



Geraint Lewis Photography

## It is almost showtime...!

On Saturday 9 September the village will come together for one amazing day of fun, festivities and fundraising for all the family.

The Septemberfest music and beer festival is a chance to relax with old friends (or meet some new ones!), be it in the calm sanctuary of our Tea and Cake Tent, or feeling the groove in the Music Marquee where a brilliant range of music acts will perform throughout the day.

Acts range from folk to funk to pop and blues rock. Artists include the incredible blues guitarist Krissy Mathews (currently on a European Tour), soulful singer/songwriter Charlotte Campbell, whose songs have featured on ITV Love Island, and the always popular local folk trio The Boot Band. With

many other acts during the day, there is music for every taste.

And speaking of taste: as well as 30 fine ales and ciders to sample, we have a fantastic selection of food vendors from noodles to wood-fired pizzas to traditional burger and chips.

For the seriously posh, we have a truly decadent Prosecco Tent sponsored by Libby Rak Jewellery of Woodstock and The Rhubarb Rhubarb Boutique of Stow (Brigitte Rak). We also have a mouth-watering selection of locally made ice creams, and even a 'proper' frothy coffee outlet. Come for lunch, stay for dinner!

Continued on p5

## 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.

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

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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.

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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: September

2	Repair Café	Village Hall	11am-2pm
3	<i>Same Table Next Week</i> & Cream tea	Village Hall (see p7)	2-4pm
3	Afternoon tea	Combe Reading Room	2.30-5pm
4	Gardening Club talk	St James' Centre	7.30pm
4,11,18,25	Monday Coffee	St James' Centre	8.45-11.30am
4,7,11,14	Taekwondo	Village Hall	5.30-6.30pm
5	North Leigh History Society	N Leigh Memorial Hall	7.30pm
5,19	Carers Café	Village Hall	10am-12noon
5,12,19,26	Zumba	Village Hall	7-8pm
5,12,19,26	Strong Nation HIIT	Village Hall	8.15-9.15pm
6	Parish Council meeting	Primary School	7pm
6,13,20,27	Gatehouse Pilates	Village Hall	9.30-10.30am
6,13,20,27	Hannah Bathe Fitness	Village Hall	7-7.45pm
6,13,20,27	Folk dancing	Village Hall	7.45-10pm
7,14,21,28	Book Break	Stonesfield Library	12.30-2pm
7,14,21,28	Hannah Bathe HITT Class	Village Hall	7.15-8pm
8,15,22,29	Baby & Toddlers Group	Village Hall	10am-12noon
9	Septembeerfest	Playing Fields	12noon-11pm
9,10	Roman Villa Open Days	North Leigh	11am-5pm
10	Gardens Open Day	Bridewell Gardens	11am-4pm
11	Combe WI	Combe Reading Rm	7.30-9.30pm
12,19,26	Stonesfield Seniors Café	Village Hall	3-4pm
12,19,26	Stonesfield Social	Village Hall	5-7pm
17	<i>And I'll blow your house down</i>	The Old Fire Station (see p4)	8pm
18,21,25,28	Taekwondo	Village Hall	5.30-6.30pm
29	Harvest Village Supper	St James' Centre	5-7.30pm

## October

1	Harvest Festival Service	Stonesfield Parish Church	11am
29	Folk Group and Scout Group Ceilidh	Village Hall	TBC

# Notices & news

## **Stonesfield Repair Café – Don't bin it! Fix it!**

**2 September 11am - 2pm  
Village Hall**

If you have a wobbly chair or a favourite bit of clothing with a hole in it, or a piece of china that has broken, we can mend it.

The toaster or food mixer that has stopped working - bring it along, we may be able to get it working.

Got problems with your computer or phone - we have professionals who can help.

If you can, let us know in advance at [stonesfieldrepaircafe@gmail.com](mailto:stonesfieldrepaircafe@gmail.com) and do come in good time.



Delicious lunch, drinks and cakes will be available courtesy of the Community Café.

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

SUPPORTED BY  
**offbeat**

# AND I'LL BLOW YOUR HOUSE DOWN

**A CARER ON THE FRONTLINE**



**What would you do if the Big  
Bad Wolf destroyed  
everything?**

**Georgie Steele's funny,  
furious, award-winning show  
about being an accidental  
carer**

Sunday September 17th 8pm age 12+  
The Old Fire Station, George Street, Oxford  
£15/£13/£11  
[oldfirestation.org.uk/01865263990](http://oldfirestation.org.uk/01865263990)

**OLD FIRE  
STATION**

**"Illuminating and deeply inspirational"  
(The Slate)**

**"Searing and vivid... buoyant and sparkling"  
(OFS Review)**

**@ georgiestoryteller**  
**f georgiesteelestory**  
**t blow\_your\_house**

**BRIGHTON  
FRINGE  
AWARD  
WINNER  
2023**

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## It is almost showtime...! (from p1)

The Festival will be held on the playing field (behind Stonesfield Village Hall). We have four marquees, so whatever the weather throws at us, you'll keep dry or out of the sun! The gates open at midday and the festival will close just before 11pm, with the final act The Stonesfield Village Idiots, who apparently have a very special secret guest ..... Ssshhh!!

Tickets are available on the gate only. They are £15 with a festival glass and £5 of drink tokens or £10 without. Under 16s go free. Under 14s must be accompanied by an adult.

Please tell all your friends about Septemberfest; we know of people flying in from France and Scotland and many travelling from London. It's going to be a brilliant day in support of three wonderful charities – Stonesfield Childrens' Playground, Cancer Research and Berks Bucks and Oxon Wildlife Trust.

