



Issue No 541 November 2023

Stonesfield Scouts



Stonesfield Scouts was formed on 4th August 1948. Over the past 75 years we have helped countless Beavers, Cubs and Scouts gain a love of traditional, outside experiences. Scouts have camped, cooked, hiked and helped all over Oxfordshire, but nowhere more so than in our own village.

We are fortunate to be blessed with a beautiful countryside to play in and our new hut will give us a new place to go from over the next 75 years.

To let some of you know (and to remind others) we are not just about our famous Duck Race. We are part of the Remembrance day celebrations, we deliver local Christmas cards, we represent our village at regional and national competitions, we hold Bingo nights, cake sales, and we even replaced the cock on

the roof of the church. We want the young people who are part of our sections to be the very best they can be, and to take pride in where they come from: our history and our area.

This year is no different. We will be at our Ceilidh (29 October), Bingo (15 December), following Santa on his Sleigh, as well as village fetes and, as ever, at the annual Duck Race. (We have even got some new ducks to swell the ranks!)

Our Hut is slowly inching forward, but we are in need of some new funds and fund raisers, and we have plans for Easter and Summer camps at Youlbury.

Would you like to be involved? It has never been easier!

Continued on p24

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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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.

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Advertisements to
slate-ads@stonesfield.online

Current and past copies of the *Slate* are available at www.stonesfield.online

Dates for your diary: November

See page 8 for The White Horse pop-up pub/café dates & times

1	Lunch Club Coffee Morning	St James' Centre	11-12.30pm
1	Parish Council meeting	Primary school	7pm
1,8,15,22,29	Gatehouse Pilates	Village Hall	9.30-10.30am
1,8,15,22,29	Hannah Bathe Fitness	Village Hall	7-7.45pm
1,8,15,22,29	Folkdancing	Village Hall	7.45-10pm
2,9,16,23,30	Book Break	Stonesfield Library	12.30-2pm
2,6,9,13,16	Taekwondo	Village Hall	5.30-6.30pm
2,9,16,23,30	Hannah Bathe HIIT Class	Village Hall	7.15-8pm
3,10,24	Baby & Toddlers Group	Village Hall	10am-12noon
4	Parish Council Community Café	Village Hall	10am-2pm
6,13,20,27	Monday Coffee	St James' Centre	8.45-11.30am
7	North Leigh History Society	Memorial Hall	7.30pm
7,14,21,28	Seniors Café	Village Hall	3-4pm
7,14,21,28	Stonesfield Social	Village Hall	5-7pm
7,14,21,28	Zumba	Village Hall	7-8pm
7,14,21,28	Strong Nation HIIT	Village Hall	8.15-9.15pm
12	Combe WI	Combe Reading Rm	7.30-9.30pm
13	Gardening Club	St James' Centre	7.30pm
14,28	Carers Café	Village Hall	10am-12noon
17,18	Stonesfield Players Production	Village Hall	7.30pm
18	Methodist Church Bazaar	St. James' Centre	2-4pm
20,23,27,30	Taekwondo	Village Hall	5.30-6.30pm
21	TLC – Tick List Club	Village Hall	7.30-9.30pm

December

2	Repair Café	Village Hall	11am-2pm
3	Christmas Market	Village Hall	Timings TBC

A message from the Editor: The December & January issues of The Slate are combined (i.e. there is no separate January issue), the deadline for this issue is 10 November for adverts and 15 November for articles.

Notices & news

Denise and Simon Fieldwick

Following the heart breaking losses of Denise and Simon, my dad (Peter) and I would like to thank everyone who has supported us and helped us through these dark days. We had visits, cards, calls and kind wishes from so many people and it has helped us somehow survive the overwhelming pain. Our thanks to Ralph for his kindness, and to all our friends and family for all you have done. We have felt so grateful to be part of a community where people just put their arms around you, physically and metaphorically, and create a safe space for grief when the world has been knocked from its orbit.



Behind the scenes, Jim O'Brien has tirelessly worked to help us create a fitting memorial and I am delighted to say an oak log has been donated by Blenheim and installed on the common today for all to sit on and enjoy, where the old one used to be on the lower path. It feels a very natural addition, and we hope many will sit and enjoy the view from it. Mum always called that spot 'her church' where she would sit and think, pray and feel at one with nature

in the beautiful setting of our common. We hope it will give everyone who uses it the same sense of peace and comfort that it gave her, to be in such a beautiful place.

We are so grateful to Jim and to Olly who moved the log into place, Richard Morris, and the Parish Council for agreeing to it being placed there. Thank you too to Alex, Simon Woolley and James Dolan for helping us dig the foundations. We hope 'Mum's church' is a place of reflection and peace for a long time to come.

Warmest wishes,

Rachel Briggs and Peter Fieldwick

Charlotte Oakeshott – a tribute

On 16 September our dear friend Charlotte passed away. The church was full with family and her many friends for her funeral on 14 October, celebrating her life, and giving thanks for all she meant to us.

Charlotte will always be remembered for her natural friendliness to all, her warmth and her real interest in everyone. Many, many of us will have been invited to tea, or lunch, at the Manor or in the garden. I was even invited to a socially distanced cup of tea in the middle of the large lawn during lockdown, sitting on deckchairs! She was a great listener, uncritical, unassuming, measured, thoughtful and encouraging. Her sense of humour and general sparkle (shown not least in her eyes) added so much to her enjoyment of life, which was infectious.

Charlotte's Christian faith underpinned everything in her life, giving it direction and purpose. She leaves us with an amazing example of faith and service in practice – love of God and love to others, even when the going is tough. To the last, Charlotte showed great courage and fortitude in her pain and frailty, still looking out for, and interested in, others.

Charlotte is now at peace, and we thank God for her life amongst us.

Lindsey Sellar

Village Hall News

Despite the mild weather so far this year, we are beginning to feel the dip in temperature, and experience the change in the weather. We are opening our doors once again to the Beavers, Cubs and Scouts as they come back in from the cold, until the lighter evenings start again.

The Village Hall continue to offer support, with a number of free events put on regularly, and open to all, with one of our new services being:

TLC (Tick List Club) on the 3rd Tuesday every month – 35 ways to £1000 in cash – Don't miss out on top tips on how to do it! Bring your smart phone if you can, as we can help more people at a time that way and we only have a limited number of computers available on site.

Can we say a Big Thank you to all those who supported the Preschool Community Café – they had a fab day, and managed to raise just over £400 so they were thrilled.

On the 4 November it's the turn of the Parish Council Community Café, so please go along and see what they have on offer for you.

On Sunday 3 December we will be holding the Christmas Market again, so if you would like a table / stall please do get in touch.

Thank you to everyone for your continued support

Jacqueline Carthew (898919)

Bookings Clerk & Secretary for Stonesfield Village Hall

stonesfieldvh@gmail.com

A Big Macmillan Thank You!



A huge thank you for all the support received for our annual Macmillan Coffee Morning, held at St James' Centre, Stonesfield on Friday 29 September, 9-11am, raising an amazing £1695.00, including online donations, Gift Aid and £290.00 raised by the John Radcliffe Neonatal Unit's Coffee Morning, held the day before, thanks for teaming with us!

We are overwhelmed by everyone's kindness and support, before, during and after our event and we hope to see everyone again on Friday 27 September 2024!

Jane & Stonesfield's Macmillan Coffee Morning Team

Bob & Geraldine Lawrence's Donation



A truly remarkable collection of twenty A4 sized folders and three large photograph albums detailing the history of the village, its people and buildings has been given to Stonesfield Library by Bob and Geraldine Lawrence.

Shortly, we hope to gain a suitable display cabinet for this wonderful collection to house it safely in our library for future generations. The volumes will not be allowed out of the library on loan but will be kept for reference within the library itself and you will be very welcome to visit and peruse the masterpiece for yourselves. We are truly fortunate and grateful to have been given these volumes, which Bob had originally intended to publish in a book.

