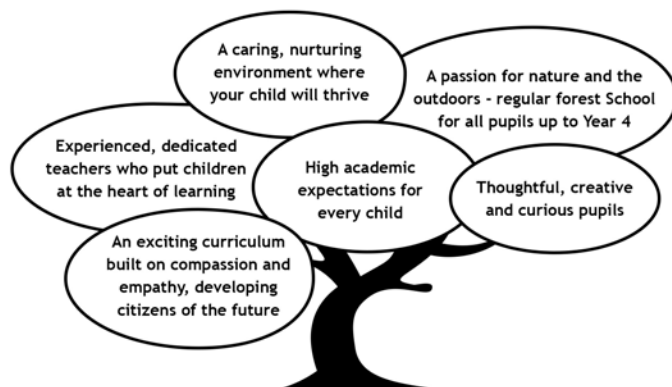
If you would like registration forms for any of the above,  
please contact our administrator, Mrs Zena Rozee  
(tel. 01993 898012 or email: [stonesfieldpsad@outlook.com](mailto:stonesfieldpsad@outlook.com))

## **Stonesfield Primary School**

Learning together to achieve our best.



Looking for a friendly, inclusive, local school for your child?  
Stonesfield Primary School has places in all year groups - we would love to show you around.



To arrange a tour with the headteacher, please contact the school office.

Tel: 01993 891687

Office email: [office.2353@stonesfield.oxon.sch.uk](mailto:office.2353@stonesfield.oxon.sch.uk)  
Headteacher email: [head.2353@stonesfield.oxon.sch.uk](mailto:head.2353@stonesfield.oxon.sch.uk)

# Education, culture & more

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## **Stonesfield Primary School**

Your children need you...

I am pleased to say that I now have the privilege of being the permanent Headteacher of Stonesfield School. I continue to be very impressed with the children and adults of the school, and I am looking forward to working together to move things forward.

With this in mind, I would like to ask for your help. Following Covid, the school has not taken part in many inter-school competitions and this is an area of the school I would like to see expand and thrive again. We are already planning on taking Rowan Class to an indoor athletics competition next term, and I will be making sure all classes and age groups get their turn to go and represent the school.

During these competitions, I want the children to feel proud of their school to encourage them to give their best performances. To help this along, I am looking for a sponsor from the local community to support us in buying a class set of Stonesfield School-branded t-shirts and shorts.

If you would like to help us with this project, please get in touch with me at the school.

Matt Jarvis, Headteacher  
head.2353@stonesfield.oxon.sch.uk

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## **Stonesfield Library**

The Library (898187) is open as follows:

Monday	2.30–7pm
Wednesday	10am–12 noon
Thursday	2.30–5pm
Saturday	10am–12 noon.

Val Phillips (891455)  
Friends of Stonesfield Library

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## **Why buy when you can borrow?**

In these times of rising prices, why buy books when you can borrow them from your local library?

Author Sathnam Sanghera, writing recently in *The Times*, said that he was puzzled about why the nation rallies to the cause of free school meals but appears indifferent to the fall in the number of libraries; down 14% in the last decade. Amanda Spielman, the head of Ofsted, recently stated that 1 in 4 children leave primary school unable to read fluently. This year's tests showed that 175,000 children across the nation did not meet the expected reading standard at the end of primary school. Reading is such a vital life skill; enjoyment of reading is one of the biggest indicators of future success.

Sathnam Sanghera goes on to say that he often hears the view that computers have made literature and the humanities redundant. Many people seem to believe that all children need now is to learn about computers, coding, science and maths

from the internet or textbooks. Yet the educational experts Sathnam spoke to were unanimous that the capabilities children need to develop are social skills, problem-solving, emotional intelligence, language skills, cultural appreciation and art. In other words, the best way to beat the robots, algorithms and the speed of computing that have replaced jobs is to become more human – and what are libraries if not repositories of human experience?