Lastly, a big thank you to all our wonderfully generous sponsors, many have



been with us since the inaugural Septemberfest and without whom the festival would not be possible. If you are keen to get involved there are still opportunities ranging from volunteering behind the bar on the day or sponsoring a barrel of beer or case of fizz – just get in touch!

We look forward to seeing you all there.

The Septemberfest Committee  
[hello@septemberfest.org.uk](mailto:hello@septemberfest.org.uk)



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## **Monday Coffee at St James' Centre**

Did you know that you can get free coffee, biscuits and conversation at St James' Centre every Monday morning, from 8.45am during term time and from 10.00am at other times finishing at 11.30am?

Everyone is welcome and there is plenty of opportunity for anyone involved in the school run to come along, with plenty of space for pushchairs. We have toys for the children to play with and there is a car park. As the morning progresses, we welcome others who call in for coffee and a chat with friends. We stay open until 11.30am. If you are new to the village or to the school it is a great way to meet other people.

This event was started 13 years ago by members of St James' Church with the intention of serving the village community, offering hospitality, and, of course, free coffee and what are mostly homemade biscuits to all who come.

Why not call in and join us?

The Monday Coffee Volunteers

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## **St James' Centre – available for hire**

A reminder that St James' Centre (opposite the school) is available for hire for both regular and one-off bookings. It is an ideal venue for children's parties, family gatherings, adult education classes, meetings, workshops, fundraising events etc. If you would like further information or to book, please do get in touch – email [sjcsbookings@gmail.com](mailto:sjcsbookings@gmail.com)

Ruth Sellar

St James' Centre Bookings Administrator

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## **Harvest Village Supper – Friday 29 September**

Everyone is invited to come and enjoy another Village Supper – a great way to celebrate Harvest. There's room for lots of people! The food is free of charge - come anytime between 5pm and 7.30pm, to the St James' Centre.

Don't forget that the Harvest Festival Service is Sunday 1 October at 11am. All are welcome!

For any queries, please email [stonesfield@stonesfieldparishchurch.org](mailto:stonesfield@stonesfieldparishchurch.org)

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## **Village Hall News**

We do hope that everyone had a lovely long break over the summer and are back feeling revitalised and full of energy for the Autumn months. We have been busy working with our regular clients to give you some information on some of the classes and groups currently running:

**Community Café** – The Repair Café returns on Saturday 2 September to provide a much needed wealth of knowledge to help you potentially save the old and broken items in your home and give them a new lease of life!

We have one more space left this year for the Community Café which will fall on the 7 October – If you want to book to raise money for a group or charity, please get in touch. Also if you are thinking about running one, but you aren't ready yet, we are now booking for next year's dates, the first Saturday of each month.

**Carers Café** – Please note the Carers Café runs on the 1st and the 3rd Tuesday of each month, from 10am – 12noon. This is an ideal place to take a rest stop for anyone in



the community who is looking after, or responsible for others. We all need a break and a cuppa, so why not do that with likeminded people and have a chat too?

**Hannah Bathe Fitness** – HIIT & Circuits (ladies only)

Wednesday - 7pm

Thursday - 7.15pm

**Gatehouse Pilates News** – This term of pilates we have been focussing on strength, mobility, reaction times and balance and everyone has improved greatly, it has been wonderful to see. Classes will resume after the summer on Wednesday 6 September at 09.30, if you are interested in making positive lifestyle changes to your health and well-being then please get in touch at [anitaloxtonwellbeing@gmail.com](mailto:anitaloxtonwellbeing@gmail.com) or [www.anitaloxton.com](http://www.anitaloxton.com).

**Stonesfield Folk Dance Club** – The details of our meetings in September are:

Sept 6 Donkey House Band with Val & Ian McFarlane. 8pm to 10pm

Sept 13 Clive Harman with his choice of dances. 8pm to 10pm

Sept 20 Diane Morgan calling with David & Tina 8pm to 10pm.

Sept 27 Donkey House Band with Doreen Crewe. 8pm to 10pm.

New Members always welcome and personal tuition given in the intricacies of English Folk Dancing - please come & join us at the Village Hall.

[www.stonesfieldfolkdance.danceorg.uk](http://www.stonesfieldfolkdance.danceorg.uk) for more information.

**Baby & Toddler Group** runs every Friday during term time. We have welcomed lots of new families from Stonesfield and the surrounding villages for free play, a themed craft activity, stories and songs. Coffee and tea provided for parents/carers with homemade cake plus a snack for babies/toddlers. Everyone is welcome!

Jacqueline Carthew (898919)

Secretary & Booking Clerk for Stonesfield Village Hall

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**Same Table Next Week –  
The Stonesfield Players**

Come to the Village Hall at 2pm on Sunday 3 September for a one-act play served up with a cream tea.

*Same Table Next Week* by Nicky Holland is set in a tearoom and is a light-hearted comedy following one woman's pursuit of friendship and a new meaning in life after early retirement. The village hall will be transformed into the tearoom so the audience will feel they are part of the drama – but don't worry, no participation is required!

Tickets are £10 and include a cream tea. If you have specific dietary requirements please contact us by 29 August so that we can cater for you.

Tickets are available from 3 August from Suriya Express (payment by cash or cheque only) or from Andy Tacon 01993 891217, 07795 441986 or [andrew.tacon@outlook.com](mailto:andrew.tacon@outlook.com).

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## Who let the dogs out!

Stonesfield Playing Field Association wishes to remind residents and guests to the village that dogs (including service dogs) are not permitted to be walked or exercised on the Stonesfield Playing Fields.

These fields are used daily by sports teams and children and require constant maintenance to keep them in the fantastic condition they are in.

Dogs are therefore not permitted on these fields for the safety, hygiene and enjoyment of all users.