Stonesfield Primary School Prospective Parents Open Morning

This year, for the first time, Stonesfield School will be running a Prospective Parents Open Morning on Wednesday 8 November. If your child will be starting school in September 2024, come and look around! This is an opportunity to see the school in action. You will be able to talk to the children, meet the headteacher, see our beautiful school grounds and Forest School, pop into classes to see the children and teachers hard at work, and all this

while soaking up the peaceful, purposeful atmosphere of our lovely school.

The morning starts at 9.30am serving refreshments and a short talk from the headteacher which will be followed by a tour of the school led by our fabulous Year 6 children. If you are curious about the school and would like to look round with your child, please contact the school office on 01993 891687 or email office.2353@stonesfield.oxon.sch.uk to book in and we will see you then!

Septemberfest raises £12,000 for charity



The final numbers are in and the Septemberfest 2023 team is delighted to confirm that we raised £12,000, which will be equally distributed amongst our worthy charities – Stonesfield Children's Playground, Cancer Research and the Berks Bucks and Oxon Wildlife Trust.

The team is keen to hear your feedback or thoughts for future events, so do get in touch at hello@septemberfest.org.uk

Finally, our thanks again to all those involved, especially the wonderful volunteers and sponsors without whom the event would not be possible.

See you next time!

The Septemberfest 2023 Team

White Horse update



A good turn out on 15 October

It was wonderful to see so many of you at The White Horse Open Meeting. As well as an opportunity to update you with the latest developments and answer your questions, we were able to thank you again for your vital support in making the purchase of the pub possible.

Your feedback at the meeting was also immensely valuable, and together we covered a wide range of topics including disabled access, tenancy and business models, the longer-term role of our volunteers, and the best use of the building and garden for the benefit of the community.



Enjoying the White Horse garden

The volunteer-run pop-up pub/cafe has had a very busy first three weekends of operation. The profit that Claire and the team have generated will be used towards the upcoming repair and refurbishment programme, the essential works of which include re-equipping the kitchen,

improving the function of the cellar, and extensive repairs to the roof and fabric of the building.

We are planning to operate the pop-up pub/cafe until Christmas, with repairs and refurbishments commencing in 2024. Once we have achieved our Community Shares Standard Mark we will relaunch our share offer to help raise funds for the works, and press ahead with applications for grant funding.



Steve Callaghan and Claire Renshaw

We are looking at the possibility of conducting another survey of community preferences for the pub, but in the shorter term if you have questions or suggestions, we invite you to contact us at info@backthewhitehorse.com or chat with the committee during surgery sessions at the pub on 27 and 28 October.

See also the 'pictures @ the Pub' article (p8) to find out what artwork we're lining up for the pub walls!

How to contact us:

Offers of volunteer support:
volunteers@backthewhitehorse.com

Any other enquiries:
info@backthewhitehorse.com

Website: www.backthewhitehorse.com

Instagram: [stonesfieldwhitehorse](https://www.instagram.com/stonesfieldwhitehorse)

Facebook: [thewhitehorseatstonesfield](https://www.facebook.com/thewhitehorseatstonesfield)

Pictures @ the Pub

Pictures @ the Pub offers our artists the opportunity to exhibit their work throughout the year whilst enabling the pub to maintain fresh and interesting displays on its walls. For the opening night we arranged an exhibition of photographs featured in the fundraiser calendar for the Back the White Horse campaign. These, along with metal wall art created by A Blackbird Sang, will be on view until mid-November. From mid-November and throughout December we will have Michael Sofroniou's vibrant and colourful paintings of still life, landscapes and interiors.

In order to give our crafters a similar opportunity, on Saturday 9 December we plan to hold our first event for them - Crafts for Christmas. This will take place between 11am and 4pm and a variety of handmade decorations, cards and gifts will be on sale. As usual, the café will be open for breakfast and lunch and we hope to see many of you there!

More information is available from Trisha Williams. Call 891960 or email trwynwil003@gmail.com.



POP-UP PUB/CAFE

OPENING TIMES
Every weekend until Christmas
Breakfast until 12pm, light lunches until 3pm

Friday: 10am to 11pm
Saturday: 10am to 11pm
Sunday: 10am to 3pm

Proceeds to the Stonesfield Community Pub Ltd
www.backthewhitehorse.co.uk

 [stonesfieldwhitehorse](https://www.instagram.com/stonesfieldwhitehorse)  [thewhitehorseatstonesfield](https://www.facebook.com/thewhitehorseatstonesfield)

THANK YOU to the community for bringing the pub back to life and making the opening of the temporary pop-up pub/cafe possible. The White Horse is due to fully reopen in 2024.

Calling our Community Champions!

Here we are again at the start of November, and on the Stonesfield Community Pub team, we have turned our thoughts to Christmas. We are very aware how difficult things continue to be financially for many, with the cost-of-living crisis affecting so many lives, including households in Stonesfield. Any one of us might need support from our village at some point, and the pub team, along with our wider community, want to help.



The 'Reverse Advent Calendar' initiative has been very much appreciated over the last three years and we'd like to ask for your help again. We're hoping to encourage as many people as possible to become community champions by using our reverse advent calendar guide to create a festive food parcel that can be delivered to a household in need.

It's easy to get involved: simply wrap an empty box - ideally in festive paper - leaving the top open. Then from now until 17 December, add the items suggested daily on the calendar, or an alternative of your choice, that can be served cold if necessary (avoiding nuts/alcohol please). It's also fine if there are more or fewer items in your box - everything will help and be gratefully received.

You can find the calendar on page 10 or at www.backthewhitehorse.com/news/reverse-advent-calendar.

Do please let us know if you're taking part by sending an email to Susan Rudlin (susan@backthewhitehorse.com) and we'll arrange to collect your box between the 17-19 December so that they can be delivered by Christmas Eve.

Please turn to 'Education, culture & more' if you would like to find out how to receive a hamper of festive food.

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.

Police and community support

For information or advice on security concerns, please call 101 or contact woodstockNHPT@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk

Upright Piano Free - please save from disposal

Housed in dry garage for a while (covered in protective sheets).
Associated piano stool included.
Piano keys lid has locking key.
View at any time, by arrangement.

01993 898733

Dallas Townsend

51 Pond Hill, Stonesfield

Stonesfield Reverse Advent Calendar

with Stonesfield Community Pub Limited and Stonesfield Mutual Aid

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Will you make a difference to someone this Christmas?	27 Nov Tea / coffee	28 Nov Tinned tomatoes	29 Nov Christmas biscuits	30 Nov Cereal/ porridge	1 Dec Tinned potatoes	2 Long-life juice
3 Gravy	4 Tinned fruit	5 UHT milk	6 Instant mash	7 Tinned meat / fish / lentils etc.	8 Soap	9 Tinned meals (incl. vegan)
10 Soup	11 Chocolate for children	12 Custard/rice pudding	13 Baked beans	14 Festive cake	15 Pasta n' sauce	16 Hot pudding
17 Chocolate orange	18 - 20 Parcel collection	21 - 24 Parcel delivery	25 Christmas Day Thank you! Your generosity has made a difference to someone's Christmas			



Autumn and winter events round-up!

Repair Café

Our next Repair Café is on Saturday 2 December, 11am-2pm, along with the Community Café providing the drinks and delicious cakes. The Repair Café is becoming ever more popular with people wishing it happened more often. At September's café we repaired 76kg of stuff which otherwise might have gone to landfill and 35 people brought items to be repaired or sharpened so do think about bringing any faulty items in December. In addition, the clothing team has done a great job mending clothes, and we can offer IT advice on computers or phones that don't behave. We look forward to seeing you there. Email in advance if you can: stonesfieldrepaircafe@gmail.com



Keith at Repair Café

Christmas Art & Craft Show 9 & 10 December

Grey Cat Studio will be opening its doors again for Christmas. Come and browse through paintings, prints, textiles, fieldwork, jewellery, painted wood and other items for that unique Christmas present from local artists & artisans: Rachael, Becki & Griselda Sherlaw-Johnson, Ann Lowe, Kerry Burniston and Jenny Lines. Enjoy a glass of mulled wine as you look.