Before the pandemic, research showed that 380,000 primary school children did not own a book. Well, thankfully at the moment in Oxfordshire we have 43 county libraries, and one of them is in Stonesfield. You don't need to buy a book, but you do need to use our library. The cost-of-living crisis is affecting County Council budgets as well as our own. Economies are having to be considered. The number of people using our library is dwindling in comparison to what it was before the pandemic. We have thousands of children's books in their own special area, where parents can sit and read to or with children. By being/becoming a member you can help support Stonesfield Library for all to enjoy. Take a few books home, return them for new ones and introduce your child to the magic of books. Come in and see – it's free.

Michael Pollitt (891856)

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## I'm a Reader...

*An appreciation of Tony Scott, (Lt Col (Retd) Anthony J Scott, MBE), the dynamic and dedicated founding Chairman of the Friends of Stonesfield Library volunteer group, who died on 4 January this year, aged 83.*

Current chair, former RAF pilot Mike Pollitt, explains how Tony came to be the driving force behind the group that saved Stonesfield library from council cuts, over ten years ago. 'When Oxford County Council produced a list of rural libraries at risk unless the communities could cover fifty per cent of the existing opening hours through volunteers, we pressed ourselves forward to be the first library to open in this way. The Friends of Stonesfield Library was the first group to be trained, in December 2012. Tony took the lead.'

Tony, a former infantry officer who served in many parts of the world, including Belize and East Africa, also had experience of organising volunteers as Chairman of the Staffordshire Regiment Museum (his former Regiment). Tony came up with the blueprint of the 'rules of engagement', as Mike puts it, or the 'partnership agreement' that is, to this day, the template for all the libraries kept open with volunteer support.

(The reassuring thought that our humble village library is managed by a scheme devised by the armed forces has always been underscored by the fact that the Group Library Manager for Oxford County Council is Anne Manwaring, obviously renamed Captain Manwaring in my mind after the Arthur Lowe character from Dad's Army.)

Tony was, in demeanour, a military man – as Mike says: ‘he yomped around the village at a pace, even if it was just to collect his paper from the shop’; he was also very kind, even to those less ruthlessly well-organised. I remember being very late for my library shift one time, not because I’d forgotten I was on duty that Thursday, but I hadn’t realised it was Thursday. He could not have been more gracious about it, even though he had to cover my absence.

Tony loved books, knowledge and communication. He was a great raconteur – one might not get much re-shelving done on a shift with Tony, but one would hear a lot of entertaining anecdotes. Charlie, the youngest of Tony and his wife Rachel’s three children, says that friends used to enjoy timing the length of his responses to obscure questions. The record, apparently, was 27 minutes when Tony was asked if Napoleon had haemorrhoids at the Battle of Waterloo.

Charlie talks fondly of Tony’s eclectic book collection at home: *Boy’s Own Manuals*, sci-fi, murder mystery... alongside ancient history and whole shelves dedicated to the National Geographic, travel biopics and word play. He loved poems, sonnets, haikus and limericks. Books kept him young and with a remarkably progressive outlook’.

Tony was, perhaps, therefore, a living embodiment of the library he worked so hard for – a vast array of interests collected in one welcoming place. As one of the ‘ever-presents’ of library volunteers, John Poucher, puts it so aptly: Tony and I had few things in common. He was a military man; I was an ageing hippy. We discovered mutual enjoyment in reading. Me, by way

of *Just William* and he by *Rimfire* westerns. I immediately acknowledged his rare abilities as the Chair of our group. There might be jokes, there could be meandering, but each meeting took its allocated time and ended with a clear purpose, mutually agreed. And then Tony would buy me a pint.’

Eleanor Bailey

eleanorbailey55@gmail.com

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## **Local history: The White Horse / Stonesfield Festival 1986**

Opposite is an advertisement which appeared on the back of the Stonesfield Festival Programme, 25-27 July 1986.

At the time Nigel Bishop was the landlord. I’ve no idea who Mrs Morris was and I don’t think I ever had the *Flambé at the Table!*

If anyone has any more information about the Festival or The White Horse, *The Slate* would be delighted to publish it. Please send your article / information to [slate@stonesfield.online](mailto:slate@stonesfield.online) or contact the Editor (see page 2).

Graham Rutson

# THE WHITE HORSE

## Stonesfield

Tel. No: Stonesfield 604

VAT 311 4068 06

*Beer Garden — Bar Food — Skittle Alley — Outside Functions*  
**Halls Brewery, Oxford**

A friendly village inn, set on the borders of the Cotswolds in the charming village of Stonesfield, near Woodstock.