Fiona Dangerfield

Secretary Stonesfield Playing Field Association

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## Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal 2023

I will not be continuing as the Poppy Appeal Organiser for Stonesfield. I would like to thank you for contributing £29,644.60 to the appeal during the 14 years I was the PAO.

If any individual or organisation would like to take on this role then kindly contact Yanto Evans [YEvans@britishlegion.org.uk](mailto:YEvans@britishlegion.org.uk) - he would be pleased to hear from them.

Going forward organisations or individuals will be able to order their poppy wreaths directly from the Royal British Legion by going to their website and ordering on line or from the British Legion shop on 0345 845 195.

David Brown

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## Bridewell Gardens

Bridewell Gardens, a local mental health recovery service, will be holding an Open Day on 10 September when the walled garden and vineyard will be open to the public from 11am – 4pm.

There will be a pop-up café in the garden for tea and cake and high-quality plants, home-produced jams and chutneys, and organic sparkling wine will be on sale. Make a day of it: bring a picnic blanket and relax in the vineyard with friends and family. Dogs on leads are very welcome, and families and children are encouraged to explore the site. No booking is required and the suggested donation is £5 per person.

Rachel Green

Bridewell Gardens, Wilcote OX7 3DT



Hello Stonesfield! Quick update from Blenheim here.

Craig, from the Estates Team, is currently sorting gates, stiles and fencing in and around the Lower Westfield / Lower Ridings areas to improve the enjoyment of the walks around the area. If you see Craig working, do go and say hello, or feel free to ask questions about what he's doing. One of the things he really enjoys is seeing people walking the routes he is clearing and creating new paths for everyone to explore.

A couple of months ago the Estates Team also created a 'buddy-bench' for Stonesfield Primary School, carved out of their surplus wood, and recently did the



same for Bladon Primary School. Buddy-benches are a great way to make sure all the children at the school have someone to play with and the team were really pleased to be able to help.

Blenheim is also committed to supporting the community bid for The White Horse pub, in a similar way we did in Bladon. Pubs are a vital part of rural communities but too many are being lost; communities coming together to buy a pub and help it prosper is a massive undertaking and we will support in whatever way we can.

Finally, if you would like to hear about something in particular concerning your area, please do email the Blenheim Community inbox – [community@blenheim.org](mailto:community@blenheim.org) – and we will try to answer your questions in the next newsletter. See you all next month!

Merilyn Davies

Blenheim Community Lead

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## **Ceilidh Sunday 29 October – Save the date!**

Stonesfield Folk Dance Group and Stonesfield Scout Group will be hosting a ceilidh on the afternoon of Sunday 29 October.

Please add the date to your diary - it's sure to be a fun event for young and old alike!

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

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## **North Leigh Roman Villa**

The next Open Days at the Roman Villa at North Leigh will be held on Saturday 9 and Sunday 10 September.

Full details are on the English Heritage website: [www.english-heritage.org.uk/visit/places/north-leigh-roman-villa/](http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/visit/places/north-leigh-roman-villa/).

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## **Afternoon tea at Combe Reading Room**

We are holding our afternoon tea event again this year in the garden of the Combe Reading Room on Sunday 3 September from 2.30 to 5pm. All proceeds will go to the Cystic Fibrosis Trust.

We will be serving cream teas, homemade cakes and hot drinks. We will also be selling a new range of handmade gifts and will be holding a raffle.

If you are not able to be there but would like to support the Cystic Fibrosis Trust, please contact me to purchase raffle tickets; price £5 for a book.

Libby Hanks (07958 595668)

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## **West Oxfordshire Community Choir**

Due to an unforeseen change in family circumstance, I am no longer able to run West Oxfordshire community choir. I have been running a choir here in the village for more than 10 years and feel incredibly sad to be saying goodbye to it after such a wonderful decade but at this time, family must come first.

I'd sincerely like to thank anyone who has come along to choir, been a choir member or supported the group in any way over the years. It has been a true privilege to be the choir leader and I shall miss it and all of my choir members hugely.

Thank you WOC/Stonesfield community choir for all of the years of Happy Harmonising. You were a joy.

Laura Rudge

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## Combe WI

We are looking forward to welcoming members, new members and guests to the next meeting of Combe WI which is on Monday 11 September. Jennifer Cowling is our guest speaker and she will be talking about 'Those extraordinary things we say' where we will explore the oddest expressions that trip off our tongues, such as 'making a pig's ear of it' or 'say boo to a goose', or 'being in someone's good books' - what do these expressions mean? You are invited to come along and find out!

Meetings are held on the second Monday of each month in the Reading Room, Combe, from 7.30-9.30pm. If you'd like to find out more about the Women's Institute do come along and try us out. We offer a warm welcome to all ladies over the age of 18.

Non-members/Guests are charged £5 to attend meetings which includes refreshments and a raffle ticket. Membership from September 2023 to April 2024 is £34.50, or from October it'll be just £23.00 – so a good time to consider joining us.

Julia Sharpe (891058)  
Secretary Combe WI



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## Neighbourhood Watch

Last month there was another attempted break-in on The Ridings. On this occasion the owner heard the assailants attempting to access his garage and they ran off when he came outside. They used a car to make their escape. Please be vigilant and ensure cars and outbuildings are secured.

Anyone interested in joining the Neighbourhood Watch Scheme can find details and register at: [www.member-registration.neighbourhoodalert.co.uk/30/Join](http://www.member-registration.neighbourhoodalert.co.uk/30/Join). Click on 'Join a scheme' and select 'Stonesfield'.