Open 10am - 3pm.

Grey Cat Studios, Woodlands Rise, Stonesfield, OX29 8PL

Becki Sherlaw-Johnson
rebeccasj@btinternet.com

Methodist Church Bazaar

The bazaar is to be held at St. James Centre on Saturday 18 November, from 2pm until 4pm.

Do come along and enjoy an afternoon in good company. There will be a selection of stalls, cakes, bric-a-brac, gifts, games and much more. Light refreshments will be served and toe tapping music to bring a smile!

Donations will be greatly appreciated.

A very warm welcome awaits one and all!

Kathleen Albért (891733)

Combe Community Cinema in the Combe Hub

On Friday 24 November, we are showing *The Man who Knew Infinity*, a 2015 British drama about the first Indian to be elected as a Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge, Srinivasa Ramanujan. Screen Daily says it's 'such a good story that it is hard to resist, with a particularly fine performance from Jeremy Irons. Mathematics plays a key role, but in a way that is entirely accessible, allowing the viewer to comprehend the advances that Ramanujan made and why his legacy remains so important almost a century after his death'.

As usual, doors open at 7:30 for 8.00pm start and our "Cine-bar" will be serving soft drinks, wine and a selection of beers. Come and meet friends for a chat, a drink or two and an enjoyable film night. £5 per ticket - cash and card payment accepted. For more information, contact:
combecommunitycinema@gmail.com

North Leigh History Society

On Tuesday 7 November Trevor Jackson will be giving a talk on 80 years of the RAF at Brize Norton. We meet at 7.30 pm in the Memorial Hall in North Leigh, OX29 6SA. All 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.

Lunch Club Coffee morning and bring and buy!

This will be held at the St. James Centre, Wednesday 1 November, 11am until 12.30 pm. Everyone is very welcome.

Combe WI

Many thanks to everyone who attended and helped at our coffee morning at the end of September. We raised an amazing £391 all of which, once the room hire expenses have been paid, will go towards funding speakers and events for our future meetings.

We were delighted to welcome two new members at our October meeting, but we've still room for more! Membership until May 2024 is just £23.00 – so a good time to consider joining us. Alternatively, you could come as a visitor and just pay £5 and this includes refreshments and a raffle ticket. Meetings are held on the second Monday of each month in the Reading Room, Combe, from 7.30-9.30pm. We offer a warm welcome to all ladies over the age of 18 and we've an exciting programme of speakers and events arranged for 2023/24. If you'd like to find out more about the Women's Institute do come along and try us out.

Our speaker for October was Chris Caddy and he entertained us with the history of the music from some of the most well-known composers connected to London, from Handel through to Noel Coward - and with many others in between. Our November meeting is an Open Meeting and anyone over the age of 18 is welcome to come. Our speaker will be Robin Stafford Allen and he'll be asking 'Can we live on renewable energy' – an interesting question!

Please call or email me if you would like further information about the WI.

Julia Sharpe (891058)
Secretary Combe WI
combewi@oxfordhsirewi.co.uk

Witney Music Society

The second concert in Witney Music Society's new season will be a song recital by the tenor Alessandro Fisher with collaborative pianist Ashok Gupta. Their programme will include works by Clara Schumann, Robert Schumann, Schubert and Chausson. The concert is at 7.30 pm on Friday 10 November at High Street Methodist Church, Witney. Tickets (£15, £1 for under 19s) will be available at the door from 7pm or in advance online.

For more information, please telephone 01993 898020 or visit the Witney Music Society website.

www.witneymusicsociety.org.uk

Spook-tacular new trail at Blenheim Palace for Halloween 2023

Halloween at Blenheim Palace is back with a sensational new trail and this spine-chilling message to visitors – ‘The darker it gets, the spookier it gets’.

Families, friends and loved ones can enjoy the perfect Halloween experience during autumn half term (October 20-29), wandering through the mysterious grounds of the magnificent 18th century property in the heart of the Oxfordshire countryside.

Due to the trail's popularity last year, gates open at the earlier time of 5.30pm for 2023, giving younger visitors the chance to experience it in daylight, before twilight and moonlight descend.

www.blenheimpalace.com/halloween;
[#halloweenatblenheimpalace](https://twitter.com/halloweenatblenheimpalace)



Politics & local affairs

Stonesfield Parish Council

The parish council held a meeting on 4 October 2023 and this is the report following that meeting.

The council discussed the common. The council acknowledged that there are a lot of rabbits on the land, we may have to consider controlling the rabbit population as they are considered a pest and eat neighbouring cropland. Natural England has stated that we must not damage this hedge line but we do need to look at fence repairs and the clerk has requested quotes for this. The log on the common has been replaced, with thanks from Blenheim Estate for supplying this.

Neighbourhood Plan update was provided by Richard Morris – please see the separate NP plan report. The parish council is very grateful for the work the NP group is doing.

A resident wrote to the council questioning the amount of signage in the village. Cllr Graham will take this back to OCC to consider the number of signs. The PC will update in due course.

The OCC council has changed administration due mainly to the OFSTED report for SEND. The labour party left the administration on those issues. Someone separately has now been appointed for SEND.

The District is looking at mobile network coverage to see if it is adequate in some

areas of the district. We expect to see detail on this in the coming months.

The council would like to extend our official well done to everyone involved in securing the White Horse pub. A fantastic achievement and we wholly support this community pub as a parish council. It is brilliant to have a community pub in the village. We encourage everyone to use it.

From November the parish will start looking at budgeting for the next financial year.

Date of the next full council meeting:
1 November 2023, 7pm – Stonesfield Primary School.

Neighbourhood Plan

The Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group wishes to correct a statistic used in their June presentation of the Survey results. At that presentation, we showed a slide that gave an incorrect figure for the number of respondents who felt that 'reducing/slowing traffic through the village' was important. The figure we gave was 98%, but in fact the correct figure was 72%: slightly less than three quarters of those who responded, rather than almost all of them.

We apologise for the mistake and have corrected the record of our presentation on the village website. Please would anyone referring to the Survey results use the correct figure from now on. Many thanks.

While on the topic of traffic in our streets, it is interesting to note that a few residents

commented in the free text sections of the Survey that they objected to the proliferation of roadside signage. The number of signs we now have lining our verges seems out of proportion to the size of our community.

Caroline Friend
info@stonesfieldplan.com

News from West Oxfordshire Health and Wellbeing Strategy

Oxfordshire County Council are asking residents to comment on the new draft health and wellbeing strategy which is open for comment until 12 November. As a county, we're facing challenges with an ageing population, increased demand for services, mental health and wellbeing concerns in young people and significant inequality in our health. A partnership across the county has been working to develop a strategy that gives power to our communities to help deliver what is needed to support people to make healthy choices, live independently and stay happier and healthier for longer.

Oxfordshire County Council are now asking whether it makes sense for you in your community? Get involved and have your say www.letstalk.oxfordshire.gov.uk/health-wellbeing

WODC launches the 'Westhive programme'

Community groups and residents are being invited to imagine a project that would benefit their community and make it happen, as WODC launches its exciting new programme 'Westhive' community crowdfunding.

The Westhive programme will be delivered in partnership with the UK's leading civic

crowdfunding platform, Spacehive, to deliver and fund projects brought forward by the community.

Councillor Joy Aitman, 'Times are really challenging for community groups and finances are stretched. Crowdfunding gives the community the option to back what they want and to make a contribution as small as £2 and every little helps. We know that residents are best placed to understand what is needed in their community, whether it's a new play park, a wellbeing group, a community energy project or a new sports club. The beauty of crowdfunding is that the community, local businesses and organisations will be able to back projects they truly believe in, with the council also pledging up to £10,000 for each project.'

'We are also really interested to hear from younger people who have a brilliant idea that will benefit other young people. This could be starting a new band, or running an event that appeals to you and your friends. Or adults who have an idea for something that would make the lives of younger people better.'