Home-cooked food from a country kitchen, with *flambé* at the table our speciality, with Mrs Morris's hot specials.

### MENU

#### (BASKET MEALS)

<i>Sausage &amp; Chips</i>	£1.20
<i>Fried Chicken &amp; Chips</i>	£2.30
<i>Cod or Plaice &amp; Chips</i>	£1.80
<i>Scampi &amp; Chips</i>	£2.60
<i>Seafood &amp; Chips</i>	£2.60
<i>Hot Smoked Mackerel</i>	£1.40
<i>Rump Steak</i>	£5.40
<i>Sirloin Steak</i> <i>Chips &amp; Vegetables</i>	£5.40
<i>Open Prawn Sandwich</i>	£1.40
<i>Ham Salad</i>	£2.50
<i>Portion of Chips</i>	45p

#### (STARTERS)

<i>Quail Egg Mayonnaise</i>	£1.10
<i>Hot Smoked Mackerel</i>	£1.10
<i>Prawn Cocktail</i>	£1.20
<i>Garlic Mushrooms</i>	95p

#### (MAIN COURSE)

<i>Chief's Home Made Curry</i>	£3.10
<i>(Served with rice)</i>	
<i>8 oz Grilled Rump Steak</i>	£5.40
<i>(Garnished with Mushroom and Tomato)</i>	
<i>8 oz Sirloin Steak</i>	£5.40
<i>(Garnished with Mushroom and Tomato)</i>	
<i>Steak Diane</i>	£7.00
<i>(Flambé at the Table)</i>	
<i>Scampi Provencale</i>	£7.00
<i>(Flambé at the Table)</i>	
<i>Grilled Glyme Valley Trout</i>	£4.20
<i>(Served with Horseradish Sauce)</i>	
<i>Grilled Pork Steak</i>	£3.50
<i>(Served with Chef's Home-made Sweet and Sour Sauce)</i>	
<i>(All with Home-made Chipped Potatoes and Vegetables or Salad)</i>	

**BED & BREAKFAST £9.00**

*Stone-built stable barn available for large parties and private functions.*

Back page of Stonesfield Festival Programme, July 1986

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## Local History: Broughton Castle

17 miles north of Stonesfield



The original medieval manor house, of which much remains today, was built in about 1300 by Sir John de Broughton. It stands on an island surrounded by a three-acre moat. Across the small bridge lies the parish church of St Mary the Virgin, surrounded by its historic cemetery.

The castle was greatly enlarged between 1550 and 1600 by Richard Fiennes, transforming the medieval manor into a house in the Tudor style, significantly expanding the building. King James I stayed at Broughton Castle on several occasions.

During the 17th century William, 8th Lord Saye and Sele, played a leading role in national affairs. He opposed Charles I's efforts to rule without Parliament and Broughton became a secret meeting place for the King's opponents. During the Civil War William raised a regiment and he and his four sons all fought at the nearby Battle of Edgehill. After the battle the Castle was besieged and captured.

Following the end of hostilities, reconstruction work needed to be undertaken to repair damage inflicted by Royalist cannon. Lord Saye and Sele had evaded signing Charles I's Death

Warrant and was able to make his peace with the Crown after the English Restoration.

Arms and armour of the Civil War period and from other periods are displayed in the Great Hall. Visitors may also see the gatehouse, gardens and park together with the nearby 14th century parish church of St Mary, in which there are many family tombs, memorials and hatchments.



The gardens are delightful; the Ladies' Garden is particularly beautiful in summer, boasting a variety of roses and borders stocked with perennials and shrubs.

In 2021, Time Team excavated a Roman villa on the site, recently discovered by metal detectorist and amateur archaeologist, Keith Westcott. Previously, a lead-lined sarcophagus containing the burial of a wealthy Romano-British woman was discovered and partly investigated in the 1960s.

Broughton Castle is the family home of the 21st Lord and Lady Saye & Sele, whose family name is Fiennes, the ownership of the Castle having remained in the same family since 1447.