Deanna Asplundh  
Stonesfield Neighbourhood Watch  
Coordinator

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## Thames Valley Police Open Day returns

Thames Valley Police (TVP) will open its doors to the public for the force's Open Day. The event will take place between 10am and 4pm on Saturday 2 September and will be hosted at the training centre in Sulhamstead, near Reading.

The Open Day provides a fantastic opportunity for you to get a behind the scenes look at what it takes to police one of the biggest non-metropolitan policing areas in the country. The Roads Policing Unit, Forensic Investigations Unit, Contact Management team and Major Crime Unit are just a handful of over 40 exhibitors who will be there to showcase their work.

[mediaoffice@thamesvalley.police.uk](mailto:mediaoffice@thamesvalley.police.uk)

# Farmers' markets

Local Farmers' markets run from 8.30am to 1.30pm.

- **Charlbury:** quarterly, second Saturday in the month (March, June, September, December)
- **Chipping Norton:** the third Saturday of every month
- **Witney:** the fourth Friday of every month
- **Woodstock:** the first Saturday of every month



Farmers' markets in West Oxfordshire are run by the Thames Valley Farmers' Market Co-operative: [www.tvfm.org.uk/](http://www.tvfm.org.uk/)

In addition, there is a small weekly market in Charlbury held during the summer months each Saturday until October 9.30am–12 noon outside the Community Centre. This market is a local food market, with a small collection of stalls selling locally-grown and locally-prepared food.

It supports local businesses; enabling people to buy a range of locally-produced good-quality food in one place; bringing more footfall to the town centre on a regular basis; creating a friendly, social and accessible event.

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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.

## 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.  
COVID safety precautions are still in place, if you need them.

Please call or email to book transport in September:  
**Amanda Peters 01993 891947, Viv Kendall 01993 891803**  
or [stonesfieldvts@gmail.com](mailto:stonesfieldvts@gmail.com)

# Politics & local affairs

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## **Stonesfield Parish Council**

There was no Parish Council meeting in August.

### **Date of the next full Council**

**meeting:** 6 September 2023 at Stonesfield Primary School at 7pm.

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## **News from West Oxfordshire**

### **Botley West Solar Farm**

WODC has asked the Botley West Solar Farm developer to make significant improvements to their plans in response to the Scoping Report .

WODC has advised that the developer needs to do more to consider issues such as flooding, wildlife protection, why this site has been selected, the impact on farming, housing, recreation and heritage among a wide range of topics we have been asked to comment on.

The next stage will show the detailed proposals that will be consulted on in public where all residents will be able to give their views. Residents are encouraged to take part when it is live to make their views known.

The Council has previously expressed its disappointment that the proposal will bypass the local planning process, limiting input and decision making at a local level. The next round of public consultation is expected in Autumn 2023 according to the developer's website. Residents can find more information at [www.botleywest.co.uk](http://www.botleywest.co.uk)

The Botley West Solar Farm is a national level proposal being brought forward by a private developer and ultimately the Planning Inspectorate and Secretary of State will be making a decision on whether it is approved.

### **Expanding electric fleet will help keep towns green and clean**

The job of keeping the towns of Carterton and Woodstock clean will be greener following the purchase of two new fully electric street sweepers by WODC as the authority strives for greater sustainability to benefit the local environment and the communities it serves.

The sweepers are the latest additions to the Council's growing fleet of fully-electric vehicles as it continues to champion greener transport choices. With zero tailpipe emissions and quiet to operate, the new Green Machine Ze500 sweepers are well suited to be used in the two towns' residential areas where they will be used to clear road gutters and cleanse pavements as well as other pedestrianised areas.

Collectively they could save over 19,000 kg CO<sub>2</sub> per annum - the equivalent of saving 70,000 miles being driven in an average petrol car.

### **Buyers beware!**

WODC is warning potential buyers of land in West Oxfordshire to do proper checks before purchasing land.

Councillor Carl Rylett said, 'We have been contacted by numerous people who are

confused about the sale of plots of land in West Oxfordshire that are being sold with adverts saying they have future potential for development.

Some of those contacting us are asking about buying land to build their own home when the likelihood of planning permission being granted is very low. Some of these plots have even had planning permission for development turned down on numerous occasions before being sold as individual plots.

We are calling out to anyone looking to purchase land for development to make sure they are fully aware of what planning is required for what they want to do and to get professional advice, so they go into the purchase with the full information.

Our planning team is happy to offer information and support so please do contact us if you are thinking of buying land or speak to another planning or development professional.'

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## **From our MP Funds for Farmers**

I was delighted by the recent announcement to award farmers and foresters across West Oxfordshire with £165,527 in funding as part of the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs 'Farming Equipment and Technology Fund'.

This funding aims to help growers boost farm productivity, reduce waste and cut input costs, as well as increase environmental sustainability.

On top of this, I was very pleased to welcome the Minister for Food, Farming & Fisheries, Mark Spencer MP to West

Oxfordshire recently to meet with local farmers.

It was important to meet with the Minister and for local farmers to be given the opportunity to have an open and honest discussion with him about the challenges they are facing and stress the importance of supporting farming businesses in West Oxfordshire and across the UK.

## **Local Nature Recovery Strategy**

The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs awarded Oxfordshire County Council £238,000 to work on a Local Nature Recovery Strategy.

Through the adoption of a more localised approach to nature recovery, local communities will have greater autonomy to identify areas to create, enhance and restore habitat to maximise environmental benefits. This funding comes as part of a £14 million government package to regenerate our natural environment nationally.

August saw the launch of the first round of funding in the £25 million Species Survival Fund, targeted towards environmental charities, voluntary organisations, local authorities, national parks and AONBs and their partners, as well as eligible farmers. The fund will support early action for the 2030 Species Abundance Target, supporting the creation and restoration of wildlife-rich habitats, including on protected sites.