The council has a fund of £120,000 and are looking to invest in projects that will support a number of the Council's priorities including creating resilient communities, protecting and enhancing the environment, ecological projects and climate change projects.

Westhive is about everyone, so at least £20,000 of the pledge pot will be allocated to the funding of projects aimed at or brought forward by young people, so that they have the chance to take the driver's seat and make the changes they want to see.

WODC to improve car park signage

West Oxfordshire District Council will be improving signage to help people reach and use its free car parks and making free long stay permanent in the Woolgate Car Park to help local workers. The Council has been trialling permitting free long stay in Zone G of the Woolgate Car Park since July 2022 to help people working locally be able to park during work. Having proven successful the change has now been made permanent.

WODC will do some more work to look at capacity in car parks in Woodstock and Burford to explore options to further improve parking in those towns. The Council owns 14 car parks across the district which are free for residents and visitors to use. Over 1100 residents responded to the council survey on car park usage which took place during 2023. The survey showed many car parks had a lot of capacity but that Hensington Road Car Park in Woodstock and Guildenford Car Park in Burford had higher than average use. Further studies will be done to look at options for those towns. The Council will also be maintaining its enforcement action to tackle people parking poorly or misusing disabled bays. This aims to help make the car parks accessible and inviting for all residents and visitors

Warm Welcome this Autumn

As high inflation continues to affect the cost of living, many will struggle to heat their homes and may feel socially isolated. In response, voluntary, charity and faith groups across West Oxfordshire are opening their doors again this year to provide inclusive, non-judgmental spaces where everyone can expect a warm

welcome, free tea / coffee and an opportunity to chat.

Below are a few examples -

Carterton Town Hall - Warm Space -
19 Alvescot Rd, Carterton OX18 3JL.

St Leonard's Church Eynsham -
Warm Welcome Wednesdays - 21 High St,
Eynsham, Witney OX29 4HE - Wed
10.30am - 12 noon

Chipping Norton Library - OX7 5NP -
Fridays 2 - 5pm

St Mary's Church Charlbury -
Font Café - Thursdays 10am -12 noon

Need help in a financial crisis?

A scheme has been launched by Oxfordshire County Council to support residents who are either in, or at risk of being in crisis, are in need of immediate help and have no other source of financial support available to them.

The Resident Support Scheme will help with short-term basic living costs such as food and credit for gas/electric prepayment meters. It can also help in some circumstances with white goods, furniture and clothing. It is intended to meet one-off crisis or emergency needs and is not designed to meet any type of ongoing expenses.

Residents (or registered professional partners supporting them) can apply online or call 01865 804171

For details of other Warm Spaces or if you know someone who needs support, please contact our Resident Support Worker on 01993 861077 or email Community.Support@westoxon.gov.uk

West Oxfordshire District Council
communications@westoxon.gov.uk

Education, culture & more

Stonesfield Primary School

The new school year has started at Stonesfield School and we are looking to the future. A big part of our school ethos focuses on teaching the children to look after and respect our environment. That's why today I wanted to talk to you about our Wildflower Meadow Project.

It started in early 2020 when the school's Eco-Council, a group of pupils representing all year groups, wanted to improve biodiversity on the school grounds and asked to turn the front field into a wildflower meadow. As many of you will know, leaving a green space to 'rewild' is neither cheap nor a quick fix. Wildflower meadows can take up to ten years to establish properly, so we sought the advice and help of local experts, Genny Early and Jess Huband, as well as various organisations such as PlantLife.org.uk and the Wildlife Trusts. Stopping chemical spraying and only mowing the grass once a year (in late autumn to enable wildflowers to bloom and set seed) are just two of the more natural processes. Children and staff planted plug plants sown from local seed and scarified the soil to sow native wildflower seed.

But it's not all about the bees and the flowers. As well as different insects and other invertebrates, many birds also enjoy the late summer grass and flower seeds if left unmown. The long grass also helps the soil retain moisture for the underground bugs and beasties, as well as providing plenty of hiding places for insects and

other invertebrates to settle in and lay their eggs – in turn, providing even more food for the local bird population. We've also had several hedgehog visitors in the last year, perhaps munching on the increased fauna? The children have been the best detectives of all this activity!

Despite droughts, lockdowns and the temptation to "tidy up a scruffy lawn", many grasses and local wildflowers have now started to establish themselves. In the meadow this year we have identified Selfheal, Lesser Knapweed, Cowslips, Field Scabious, Salad Burnet, White Clover, Field Bindweed, Meadow Cranesbill and many, many others. Please have a look and see what you can spot as you pass the front of the school. Perhaps you know other local names for the plants, or a story about how some of them got their rather strange names.

We've also done some myth-busting by learning how some much-maligned plants, such as Ragwort, are not as dangerous as people once thought, and how important they are for a sustainable food web and their value from a wildlife conservation point of view.

As part of our work in progress, we're hoping to have some signs to show everybody how busy the meadow is becoming. Children can often feel like they don't have a voice when it comes to climate change. Spending time in nature, whether as an adult or a child, and taking positive action can help reduce those overwhelming feelings of anxiety about the future of our

planet. In the meantime, we are celebrating the children's voices and their plans to future-proof our local environment, with the support of our local community. This is an example of how we put our school motto into practice 'Learning together to achieve our best.'

If you are excited about nature and wish to help us with the longevity of this project, come and see how we work as a school by volunteering for our Forest School on Tuesdays and Wednesdays or apply for the job of Caretaker for the school site. This will involve a lot of grounds work as well as the usual DIY jobs you would expect around a house. If you are interested, please get in touch.

Thanks

Mr Jarvis

Headteacher

head.2353@stonesfield.oxon.sch.uk

Stonesfield Pre-School

On Thursday 12 October we held our Annual General meeting. Please read our Chairperson's report.

Report of the Chairperson

I am pleased to state that our Pre-School is thriving in difficult and trying times, with a number of settings within the close vicinity closing over the last 12 months. This is due in no small part to the support we receive from both parents and staff and the village, so thank you.

In November 2022 we were visited by Ofsted for our Inspection and as I am sure you are all aware we received a Good Rating, which is a great achievement considering all the challenges that Covid

had thrown our way over the previous couple of years.

As usual our numbers at the beginning of the year meant we opened without running all sessions to ensure we remained financially viable, but as numbers increased, we were able to open more sessions. However, following a meeting with a small group of parents we have started the 2023-2024 academic year opening all sessions except a Friday PM to allow parents more flexibility with their childcare requirements, including After School Club. We did also manage to run a very successful Holiday Club in the summer holidays for the first 3 weeks, which was very well supported.

As always, we have been financially responsible and our Fundraising Committee have been busy and their efforts have continued to provide additional funds, so many thanks to Hannah Willans, our Fundraising Chair and her team who ran a wreath making evening, a ceilidh, the Community Café, a stall at the fete and a picnic, together with Lizzie Wharton and Louise John who ran the monthly cake stall. As always, we were well supported in our efforts by our parents.

The Committee deserve our sincere thanks for continuing to support PS in these difficult times and to be wholly committed to ensuring that it continues to thrive, so my sincere thanks to Andrew Tacon (Treasurer); Zena Rozee (Secretary); Dave Baldwin; Helena Doucas; Hannah Willans and Louise John.

We have welcomed a new member of staff in Term 5, Sophie Carrigan who is fitting in well and it would be remiss if I did not acknowledge and thank our wonderful staff

who have continued to provide the children with first class support, so let's give Louise John, Georgia Townsend, Sandra Ward, Hannah Willans, Lizzie Wharton, Sarah Stone, Claire Johnson, Grace Gleeson & Sophie a huge round of virtual applause.

Finally, I would like to thank our parents for their continued support and understanding through the last year. It is vital that our village has a Pre-School to ensure the school also has a bright future, so the support of parents, staff and the wider community has been crucial and this support will help us thrive in the future.