Tickets for Broughton Castle open days will be available to book online from 14 March 2023. For more information see [www.broughtoncastle.com](http://www.broughtoncastle.com).

Paul Bates



# Clubs, societies & sport

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## **Stonesfield Sustainability Groups**

### **Stonesfield Environmental Group**

We are gearing up for a year of action and protest about the appalling state of the river due to sewage pollution. We will be devoting some of our upcoming meetings to discussing what an effective campaign looks like, what our key messages are and most importantly how to get the village involved and to provide you with facts, figures, insights and outrage to get you onboard!

There have been a number of newspaper articles recently that have highlighted how many similar campaigns are ongoing and where other actions are being taken. The New Scientist and the 'i' newspaper have launched the 'Save Britain's Rivers' campaign. The Times has launched its 'Clean it Up' campaign. The House of Lords is reportedly preparing to block the Government's plan to ditch EU laws such as the Bathing Water Regulations and the Water Framework Directive, so it appears the issue is becoming politically high profile.

We had a fascinating and insightful talk from Ash Smith from Windrush Against Sewage Pollution (WASP) before Christmas. Groups like WASP are being hailed as 'Sewage Heroes' and we are keen to work alongside them to improve the Evenlode. We will leave you with a quote from Ash 'All it takes for bad stuff to prosper is for ordinary people to do nothing. It's not an option to do nothing'.

We hope you feel the same and will join our campaign. We will update you over the coming months as to how you can get involved. Please get in touch; email below.

Julie Curran  
juliecurran0@gmail.com

### **Stonesfield Food Group**

The Winter Warmer on Tuesdays at the Village Hall is proving very popular and is a very friendly and lively event. It is open to the whole village, and is a free event being fully funded by West Oxfordshire District Council and Oxford Community Volunteers Association. Do come and join us, come on your own, bring a friend, bring all generations of your family. We have a growing team of helpers that make this event possible so please get in touch if you would like to help out at this event.

Julie Curran  
juliecurran0@gmail.com

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## **Stonesfield Gardening Club**

The club held its AGM in February and re-elected the committee of Lauren Baker, Diane Bates, Paul Bates, Suzy Boardman, Wendy Gould, Eileen Heduan, Gaye Olesen, Jill Rowlinson, Helen Taylor and Trisha Williams. Gaye Olesen was elected Chair.

Last year's accounts were presented and a budget for 2023, showing the club is in a healthy financial position and able to support local charities with surplus funds.

We have an interesting and varied programme for this year for our 75 members and hope to see as many of them as possible at our meetings.

After the official part of the meeting, Lauren Baker spoke to us about her doctorate subject - wheat. Apparently only 20 different crops are eaten across the world with the top three being rice, wheat and maize, which make up 60% of the calories eaten. Wheat has been bred over hundreds of years to be more productive and easier to crop and the demands for more food are only going to increase as the world's population does. Lauren put in a plea for more interest in plants and more education on the subject. As Education Officer at the Oxford Botanic Garden, she is involved in the work being done to get a Natural History GCSE on to the syllabus, which may redress the balance. A very interesting and thought-provoking talk.

Our calendar for the remainder of 2023 is as follows:

**March 13 Mandy Bradshaw: Beyond the Garden Gate.** *The Chatty Gardener*, will be guiding us beyond the gate of a dozen Cotswold gardens and telling the stories behind their creation.

**April 29 Plant Sale** (Four Acres, Pond Hill). Sybil has again kindly allowed us to colonise her front garden. Get your seedlings started soon so they are a good size to sell on the day. Or just be one of those queuing at 8.30 for the best plants.

**May 15 Chris Day: Gardening in a Changing Climate.** Chris' talk will highlight the latest thinking from the RHS, as well as looking at a range of plants for biodiversity.

**June 12 Russell Atwood: No Dig Gardening.** Russell says 'No Dig' is not 'No Effort', but less watering, less weeding and better for the soil.

**July 13 Sezincote Garden visit.** For those who don't know Sezincote, it is an Indian inspired house and garden, restored in 1968 with advice from Graham Stuart Thomas, containing many rare plants.