## **Thames Valley Police**

I was pleased to hear that the number of police constables in Thames Valley Police's Neighbourhood is set to double.

This announcement is hugely welcome and will mean 80 more officers are available to

deal with local crime across our area. This is a fantastic move to re-establish neighbourhood policing at a local level and I know is a very welcome and reassuring boost to our area as well as all other areas across TVP's neighbourhood.

### **Unlimited fines announced for water companies**

The Government has announced new laws to scrap the cap on penalties for polluters, giving regulators the power to issue unlimited fines on Water companies.

Following a consultation that received widespread support the Government has responded positively with new laws to bring forward more investment, stronger regulation and tougher enforcement.

Future fines and penalties from water companies will be re-invested into the government's new Water Restoration Fund aimed at delivering on-the-ground

improvements to water quality, and support local groups and community-led schemes which help to protect our waterways.

### **Parliamentary Petition on Botley West Solar Farm**

A reminder to please sign my petition through the link below and to share it far and wide so that we can send a clear message from West Oxfordshire's residents. [www.robertcourts.co.uk/botleysolarfarmpetition](http://www.robertcourts.co.uk/botleysolarfarmpetition)

Robert Courts

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

## **No to Botley West Solar Farm**

### **Petition to Parliament**

[www.robertcourts.co.uk/  
botleysolarfarmpetition](http://www.robertcourts.co.uk/botleysolarfarmpetition)

## **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 to Friday; 7.30 – 8.50am

(£6.75 per session) Cereal, toast and fruit juice included

### **Pre-School Sessions**

9am – 3pm daily for children aged 2–4 years (£18.40 per session)

### **After School Club**

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday & Thursday; 3.15 – 6pm

(£17.15 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))



# Education, culture & more

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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

The Library Manager will be in the library every Monday.

Val Phillips (891455)

Friends of Stonesfield Library

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## Summer Reading Challenge 2023

Have you read your 6 books for the Summer Reading Challenge? Only a week to go till the end of the challenge (Saturday 9 September).

Don't worry! You've still got time to finish.

The Summer Reading Challenge Celebration will take place on Wednesday 13 September at the St James Centre from 3.30 pm – 4.30 pm. Save the date!

Make sure you collect your invitation to the Celebration from the library when you complete the challenge.

Bryony Mallows



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## I'm a reader

Nicky Holland, 63, is a specialist mentor at Oxford Brookes University, supporting students through a variety of challenges, including mental health problems, autism and ADHD.

'I'm a library fanatic, I've used libraries since I was a toddler. A librarian once told me when I went back the next week: 'You can't change the books, you can't have read them all', but I had! In those days (the 1960s), library users were regarded as a nuisance, thought of mostly as just making the place untidy. It's totally different now, everyone is welcome. The first library I remember was ten minutes' walk from my childhood home in Swindon.

At Stonesfield library, I discovered Lindsey Davis. I just love her; she writes detective novels set in A.D. 70 and onwards. She's a classicist. Currently I'm reading Terry Pratchett's *Discworld*, which I've read loads of times. It's so clever and funny, like a (Gulliver's Travels' author) Jonathan Swift style reflection of our world through another mirror. Terry Pratchett turns all our understanding of being human on its head, which appeals to my fascination with how people think.'

For many years now, Nicky has lived with rheumatoid arthritis, which makes holding and handling books difficult. Consequently, she has switched to a Kindle, which is lighter and means if she needs to read in the middle of the night, she can switch its backlight on and read

herself back to sleep without waking husband, Harry.

Nicky is heavily involved with the Stonesfield Players, our thriving amateur dramatic society. She always wrote as a child but was discouraged from a writing career by a narrow-minded headmistress. Proving it's never too late, though, Nicky has recently written two short plays that she is now directing for autumn performances.

The first, *Same Table Next Week*, focuses on a woman who sees books as a vital way to make friends. The second, which will be performed in November - so there is still plenty of time to bag your seats – is centred around the recent, true story discovery by Nicky of letters hidden for decades, which were sent to Nicky's then teenaged mother by her favourite uncle while he was on active service in France during World War Two. The two plays, while very different, both have at their core a message about the power of the written word.

Creative inspiration can strike at any time, particularly, she says, when gardening, which is why she's not a big listener to audiobooks while she works: 'I enjoy thinking time. When I'm pulling up the weeds, my brain will pull the threads of what I'm writing together and sometimes I have to rush back inside to write it all down.'

Nicky's now grown-up daughters, on the other hand, however, were enthusiastic audiobook fans. One used Stephen Fry's narration of Harry Potter to help her sleep; this technique worked so well that for some time afterwards, like Pavlov's dogs, 'if she heard Fry's voice talking about anything, she'd fall asleep, no matter where she was.'

Nicky is now looking into Oxfordshire libraries' own free e-book service, in addition to Kindle and you can too! Clear information is provided on the website: eBooks and eAudio | Oxfordshire County Council

Eleanor Bailey

### FoSL:

#### Friends of Stonesfield Library

Do you enjoy reading?

Could you spare a couple of hours a month?

Come and join the library team. A great volunteering opportunity!

For further details contact  
Mike Pollitt (891856)



**STONESFIELD  
SEPTEMBERFEST**

**Sat 9th Sept  
2023**

Septemberfest is a family friendly music & beer festival raising money for good causes – Cancer Research UK, BBO Wildlife Trust & Stonesfield Village Playground

**HOW TO GET INVOLVED**

**Volunteer:** We need bar staff, first aiders, clean-up crew and anyone with fundraising experience. Please get in touch if you can lend a hand!