Simon Hopkins
Chairperson

Pre School would also like to send their condolences to the family of Mrs Charlotte Oakeshott. Over many years Mrs Oakeshott allowed Pre School to use her amazing garden for our annual Easter Egg Hunt and numerous picnics. She always thought of Pre School fondly and she will always be in our hearts as we are able to continue using her wonderful garden

Thank you Mrs Oakeshott.

Louise John Pre School Manager
Friends of Stonesfield Library

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Stonesfield Baby and Toddler Group

Stonesfield Baby and Toddler Group meet every Friday during term time at the Village Hall. The weekly sessions consist of free play, a craft activity with a story and songs. We welcome families from Stonesfield and beyond and have some exciting sessions planned to celebrate autumn & winter.

As we are a community group we were lucky enough to be given tickets to Blenheim Adventure Play, the new playground behind the walled garden at Blenheim Palace.



Enjoying Blenheim's new playground

We soaked up some September sun with our families; the babies played in the very popular splash area whilst the bigger toddlers explored the climbing frames, slides and speedy zip wires.

Everyone had a wonderful time and a visit during term time meant we had the place (almost) to ourselves. A big thank you to Blenheim for your generosity. We will be back!!

Sarah Lydiat

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)

I'm a reader

Lindsey Thornton arrived in Stonesfield in 1968 as a six-year-old, from Singapore, where her dad was in the RAF. After some years away, she returned to care for her mother with dementia, and now lives here with her husband, David. She works in charity and mental health roles and is studying a humanities degree with the Open University, after winning a carer's scholarship.

Lindsey always read - from her parents' classics 'because they left them in my room' to sci-fi such as John Christopher's *The Death of Grass*, a sci-fi eco-disaster and *The Tripods Trilogy*, a post-apocalyptic thriller series where humans are enslaved by intelligent tripods.

Lindsey loved the Thelwell pony cartoon series. Now, me, as a child of the London 'burbs, whose preferred transport was the fag friendly upstairs of the red double-decker, I enjoyed Thelwell for the funny chubby ponies; Lindsey, however, who loved horses, appreciated its genuine insights into pony behaviour.

'The psychology fascinated me; I rode a known psycho pony, called Pringle, at the stables. He tried to throw you off. He made

the ride as uncomfortable as possible; he wouldn't do a sitting trot or canter. With jumps, he'd either barely scrape over or go at it like it was a five-bar gate. Everything was on his terms. I liked his spirit. If you could handle the bad behaviour and return, it was as if he said: "oh, you came back", then he'd be nicer'.

That Lindsey had a deeper understanding of Thelwell all makes sense when you learn of our strange first encounter and the reason that Lindsey suggested we share our story here.

Before I knew Lindsey, I often read her name in *The Slate*, particularly in the context of bell ringing. Lindsey has been a loyal St. James' campanologist since her teens. However, to me, 'Lindsey Thornton' was the fictional child heroine of *Spirit of Punchbowl Farm*, by Monica Edwards, an intense, spiritual, farmer's daughter, who fights against her commercially minded brother Dion's plans to fell an ancient yew tree. As with Thelwell's ponies, I missed *Punchbowl Farm's* deeper meaning, and, worse, laughed at fictional Lindsey Thornton. For a full two years, I would read it aloud to my brother and he constantly interrupted with comic objections. It took us a month to get past the first page. Fictional Lindsey Thornton, with her recorder playing in her tree house and her earnest demeanour, began to annoy me so much she became a recurring comic character in plays I wrote as a teenager.

Luckily, Stonesfield's real life Lindsey Thornton had more sympathy. After I brought the character to her attention, she actually ordered the book online from the library. Real Lindsey felt an affinity with her fictional counterpart. *Punchbowl Farm*

Lindsey researches the 500-year history of the yew tree and learns that it was planted to protect the house from evil spirits.

‘She’s an early eco-warrior’ says Stonesfield Lindsey, ‘It made me think of the time when Stonesfield Primary School took part in the national ‘plant a tree in ‘73’ initiative. My acorn grew well but was too big for school, so I wrote to Blenheim, and they planted it out with a lovely little ceremony! I used to visit my tree regularly, near Combe Lodge, but it got nibbled, because they didn’t protect it properly. That was the sad thing ... the reason I planted an oak tree...was because it sustains so much life.’

I feel rather a wallflower in this meeting of minds of the two Lindsey Thorntons, though at least I facilitated the beginning of a beautiful friendship.

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)

Would you value some support this Christmas?

Old, young and all those in between, there are times when we all need a little help from our community and we're here to support you. If receiving one of the ‘reverse advent calendar’ food hampers described in the news section would help you or someone you know this Christmas, please tell us. If you’re contacting us on behalf of someone else, please make sure you have their permission to provide their details.

All you need to do is to contact one of the people listed below. They will just need to know – in confidence - your name, your address and how many people are in your household:

Stonesfield Community Pub

Email: susan@backthewhitehorse.com

Stonesfield Pre-school

Tel: Mrs Louise John 01993-898370

E: stonesfieldps@outlook.com

Stonesfield Primary School

Tel: 01993-891687

E: office.2353@stonesfield.oxon.sch.uk

Stonesfield Voluntary Transport Scheme

T: Viv Kendall 01993 891803

E: stonesfieldvts@gmail.com

Stonesfield Methodist Church

T: Kathleen Albert 01993 891733

E: k.m.albert14@gmail.com

St James’ the Great Church

T: Rev. Ralph Williamson 01993 891872

Email: rector@scbenefice.org

Baby & Toddler Group

E: Sarah Lydiat

stonesfieldbabyandtoddlers@gmail.com

Stonesfield Scouts

E: Ben Whitworth chair@stonesfield-scouts.org.uk or talk to any of the leaders.

It’s a pleasure to work again in partnership with a wide range of village organisations this year. Thank you so much to everyone for your help.

SOFO celebrates our county's war heroes!

On 22 October 2023 Soldiers of Oxfordshire Museum (SOFO) in Woodstock unveiled a new gallantry display to celebrate some of the county's most remarkable heroes - the 31 men who have been awarded the Victoria Cross, the George Cross, or the Edward and Albert medals that preceded its institution.

The county's military museum aims to excite the curiosity of visitors through the diverse stories of the county and its people, and those told in the new display are among the most impactful.

The Victoria Cross was instituted by the Queen in 1856 to recognise exceptional acts of valour in the presence of the enemy, and was open to all ranks of the military. All those recognised are individuals who have close and enduring links to Oxfordshire. Many were born in the county, or were residents for much of their life. Others served in one of the county regiments, or in one of the permanently-based Royal Air Force stations, such as Bicester or units like the 11 EOD (Explosive Ordnance Disposal) Regiment based in Didcot.

10 Oxfordshire men were awarded the VC prior to 1914, in campaigns ranging from the Crimean War to the Boer War. James Langley Dalton, assistant commissary in Lord Chelmsford's force during the Zulu War, was one of the 11 men who were honoured with the award of the VC following the January 1879 action at Rorke's Drift. Today, he gives his name to Dalton Barracks in Abingdon. 6 more VCs were awarded to county men during the Great War.

The George Cross and the George Medal were both instituted in September 1940 by King George VI for "acts of the greatest heroism or of the most conspicuous courage in circumstances of the most extreme danger".

The county's Second World War Victoria Cross and George Cross recipients cover both civilian acts of bravery and all branches of the armed forces, with three GCs awarded to men in the Royal Navy. Henry James Miller, of Hanborough, died whilst helping to evacuate the crew from his submarine HMS Unity in April 1940 after a night collision with a freighter in the North Sea.

Lawrence Frank Sinclair, a Shipton-under-Wychwood resident, was awarded the GC in September 1940 for saving a severely injured airman from a crashed and burning aircraft.

Leonard Cheshire VC, of Oxford and Abingdon, earned his prestigious gallantry award whilst serving in Bomber Command. He became one of the most decorated officers in the RAF and founded Cheshire Homes after the war.