**September 11 Lorraine Broderick: Garden Design and Future Proofing.** Lorraine, a local garden designer, will talk to us about future proofing our gardens. For those who are wondering how their garden can evolve as they get less able to do everything (or just too busy!), she'll give us thoughts and tips. If there's a particular topic you would like covered, please let us know!

**October 9 Andrew Wood: Vineyards and Wine Tasting.** Andrew will talk about changes to grape growing and vineyards, complete with wine tasting. We will be charging a small amount for pre-booked tickets to this event.

**November 13 Ollie Spacy: Mistletoe.** All you need to know about this unusual and seasonal plant.

**December 11 Quiz and Social.** Suzy Boardman will be doing a 'Spring' Quiz, so walk round the village over the next few weeks and take notes!

### **2023 Membership**

We have over 75 members and are always looking to increase our numbers. It costs £8 per year for an individual or £15 for a couple. You can pay when you first attend a meeting or by contacting us via [www.stonesfieldgardeningclub.info](http://www.stonesfieldgardeningclub.info)

### **Non-members**

We are happy to have non-members visit our meetings for a very small fee.

Diane Bates

Secretary Stonesfield Gardening Club

[www.stonesfieldgardening.info](http://www.stonesfieldgardening.info)

## **Stonesfield Tennis Club**

The club was established over 100 years ago with membership open to all at very competitive subscription rates. The two astro-turf tennis courts were re-laid in 2018 and are in excellent condition with plenty of court availability.

Phone: 07795 441986  
(Andrew Tacon; Chairman)

Website:  
[https://clubspark.lta.org.uk/  
StonesfieldTennisClub](https://clubspark.lta.org.uk/StonesfieldTennisClub)

Email: [stonesfieldtc@gmail.com](mailto:stonesfieldtc@gmail.com)  
Facebook: [@stonesfieldtennisclub](https://www.facebook.com/@stonesfieldtennisclub)  
Instagram: [@stonesfieldtennis](https://www.instagram.com/@stonesfieldtennis)

## **Scout Hut and Fundraising Update**

Preliminary works are being carried out on the site of the new Scout hut in preparation for the groundworks in the coming months. The hut is going to be built in stages, therefore when needed it is likely we will have to limit access for the safety of all involved. We will endeavour to keep this to an absolute minimum and will put signs up to let people know if access will be restricted or we have had to close the path. It is also possible it may get a bit more muddy down there to begin with, but the end result will be better for all involved, so please bear with us! You can see any updates at [www.stonesfield-scouts.org.uk](http://www.stonesfield-scouts.org.uk).

This is a really exciting time for the group, and has only been made possible with grants, donations and time from supporters. We would like to say a massive thankyou to everyone who has been involved, especially the Parish Council for the continued moral and financial support, as well as numerous Stonesfield-ites (you know who you are!). Our fund now stands at around £116,000. This is enough to get us a long way, but we are still looking for more. If you know of any grants we might apply for, or people who may be able to help then please get in touch with [fundraising@stonesfield-scouts.org.uk](mailto:fundraising@stonesfield-scouts.org.uk).

Ben Whitworth

[chair@stonesfield-scouts.org.uk](mailto:chair@stonesfield-scouts.org.uk)

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## **Stonesfield Football Club**

What a month it's been, as our two teams continue to provide entertainment, excitement, and goals galore. Now, I must confess that my favourite scoreline of all time is 7-1 and I've waited a long time for one of our teams to win by that: lo and behold, it's happened twice in the past month!

The Firsts went on the rampage at home and ripped Spartans apart in a stunningly clinical display of fabulous football winning 9-1 (yes, NINE!). Next, Freeland came visiting, hoping to depart with all three points, but were easily brushed aside as our guys recorded that famous 7-1 scoreline .... Just fabulous!

The goal-fest continued with the visit of Minster Lovell; this time our boys showed the opposition some pity, but nonetheless recorded another great win (5-1). They now sit in second place behind Hailey who have faltered recently, giving our boys a decent shot at ending the season as league champions. It's a tall order, but if they keep their 100% league record going, then they'll do it. Jingx, hope I haven't jinxed it ... time will tell.