**Sponsor us:** You can help in making Septemberfest possible by sponsoring a beer barrel (£150) or even being a Headline Sponsor (£1000) with your name above the main stage! There are various sponsor packages available which include advertising and complimentary tickets.

– please contact Karen Payne on 07769948075 or email us: [hello@septemberfest.org.uk](mailto:hello@septemberfest.org.uk)

If sponsorship is not for you but would still like to make a contribution we have set up a 'Just Giving' page: <https://www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/karen-payne-2>  
A donation (however small), would be very much appreciated

Volunteers: Please get in touch with a committee member, via our webpage [www.septemberfest.org.uk](http://www.septemberfest.org.uk) or  Facebook

# Clubs, societies & sport

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## **Stonesfield Players Safari Supper**

**Saturday 23 September at 7pm**

The Stonesfield Players are holding another Safari Supper. Do join us for an evening of gastronomic delights and lots of fun all mingled with a wander around the village to a different venue for each course.

The evening will begin at The Old Bakery, Boot Street and throughout the evening you will enjoy a four course meal ending together with cheese and biscuits. All are welcome, we need guests and hosts, if anyone is interested in hosting please contact Ros.

Attendance is by booking only. Tickets are £18.50 per person and can be booked with Ros Mengech by Saturday 16 September.

Ros Mengech (07852 584688)

[ros\\_mengech@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:ros_mengech@yahoo.co.uk)

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## **Stonesfield Gardening Club**

As is our custom, we had no meeting in August.

I'm sure we have all been busy in our gardens and vegetable patches, enjoying our green lawns and comparing yields with last year, although it would be nice to be able to spend more evenings outside!

Everything is growing well, but some heat and sunshine to get things ripe would be very welcome now – fingers crossed for the proverbial Indian Summer.

Our September talk will take place on Monday 4 at 7.30pm in the St James' Centre, when we will welcome local garden designer Lorraine Brodrick. She will be talking to us about Future Proofing our gardens, looking at designing for time, resources and physical capability available. Lots to talk about, I'm sure. Hope to see you there.

Diane Bates

Secretary, Stonesfield Gardening Club

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



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## **Stonesfield Playing Field Association**

The Playing Field and its facilities are owned by the Playing Field Association and administered on behalf of the village by the trustees of the association. The association receives funding from a number of sources including the footballers, cricket players, tennis players, Sports and Social Club, Parish Council and other occasional users.

Historically, the association has operated on a shoestring budget, appealing to various bodies for grants for large expenditure. In recent years the Parish Council has reduced its contribution to the association, inflation and the lack of volunteers has meant that the old economic model no longer works. The association is in danger of running out of funds, which could result in some of the facilities on the field being closed or restricted.

The trustees are discussing plans to alter the economics of the playing field to put it on a more sustainable footing for the future. As the current chair is retiring, the association is looking for a new energetic chair who can lead the organisation forward. It is not an onerous task and can be very rewarding, working with the team of dedicated trustees. The only firm commitment is chairing the monthly trustees meeting. If you think that you can help sustain one of the village's most important assets please contact Frank Huddleston on 01993 891785 or any other member of the trustees.

Fiona Dangerfield (07814 112437)  
Secretary, Stonesfield Playing Field Association

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## **Stonesfield Food Group**

Although we did not have any Socials or Community Cafés over the summer, the Food Group have been busy behind the scenes, planning and supporting the widespread availability of good food for everyone in Stonesfield, by neighbours helping neighbours.

**Summer holiday vouchers** We have been able to support some households with primary school aged children, with additional funds (via vouchers) to help fill that hungry gap when free school meals aren't available over the holidays. We are grateful to Stonesfield Parish Council and *The Stonesfield Slate* for helping us to achieve this. Thanks also to Stonesfield School for helping us to pass the vouchers on to families who can use them.

**Community Freezer** Working with Stonesfield Mutual Aid, we have been lucky enough to source a chest freezer, thanks to Stonesfield Parish Council, and to Dan O'Gorman, who generously gave us a discount on the price. We'll use it to continue our mission to reduce food waste by both cooking in advance when there is a lot of food to rescue at the Oxford Food Hub or to save delicious surplus meals from the Social and Café, to be used at a later date. We are so pleased to be able to extend our work in this way!

We have been lucky enough to benefit from more than 23 kilos of good food donated by Garsington Opera at the end of their performances. We are storing the perishable items in our freezer for use in the future. We are really grateful to Garsington Opera for their kindness.

If you have a glut of vegetables in your garden or allotment which you can't use,

and would like to donate to us, please get in touch and our creative cooks will work their magic!

Also needed is a fridge in good clean condition, please get in touch if you can help with this.

**Emergency Meals** Stonesfield Mutual Aid group successfully supported the community with emergency food parcels during the Covid crisis. Together we are continuing this project. If you are in need of a food parcel, or know someone in Stonesfield who is, please contact Kate Harris, on 01993 898781; at 6 Brook Lane, or via email at [kateharris58@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:kateharris58@yahoo.co.uk)

If you are able to, you can support this initiative by donating tinned meat pies, hotdogs, meatballs, chicken, or ham. They can be left in the brown box on the doorstep of 6 Brook Lane.

**Community Café** The next Community Café run by the Food Group members will be on 2 September 10-2pm alongside the repair café. Lunch will be served noon till 2pm or when we run out - if earlier! Further attractions - the Neighbourhood Plan team will be joining us.

Our bakers and soup makers have been planning the menu – come along for a delicious lunch or sweet treat! You can also bring along your repairs if you'd like, but the café is open to all.