Commissioned as an officer with the Oxf. & Bucks Light Infantry and attached to the Parachute Regiment at the time, John Hollington Grayburn was killed at Arnhem in September 1944, and posthumously awarded the VC. Every account indicates he was a brave and inspirational leader. Wounded multiple times, he refused evacuation, instead staying to lead his men.

Since the end of the war, five more GCs have been awarded to Oxfordshire men - four of these were based at different times at Vauxhall Barracks in Didcot, the home

of the 11 EOD Regiment. The most recent of these were in 2009. Kim Spencer Hughes and, posthumously, Olaf Sean Schmid, both served with the Royal Logistic Corps in Helmand province, Afghanistan, where the threat of ambush by improvised explosive devices was ever present during the British army's deployment there.

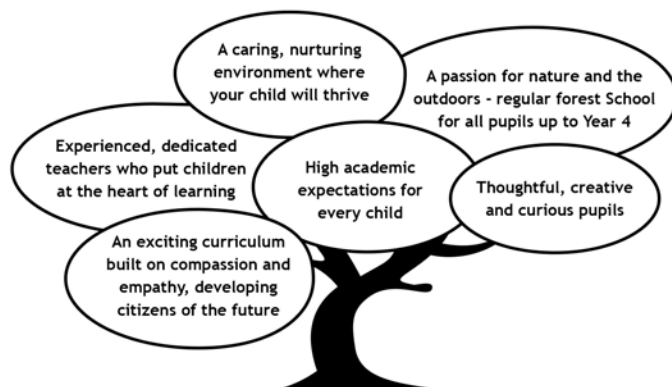
(Editor's note: I had the honour of serving with Olaf 'Oz' Schmid in Afghanistan, the sandy-haired cheeky chappie who made everyone smile. He died defusing a massive IED on 31 October 2009 - Never forgotten. Major (Retd) Fiona Dangerfield RLC).

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
Headteacher email: head.2353@stonesfield.oxon.sch.uk

Clubs, societies & sport

Stonesfield Scouts: the next 75 years (from p1)



Scouting is not just for young people. It is something anyone and everyone can get involved with.

One of the best things is that we have children and grand-children of former Beavers, Cubs and Scouts in our group at the moment and, with close to 70 young people, we seem to be getting bigger!



Scouts on Remembrance Day

Scout groups across the country are finding the same challenges as we are around finding volunteers. Changes in how all groups run are now allowing more people to get involved by lowering the barriers to entry. You can volunteer on the trustees, for a few sessions a year, as a fundraiser, as one of the team and (soon we hope) as painter and decorator on the hut. We would love you (yes you) to have a go. If you are interested then email Ben Whitworth on chair@stonesfield-scouts.org.uk or come and find one of us to ask what it is about.

Stonesfield Tennis Club

The Summer tennis season formally ended with the annual Wychwood League tournament on 1 October hosted this year by Moreton-in-Marsh.

The Wychwood League comprises 6 clubs, Moreton, Bourton-on-the-Water, Chipping Campden, Charlbury, Ramsden and ourselves and a league competition runs through the Summer in addition to the end of season tournament.

While Stonesfield headed the league table for a few weeks at the start, our challenge faded away to a mid-table finish, with Ramsden winning the league trophy.

However it was a different story when it came to the tournament and for the first time in its 26 year history we can report a Stonesfield win! Thanks to a strong performance from our 'A' pair of Borut Rozman and Wendy Gundry, who won four

of their 5 matches, supported by the “B” pairing of Andrew Tacon and Lindsey Thornton who won 3 of their 5 matches for a combined points score of 49, Stonesfield finished top, 10 points ahead of second placed Moreton.

It didn't even matter that the trophy had got broken in transit – it will be a pleasure to get it mended.

Remember that our artificial grass courts are very playable through the winter months (except when there's a heavy frost on the surface) so there's no need to hang up your rackets and, if news of the win has inspired you to pick up a rusty racket, the club runs a rolling membership so you get 12 months' membership from the date you join.

Our annual membership rates remain extremely competitive with £40 for an adult individual, £70 for a family membership (adults and children under 18) and £10 for an individual child. The membership link can be found on our website: www.clubspark.lta.org.uk/StonesfieldTennisClub

Stonesfield Tennis Club

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Stonesfield Football Club

It's been a tough month for both our teams and while injuries are part and parcel of the game, it's been very difficult to see both Cary and Raffy Rice sidelined with really serious injuries. Firstly, Cary dislocated his knee and will be out for 3 months, then the following week Raffy suffered a horrendous leg break that will see him miss the rest of the season. The club sends its best wishes to the brothers with hopes for a speedy recovery in both cases. Football wise, it started well for The Firsts with a great win

(5-1) at Enstone then it all went downhill with three league losses at Charlbury (2-1) at home to Carterton Utd (3-4) then away at RAF Brize Norton (5-2). Sandwiched in between these league games was the first round of the Oxon Junior Shield where our boys got some shooting practice against Broughton & NN, scoring 10 (ten) without reply! I'm hoping for better luck next month.

With Raffy and Cary both out it means that The Reserves lose two of their better players which weakens them going forward. In the league they were gifted their first 3 points by Kingham AB who failed to raise a side. They then drew (2-2) at home with Carterton Town, lost away at both Aston (4-1) and Yarnton 'B' (2-0). They ended the month with a hard-earned draw at home to Spartans (1-1). With his two brothers indisposed, it's up to young Eden Rice to step up and maintain the family tradition of scoring goals for Stonesfield – no pressure there, eh? At least Eden has full use of Raffy's car and the free petrol that comes with it!

Raffy Rice's hat-trick against Enstone had him in pole position for this month's Fredo award but in the Junior Shield, Harrison Connolly went one better, crashing in 4 goals against Broughton. There's no room for sentiment when it comes to The Fredo Award and while we all feel for Raffy, Harrison has earned it, let's hope he gives us more goal-scoring exploits in the months ahead. Step up Harrison Connolly, The Fredo is all yours!

Tom Flanigan (891979)

Stonesfield Players

Local talent takes centre stage again on 17 and 18 November at the Village Hall at 7.30pm as we premiere two new plays by local writers about the power of human memory and old age.

In *The Private Collection* (by Rebecca Sherlaw-Johnson and David Lines) we meet Constance, once an opera diva and a spy, as she faces her younger self who opens a Pandora's box of carefully buried memories demanding to be heard.

In *Can You Hear Me Mother* (by Nicky Holland) Rita is confined in her small flat by the Covid restrictions of spring 2020, trying to keep in touch with friends and family and wondering why everyone is comparing the pandemic to WWII. It's not how she remembers her wartime childhood... or is it?

Tickets: Are £10 from the box office: andrew.tacon@outlook.com, 07795 441986 or from the village shop.

Instagram and Facebook:
[@stonesfieldplayers](https://www.instagram.com/stonesfieldplayers)

Stonesfield Gardening Club

In a change from our usual talk, October's meeting took the form of a wine tasting, with the excuse being that we were also learning about how climate affects the growing of grapes!

Andrew Wood, a postgraduate student at Oxford, gave us a talk entitled *Bordeaux: A Story from Vine to Wine* which took us on a journey using our eyes, noses and palates to taste the 6 wines that he had brought along. We started and ended with wines made from Semillon and Sauvignon Blanc grapes, but wildly different in character, as

the first was a crisp white wine and the last a sweet Sauternes. In between these we tasted 4 red wines, all made with Merlot and Cabernet Sauvignon grapes, ranging from a 2 euro bottle from a French supermarket to a 2015 Medoc from Waitrose which retails at £16.50.



Andrew and his fellow researchers have just published a paper outlining their research, which looked at climate data from 1950 to 2020 in Bordeaux. They found that high quality wines were produced with cooler, wetter winters; warmer, wetter springs; hot, dry summers and cool, dry autumns. With climate change it is likely that wines will go on improving, although there is a problem that there may not be enough water in the future.