I mentioned above that we've seen two 7-1 glorious victories this month and the second one was achieved by The Reserves away at Tower Hill in the league. Sadly, their run of good form came unstuck at Carterton Town, where they were on the wrong end of a 5-goal thriller (3-2). We can't be too disappointed with their efforts ... at least they are scoring goals and teams are having to play well, work hard and have a bit of luck to get a result against our boys.

You would have thought that hat-tricks by Mike Phipps (v Tower Hill), Cary Rice (v

Freeland) and Raffy Rice (v Spartans) would have provided the Fredo Award Committee with a tough choice this month, but with Logan Mitchell going one better and bagging 4 beauties against Spartans, the choice became an easy no-brainer. There can only be one winner: Logan Mitchell – 4 goals in one match is quite an achievement, your clinical finishing and showing the others that they have to take their chances, means you are the Fredo Award winner this month. Well done and keep it up!

Tom Flanigan (891979)

## **JUNIOR TAE KWON-DO**

### **The Korean art of Self-Defence**

Develop your children's self-confidence, concentration and help them to learn respect for themselves and others.

New lessons developed to be fun and informative for ages 5-17.

Stonesfield Village Hall

Mon and Thur: 5.30-6.30pm

\*\*Come and try a complimentary session\*\*

ITF registered international instructor

James Kumar CRB vetted

Further information, contact James

01865 772883 07788 583 965

Jameskumar@hotmail.co.uk

# Church news

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## **Church of England Worship at St James the Great, Stonesfield**

### **(Benefice of Stonesfield with Combe Longa)**

[www.stonesfieldparishchurch.org](http://www.stonesfieldparishchurch.org)

**Rector:** Rev Ralph Williamson,  
[rector@scbenefice.org](mailto:rector@scbenefice.org), 01993 891872

**Churchwarden:** Lindsey Sellar  
[stonesfield@stonesfieldparishchurch.org](mailto:stonesfield@stonesfieldparishchurch.org)

**St James' Centre bookings:**  
[sjcsbookings@gmail.com](mailto:sjcsbookings@gmail.com)

For any enquiries or help, including pastoral support, please do contact us.

### **From the Rector – Get ready!**

Throughout the year it is a great pleasure to open a window first thing in the morning and listen to the birdsong which greets us. But in March, the singing of birds at dawn takes on a whole new dimension, and glory. Nature's great event is beginning, and birds everywhere are getting ready for it – finding mates, marking territory, announcing themselves as spring erupts all around us. The dawn chorus begins in March, and is perhaps a little earlier each year, but goes on for the next two months, reaching its peak in April and May. So profound is this event that Simon Barnes, in his book *Rewild Yourself*, reckons it is the 'single biggest wildlife miracle that we have in Britain'. Birds are responding to the lengthening days, and to the emergence of sources of food after winter which spring promises – new shoots

and plant growth everywhere; warming soil and gentle rain allow the hatching and awakening of the insects which will feed them and their young once nesting and egg laying begins. Birds, in their energetic and musical preparations, singing, feeding, mating and nest building, are getting ready to make the most of summer, and of life in its fullness.

In the church, March falls in the season of Lent, and this time of five weeks before Easter has often been understood as a time to reflect on human failings through fasting and prayer. But Lent has a lot in common with the great dawn chorus of the bird kingdom. It is a time of preparation for a great outpouring of life, a time to sing and to work so that we can harness, enjoy and be part of the life which is already around us and is coming in its fullness. Lent is a time for us to get our lives ready for the dramatic Easter event, a time to make mental, physical and spiritual preparations for our annual remembrance of the love of God which the death of Christ on the cross declares, and the resurrection of Christ which lifts up our humanity to share with him the life of God. Just as our avian friends are so beautifully active, so we also should be active in these weeks, building and renewing our relationships with God and with one another, reflecting on how we will use the material God has given us to work with, the opportunities and the gifts, the teaching of the Bible and the church, our engagement with the world and the work of justice and peace, our action to protect our environment and to

shape human communities in accordance with the will of our loving Creator. There is much to do, so that when Holy Week and Easter come, we will be ready to say a heartfelt 'Yes' to the abundant life which God offers us in Christ.

I wish you a very constructive and effective Lent. The church is open each day, so please come and use it as a place to pray and to feel the presence of God, to seek God's guidance and strength. And please join us on Sundays too as we make our heartfelt preparations for the great feast of Easter.