**Stonesfield Social** We're all rested and ready to go again on 12 September! We're looking forward to seeing old friends and new, catching up on the news from the summer and sharing good food together. We meet at the Village Hall on Tuesdays, 5 – 7pm, for free home cooked food, crafts and a chat. Everyone is welcome. If you

would like to volunteer on a regular or occasional basis, please get in touch.

**Seniors' Café** Also starting up on 12 September, the Seniors' Café offers a chance to meet friends over tea, coffee and homemade cake in a welcoming atmosphere – a great way to spend a Tuesday afternoon. Same times as before – we'd love to see you between 3-4pm.

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## **Stonesfield Environment Group**

The summer is always a bit quieter for us but we do still keep up with our testing of the Evenlode for pollutants and submitting our data to the Citizen Science project, you can read about it on the Earthwatch website, [www.earthwatch.org](http://www.earthwatch.org). Our priorities remain tree planting and improving the ecology of the Evenlode and surrounding environment.

The thing about a river is, it's always moving, coming to us from somewhere else and leaving us to move on to our neighbours. We really are all in this together and what we do to our part of the river impacts those downstream of us much as the spilling of untreated sewage by Thames Water into the river at Finstock (and other upstream sites) affects us. To that end we have been planning how to coordinate with our neighbouring towns and villages to work together and increase the impact of our collective work.

We have plans for the year ahead, E. Coli testing and perhaps a Riverday in Stonesfield... so please do get in touch if you want to be involved.

[juliecurran0@gmail.com](mailto:juliecurran0@gmail.com)

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## North Leigh History Society

Our new season gets underway on Tuesday 5 September when Antonia Kearney will be talking about 'The Unknown Churchill'. We meet at 7.30 pm in the Memorial Hall in North Leigh, OX29 6SA. All are welcome. 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.

In addition, best-selling author Shrabani Basu will give 'Spy Princess' talk at Ditchley Park at 7pm on Wednesday 6 September 2023 at Ditchley Park. Tickets sold raise funds for Soldiers of Oxfordshire Trust, in memory of former Trustee and friend Major Tom Shannon. The talk will highlight the story of Noor Inayat Khan, the first woman radio operator to be infiltrated into occupied France in 1943. Based on interviews with her family, colleagues and secret service records, Shrabani Basu traces the journey of Noor Inayat Khan from her early life in Paris as a writer and a musician to her recruitment by the British secret service, her valuable work for the Allies, and final death in Dachau concentration camp in September 1944.

As her circuit collapsed around her, she remained the last link with London and refused to abandon her post despite the dangers. She was posthumously awarded

the George Cross for her extraordinary bravery, and France honoured her with the Croix de Guerre.

This talk has been organised in celebration of the life of Major Tom Shannon, a friend of Basu and former Trustee of the Soldiers of Oxfordshire Museum, who sadly passed away in August 2022. Proceeds from ticket sales from this event support Soldiers of Oxfordshire Trust. It is planned to be the first in a series of lectures held in his memory.

The co-founder of Oxford Metrics, Tom had served as a Reservist in the Australian Army, and in the Territorial Army in Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire. Alongside his Trusteeship of the county's military museum, he was secretary of the Army Benevolent Fund in Buckinghamshire and a long serving chairman of the Oxford Club.

The venue for this event will be the magnificent Ditchley Park, with the ticket price including a donation to the museum, as well as drinks and canapés.

Tickets can be purchased from the museum website, with virtual tickets to watch the event live online also available for those unable to attend in person.

Tickets: [www.sofa.org.uk/whats-on/](http://www.sofa.org.uk/whats-on/)  
Soldiers of Oxfordshire Museum 01993 810 211 [www.sofa.org.uk](http://www.sofa.org.uk)

### STONESFIELD LUNCH CLUB

Stonesfield Lunch Club meets every Weds 11 till 2 (for members) at the St James' Centre.

Lunch Club provides a social occasion, friendship and support for our more mature residents along with refreshments, activities and a freshly cooked 2-course meal each week.

Volunteers are always welcomed for many roles and this is a lovely way to be involved in village life. Contact me if you would like more information on becoming a member or in volunteering.

Kate Harris 01993 898781 or [kateharris58@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:kateharris58@yahoo.co.uk)



# Church news

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## **Stonesfield Methodist Church**

Services for September

- 3      11am The Reverend Andrew Biggs  
         Holy Communion Service
- 10     11am Marjorie Brown
- 17     11am Peter Allen
- 24     11am David Sarbutts  
         Harvest Service

Come you thankful people, come!

Rain or shine the harvest season is here once more. Golden fields of wheat are cut and straw bales stand tall, glorious gifts from God are ever present and are there for the taking. It's time to come together and give thanks to the many people who strive to support the needs of others, at home and away. The harvest brings such an abundance of good things. Thoughts can drift to those who have less easy days, with summer nearly done and autumn round the corner, a helping hand would mean so much. At the Harvest Service on the 24 September, gifts of a nourishing kind will be gathered and sent off to the Witney caring and sharing group, - long sell-by dates if you please! On that day we warmly welcome David Sarbutts, a past lay Minister here, to lead our Worship. Do come and join the celebration!

Kathleen Albért (891733)

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

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[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 – New Learning**

I always associate September with the beginning of a new school or college year, and I wonder whether you do too. Many of us have been shaped by years of study, or have been scarred by it, or have felt our lives punctuated by ushering children through the long process of education. When September comes, our children and young people, after a summer of relaxed days, time with grandparents, family holidays, travel with friends or damp festivals, have to begin another academic year and relearn the art of sitting still, listening, reading and thinking. For some this will be a delight, and for others, it will be rather less so. As this September arrives, I am conscious of how much has changed in the world of learning in recent years. The use of tablet computers in school, smart boards, the digitisation of

libraries and widespread access to online resources was already well underway before Covid struck, but since then the revolution in learning has been extraordinary. Like many of my age, I use the internet a lot, but I now feel like a dinosaur for also using reference books, or for taking actual books on holiday. And I wonder whether the Artificial Intelligence revolution will soon change things again.