A great evening, fully booked by members – a steal at £4 per head, so no wonder. One of the many benefits of gardening club membership!

November's talk is by another Oxford student – this time introducing us to the mysteries of mistletoe.

Diane Bates

Secretary Stonesfield Gardening Club

www.stonesfieldgardening.info

Stonesfield Playing Field Association

Hunt's Paddock welcomes its first matches!

Last year Pat Hunt generously gifted an extra piece of land adjacent to the Playing Fields to the Parish Council. This has been leased to the Stonesfield Playing Field Association and over the last few months an enormous amount of work by SPFA volunteers has transformed the barren ground into a fantastic new 9x9 grass pitch for the junior teams.

Once initial rotovating was complete, the Strikers conducted stone picks before seed, feed and tender loving care followed, and at the start of this season the pitch was ready for its first matches!

The provision of this new pitch facility means that youth matches can now be played at home rather than resorting to hiring out external pitches - a definite win for the juniors! A fantastic effort by the team, most notably Mark Hatton and Kim Patterson to make Hunt's Paddock ready for kick off!

Fiona Dangerfield

Secretary, Stonesfield Playing Field Association

Stonesfield Environment Group

Stonesfield joins Earthwatch Evenlode Water Blitz

Once a month to coincide with the Earthwatch Evenlode River test dates, a pair of volunteers from the Stonesfield Environment Group take samples of our river water. We test by the Stonesfield bridge and further upstream near where we used to swim.

Our little team a.k.a. 'Waterbabes' were upset to see phosphate and nitrogen levels were even higher in September than previous months. Put simply this means increased sewage in our section of the Evenlode River.

We report the results to Earthwatch each month and have many interesting chats with local people, all horrified at the state of our river.

We're testing for e.coli for the first time too. Watch this space.

If you'd like to join our Environmental team, please email julie.currano@gmail.com

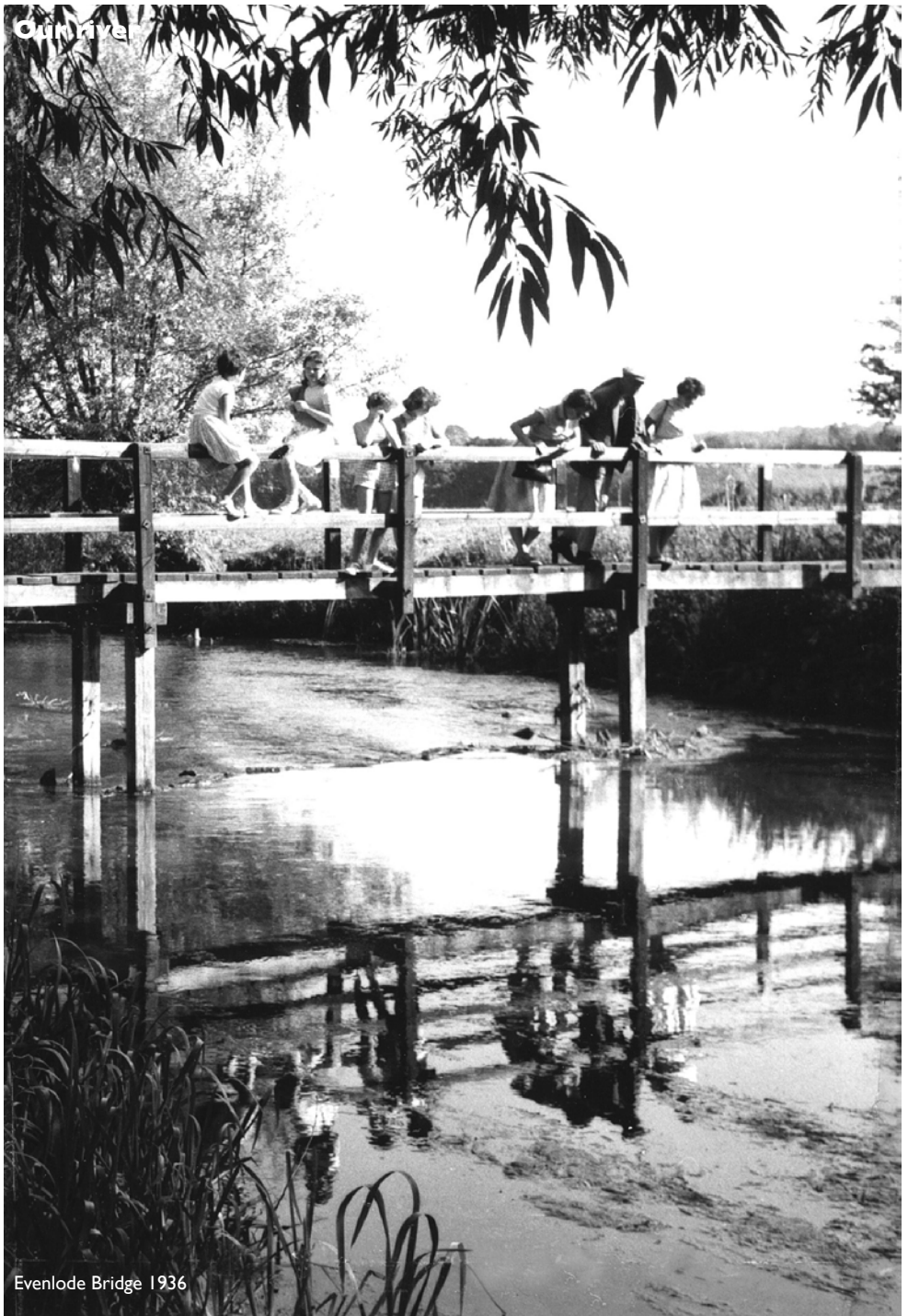
STONESFIELD VOLUNTARY TRANSPORT SCHEME

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 November:
Viv Kendall 01993 891803 or stonesfieldvts@gmail.com

Our five

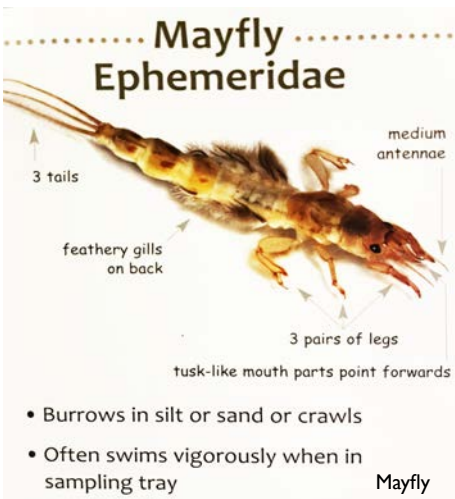


Evenlode Bridge 1936

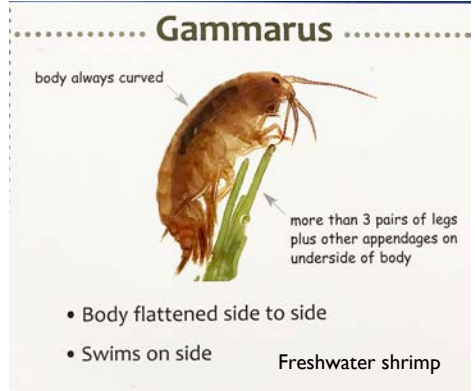
We want our river back



Riverflies live most of their lives as larvae on the bed of rivers emerging in spring and summer as short-lived adult flies. Think of the mayflies we see each year dancing up and down. Riverfly populations are affected by many factors, predominantly water quality. It is no surprise that they are suffering from the pollution we have increasingly seen in our river. They are the ‘canaries of the river’ sensitive to deteriorating water quality.



Monitoring the larvae of caddisfly, four of the up wing fly larvae and stonefly larvae along with freshwater shrimps on a regular basis reporting into the national database gives information on the health of our river. We have a registered site upstream from the bridge and have done our first sampling.



36 larvae and 610 freshwater shrimp, way down on numbers that would have been present twenty years ago. Six of the larvae were mayflies. The shrimp caused havoc as we tried to count numbers.