Revd Ralph Williamson  
Rector

### **Services for March**

#### **Sunday 5 [Lent 2]**

8am	Stonesfield	Holy Communion [BCP/said]
9.30am	Combe	Parish Communion – for all the family
11am	Stonesfield	Parish Communion – for all the family

#### **Sunday 12 [Lent 3]**

8am	Stonesfield	Holy Communion [BCP/said]
9.30am	Combe	Parish Communion
11am	Stonesfield	Parish Communion

#### **Sunday 19 [Mothering Sunday]**

8am	Stonesfield	Holy Communion [BCP/said]
9.30am	Combe	All Age Worship
11am	Stonesfield	All Age Worship

#### **Sunday 26 [Lent 5]**

8am	Stonesfield	Holy Communion [BCP/said]
9.30am	Combe	Parish Communion
10am	Stonesfield	Parish Communion followed by Annual Parochial Church Meeting at 11am

#### **Wednesdays**

9.30am	Stonesfield	Holy Communion (every week)
11am	Combe	Morning Prayer (8th, 22nd)

#### **Thursdays in Lent (from 2 March)**

1.45pm	Combe	'Come & see!' – informal discussion on the Beatitudes (at Church Cottage)
3.30pm	Stonesfield	'Come & see!' – informal discussion on the Beatitudes (at St James' Centre)

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## **Stonesfield Methodist Church**

### **Services for March**

Friday 3	2pm	World Day of Prayer Service
Sunday 5	11am	Marjorie Brown
Sunday 12	11am	Martin Hannant
Sunday 19	11am	Local Arrangement
Sunday 26	11am	The Reverend Andrew Biggs; Holy Communion Service

### **The Connexion**

This late winter magazine is far from wintry; in fact it's full of inspiring stories, each one focused on the theme 'Kindle a Flame.'

The Reverend Nicola Langton-Miller recalls her own 'flame moment', when at the age of just eleven, she heard these words from a Wesley hymn:

'Jesus, confirm my heart's desire to work and speak and think for you.'

Recognise the hymn?

Nicola writes more of her Ministry; she says often in her day-to-day conversations it becomes evident that God IS at work, and she sees sparks ignite!

In this world that shares its ups and downs so readily, these life stories are a worthy and heartwarming read. Copies of *The Connexion* are here at Church, or can be downloaded at [www.methodist.org.uk/connexion](http://www.methodist.org.uk/connexion).

Come to a Service soon.

Kathleen Albért (891733)

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## **Roman Catholic Worship**

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As Lent approaches as our preparation for Easter, reflecting on Matthew, Chapter 5, The Beatitudes, we can see how our faith as a love story with God may be developed in dialogue with God.

*Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven.*

*Blessed are they who mourn, for they will be comforted.*

*Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the land.*

*Blessed are they who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be satisfied.*

*Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy.*

*Blessed are the clean of heart, for they will see God.*

*Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.*

*Blessed are they who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven.*

*Blessed are you when they insult you and persecute you and utter every kind of evil against you [falsely] because of me.*

*Rejoice and be glad, for your reward will be great in Heaven.*



*Living God,  
you walk alongside us  
and speak to us throughout the Scriptures.  
Your Son, Jesus Christ, listens to our  
hopes and fears  
and shows us how to live for one another.  
Send us the Holy Spirit to open our hearts  
and minds  
so that we may be your witnesses  
throughout the world.*

## **Holy Mass**

Sunday Mass at 9.15am

Please check St Teresa's website for information about daily Mass in Charlbury (see link below) or contact Suze Mathews on 01993 891720.

## **St Teresa's Parish news**

Fr Tony Joyce, our much-loved parish priest based in Chipping Norton, has finally retired after over 57 years as a priest. He's currently recuperating from an operation on his knee, and once he's finished his medical treatment will take up residence in Charlbury.

We wish him, with our thoughts and prayers, a very happy and much deserved retirement, and look forward to seeing him out and about in Charlbury.

Fr Clive Dytor, who has been Fr Tony's Assistant Priest in Charlbury, will now take over as Parish Priest for St Teresa's in Charlbury and Holy Trinity in Chipping Norton. We wish Fr Clive a long and happy time with us as our Parish Priest.