My father died a year ago this month, but left behind lots of books, which I hope to read one day. His own father had been a postman in East London, who attended improving lectures and concerts in his limited free time, but passed on to my father a love of learning. Whether we get our learning from documentaries, on the internet, from magazines or from books, I believe it is important for us all to be lifelong learners, to be open to new ideas, to insights which will help us to experience life with a new vitality. The world has so much to teach us, and so many things to share, which can enlarge our vision and challenge our assumptions at any age. There are always new things to learn, to experience, to feel and to know. Not novelty or distraction, but insight, understanding and wisdom. One of the things which has been missed by many people in recent decades is an understanding of the Bible, its context and its message, even though it underpins so much of our language, literature, culture, politics, belief and history. It is never too late to learn a language, an instrument, to encounter another culture or to ride a unicycle, and neither is it too late to begin to understand the riches of the Bible's message of love, justice and grace. If you are interested in learning how the Christian message could change your own

understanding of life, the universe and everything, please get in touch - as we hope to begin a group who will meet weekly to learn and discuss together this autumn.

Revd Ralph Williamson

Rector

## Services

### Sunday 3 September

#### [Thirteenth Sunday after Trinity]

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

### Sunday 10 September

#### [Fourteenth Sunday after Trinity]

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

### Sunday 17 September

#### [Fifteenth Sunday after Trinity]

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

### Sunday 24 September

#### [Sixteenth Sunday after Trinity]

8am	Stonesfield	Holy Communion [BCP/said]
9.30am	Combe	Parish Communion
11am	Stonesfield	Parish Communion
5pm	Combe	Evensong

## Wednesdays

9.30am Stonesfield Holy Communion  
(6,20 & 27 Sept)  
11am Combe Morning Prayer  
(6 & 20 Sept)

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## Roman Catholic Worship

### Transfiguration

On August 6 we celebrated the Feast of the Transfiguration, an important feast in the liturgical calendar. Most denominations in the Christian Communion commemorate Jesus' Transfiguration which is recorded in three of the four Gospels. We are told (Mark 9:2–13; Matthew 17:1–13; Luke 9:28–36) of the occasion upon which Jesus Christ took three of his disciples, Peter, James, and John, up on a mountain, where Moses and Elijah appeared and Jesus was transfigured, his face and clothes becoming dazzlingly bright.

The Transfiguration reiterates God as a threefold figure, all coequal: (1) as Creator, Lord of the history of salvation, Father, and Judge, as revealed in the Old Testament; (2) as the Lord who, in the incarnated figure of Jesus Christ, lived among human beings and was present in their midst as the "Resurrected One"; and (3) as the Holy Spirit: the Giver of Life and Love. Matt. 17. [5] 'And as he was yet speaking, behold a bright cloud overshadowed them. And lo a voice out of the cloud, saying: This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased: hear ye him.' This in effect repeats that of Jesus' Baptism: Matt 3. (16-17) 'And Jesus being baptised, forthwith came out of the water: and lo, the heavens were opened to him: and he saw the Spirit of God descending as a dove, and coming upon him. And behold

a voice from heaven saying: This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.'

The Transfiguration represents the end of Jesus' earthly mission to humanity; thereafter it is His apostles and disciples who are charged with spreading the 'good news' of the Gospels and Christ's teaching. Their continuing mission is to transfigure us all, by reminding us that Jesus was fully God and wholly man who lived, died and was resurrected for us.

### Holy Mass

Sunday Mass at 9.15am

Wednesdays and Fridays at 9.15am

For parish updates, any further information and further support, please see [www.stteresaschurch-charlbury.com/](http://www.stteresaschurch-charlbury.com/)  
Or contact Fr. Clive Dytor, parish priest:  
[fr.clive.dytor@rcaob.org.uk](mailto:fr.clive.dytor@rcaob.org.uk)

Roman Catholic Community in Stonesfield

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## A record of some recent weddings and funerals:

### Weddings

13 July: Peter Miller and Rosie Evans

Congratulations and God's richest blessing.

### Funerals

11 July: David Brooks

3 August: Janet Melrose

11 August: Simon Fieldwick

Our prayers are for family and friends at this time.

*Editor's note: If you wish a wedding or a funeral to be recorded in The Slate then please send details to me at [slate@stonesfield.online](mailto:slate@stonesfield.online)*

**best-one** 

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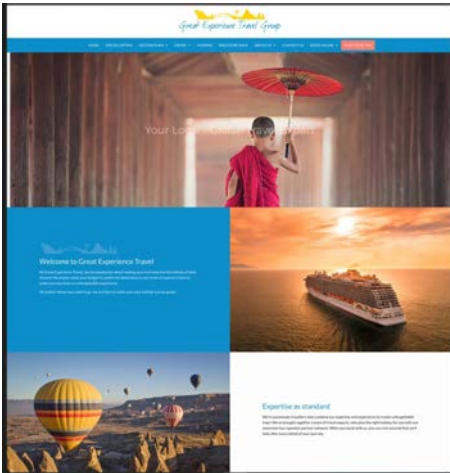
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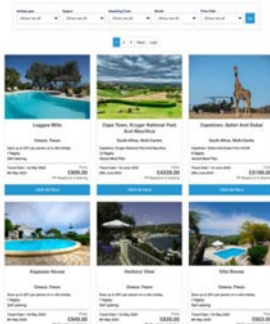
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