We are looking for anyone willing to help, there is training or if you are already trained even better. Please get in touch.

Our usual monitoring of nitrate and phosphate pollution continues. We are also checking the river for bacterial contamination (e.coli and coliforms). We await laboratory results and are being supported by people from Ilkley where they have bathing status. We expect bad news and specific evidence of the state of our river. We want our river back.

John Sampson

Church news

Church of England Worship at St James the Great, Stonesfield

(Benefice of Stonesfield with Combe Longa)

www.stonesfieldparishchurch.org

Rector: Rev Ralph Williamson,
rector@scbenefice.org, 01993 891872

Churchwarden: Lindsey Sellar
stonesfield@stonesfieldparishchurch.org

St James' Centre bookings:
sjcsbookings@gmail.com

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

From the Rector - Remembering

One of the privileges of the role of parish priest is to be invited to officiate at baptisms, marriages and funerals. All of these are moving, and are a healthy reminder that life moves in cycles, with joy, hope and sorrow taking their place in the rich tapestry of human experience. As Christians we have faith that God's love is as present in the dark and difficult times as in the exciting and happy ones. As is to be expected, there have been a number of sad losses in both the parishes of the Benefice which I serve, in Stonesfield and in Combe, over the last year. Familiar and much loved members of the community have died, some before their time, but most in their 70s, 80s and 90s, and we have commended them to God at funeral and memorial services. But the loss of those we love continues to sadden us long after they have

passed, and, when life returns to a new kind of normal, we still hold them in our hearts.

At this time of the year, around the time of Remembrance, All Souls and All Saints, at the beginning of November, churches across the country hold services at which we can remember those whom we love but see no longer. These services of 'Thanksgiving for the Departed' offer a chance for us to pause and pray, to remember and to recall the importance of those we continue to miss so deeply. In doing so, and in lighting a candle for them, we recognise that although we can feel alone in our grief and loss, we share that experience with very many others. This year we are holding these simple and deeply moving services at St Laurence, Combe, at 5pm on the 5 November, and St James the Great, Stonesfield, at 5pm on the 12 November. Everyone is warmly welcome to attend either service, and if you would like the name of a relative or loved one read and remembered at the service, please let me or one of our Churchwardens know beforehand.

Revd Ralph Williamson
Rector

Services

Sunday 5 November [All Saints]

8am	Stonesfield	Holy Communion [BCP/said]
9.30am	Combe	All Age Worship
11am	Stonesfield	All Age Worship
5pm	Combe	Thanksgiving service for the departed

Sunday 12 November [Remembrance Sunday]

8am	Stonesfield	Holy Communion [BCP/said]
10am	Combe	Remembrance Service followed by War Memorial at 10.45am
10am	Stonesfield	Remembrance Service followed by War Memorial at 10.45am
5pm	Stonesfield	Thanksgiving service for the departed



Sunday 19 November [Second Sunday before Advent]

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

Sunday 26 November [Christ the King]

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

Wednesdays

9.30am	Stonesfield	Holy Communion
11am	Combe	Morning Prayer (1,15,29)

A record of recent funerals:

14 October Charlotte Oakeshott

Our prayers are for family and friends at
this time.

Roman Catholic Worship

Advent - The time for preparation

Christmas cards and decorations are already appearing in the shops; we are being encouraged to buy our gifts and stock up with food – all sensible and practical, but missing the point of Christmas. If the purpose of the cards, decorations, gifts and food is to celebrate the arrival of Jesus Christ, then we also need to prepare ourselves by reflecting on what it all means. Advent is a season of hope and of longing, of joyful expectation and of peaceful preparation. Advent is that time of the year when we prepare to welcome Jesus into the world and our lives again. We can try to step back for a moment from the hectic routine, slow down and contemplate the Mystery of the Incarnation – when God became Man and lived among us. It marks the beginning of a new liturgical year in the Church that slowly builds momentum towards Christmas as the weeks go by. As with all new beginnings, this season is intended to renew our joy, hope, faith and love.

Besides this, you know what time it is, how it is now the moment for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we became believers; the night is far gone, the day is near. Let us then lay aside the works of darkness and put on the armour of light...Romans 13:11-12

An Advent Prayer

All-powerful God, increase our strength of will for doing good that Christ may find an eager welcome at his coming and call us to his side in the kingdom of heaven, where he lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

All-powerful God, your eternal Word took flesh on our earth when the Virgin Mary placed her life at the service of your plan. Lift our minds in watchful hope to hear the voice which announces his glory and open our minds to receive the Spirit who prepares us for his coming. *We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen*

Holy Mass

Sunday Mass at 9.15am

Wednesdays and Fridays at 9.15am

Parish events:

Sunday 17 Dec 3pm Carol Service

For parish updates, any further information and further support, please see www.stteresachurch-charlbury.com/
Or contact Fr. Clive Dytor, parish priest:
fr.clive.dytor@rcaob.org.uk

Roman Catholic Community in Stonesfield

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

Stonesfield Methodist Church

Services for November

- Sun 5 11am Eddie Fowler
Sun 12 11am The Reverend Ian Worrell
Sun 19 11am Local Arrangement
Sun 26 11am The Reverend Andrew Biggs
Holy Communion Service

Stir up Sunday is on its way, are you ready?

This late November Sunday conjures up intriguing possibilities. Some folk may well be busy stirring up festive ingredients on that day, with maybe a prayer or a wish, while hoping for a delicious pudding in a few weeks' time.

But the meaning of 'Stir up Sunday' is much more important, it marks the onset of Advent, the stirring up of our thoughts when once more God takes us on the journey He planned for us. It's the time to be prepared, alert and ready to follow, a time for ourselves to be stirred up, with the brightest star in sight.

Stir up, we beseech thee, O Lord, the will of your faithful people

Book of Common Prayer.

Come to a Service soon.

Kathleen Albért (891733)

New Church thought

'Everyone in heaven works together, whether at close quarters or more at a distance, and by many different means.' E. Swedenborg

I saw this in action up at the White Horse, in the very busy weeks before the pop-up pub opened on 29 September. The sense of community was palpable, and it did feel a little bit like heaven: all sorts of people came and asked 'What can I do?', and then did it, whatever it was. Everybody had one goal in mind – to make our village pub fresh and clean, attractive, and welcoming.

Other things were happening in the background, sight unseen: ordering drinks from suppliers, scheduling a rota behind the bar, booking chimney sweeps, wall builders, electricians etc. Lots had been organised by the committee beforehand too – surveys to decide what needed doing before opening, deciding what can wait till the more detailed refurbishment, prioritising tasks. Plus of course all their efforts to acquire the pub! And the work continues....

A community working hard together towards a common goal, forming new friendships as each person did their assigned tasks – did my heart good to see it.

Dale Morris (898210)



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Since then, we have welcomed baby and toddler groups, pre-schools, and youth groups to the Adventure Play, from across the eight villages surrounding Blenheim. If you work with children who you think would enjoy the Adventure Play, please do get in touch at community@blenheim.org and we can help arrange a visit free of charge.

Also, please do visit our new Community Website, Blenheim Community (blenheimcommunities.org) or on my Facebook page **Merilyn Davies – Community Lead at Blenheim**.

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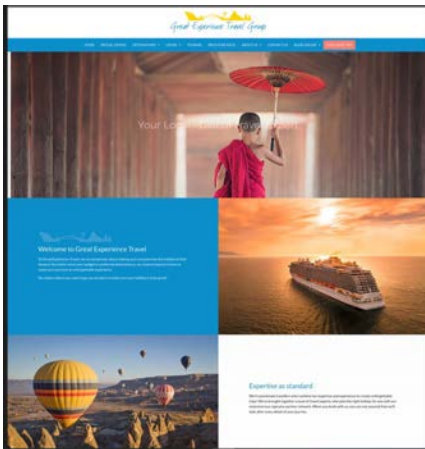
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