Confession by arrangement with Fr. Clive as below.

For Parish updates, any further information and further support, please see [www.stteresachurch-charlbury.com/](http://www.stteresachurch-charlbury.com/) or contact Fr. Clive Dytor: chair.stteresachurchcharlbury@gmail.com

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90 Main Road, Long Hanborough, Witney, OX29 8JY  
Stephen.Wiley@btconnect.com





## BLENHEIM PALACE

### Easter Eggstravaganza

Friday 7th - Monday 10th April 2023

Visit Blenheim Palace for a perfect family day out during the Easter weekend. Hop along to the Walled Garden to enjoy a whole host of egg-citing activities including circus skills, balloon modelling, bubble performances, bungee trampolines and a travelling vintage variety show, not to mention appearances from none other than the Easter Bunny throughout the weekend too. Keep little ones busy with our Easter egg hunt around the grounds to win a tasty chocolate treat. After working up an appetite, why not visit the Walled Garden Pizzeria to refuel with drinks and pizza by the slice.

## BLENHEIM

Our social prescribing scheme in partnership with Oxfordshire charity Aspire is now in its 3rd phase, with sessions having started in February. The scheme utilises the Parkland to provide guided wellbeing walks and activities for vulnerable people, and to date more than 130 people have benefited from the project. Aspire provides support to improve wellbeing for people facing disadvantage, mental health difficulties, long-term health conditions or affected by homelessness and poverty. We are committed to facilitating social prescribing as part of our wider strategy which includes helping the local community to thrive and prosper.



## BLENHEIM ESTATE

We welcome dogs to join you on a walk around the Estate and love seeing our four-legged visitors, but we would like to kindly remind dog owners that dogs must be kept on a lead at all times. The safety of our livestock, resident wildlife, guests and staff is our priority. Areas of the park are sectioned off by electric fencing to ensure our livestock stay grazing in these parts of the park. As we approach lambing season, keeping your dog on a lead is particularly important to ensure that our sheep are not attacked or chased in a way that may cause injury, suffering or miscarriage.

Please abide by the Countryside Code and keep your dog on a lead, to create a safe, respectful environment for everyone. Thank you.

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Keep up-to-date with our news and latest events by signing up to our newsletter at

**[blenheimpalace.com](https://blenheimpalace.com)**

# FLOWERS

## ESTATE AGENTS



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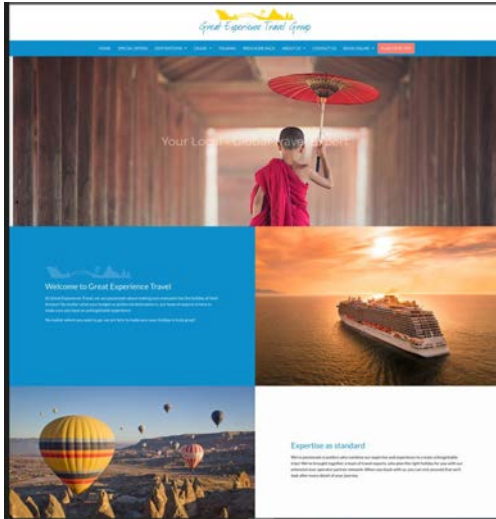
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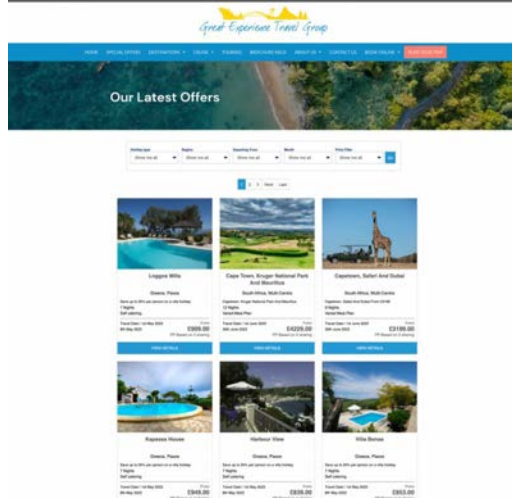


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