



Issue No 550 Sept 2024

## Triathlon triumph



On 7 August, Samuel completed his personal triathlon in Snowdonia to raise money for the Stonesfield Scout Group and the new scout hut.

We set off at 8 am on a slightly revised route due to the weather. We decided to reverse the kayak leg that we had originally planned, and started at the other end of the lake. We paddled all the way back and ended up landing at our campsite due to the strong winds. This change of direction meant we were kayaking upstream but on a downwind, and with a reduced distance of half a mile. This was due to the choppy water conditions and Samuel's training all being done on the calm Cherwell and Oxford canal. He very quickly completed the kayak leg in eight minutes, which was quicker than the support vehicle could get back to get photos of him landing.

Samuel then quickly dashed back to the tent to get changed into his cycling and walking gear, and set off on his bike. The reversed kayak route put the bikes' starting point at just over 2 miles from the walking transition, and added a steep hill climb out of the campsite. Samuel tackled the cycle like a champ, completing the leg in under 20 minutes in a light drizzle.

Then came the walk. The Watkin path is the most scenic route on Snowdon. The route starts in a wooded area and follows a river that goes from waterfall to pool continuously for a mile, and is a great wild swimming spot in the summer. But despite being August, we were not in summer climbing conditions. The winds started light while we remained in sheltered valleys for the first two miles, but it rained on and off for the whole day.

Continued on p5

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### **Editor**

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## Dates for your diary: September

2,5,9,12,16	Taekwondo	Village Hall	5.30-6.30pm
2,9,16,23,30	Monday Coffee	St James' Centre	10am-noon
3	North Leigh History Society talk	North Leigh Mem Hall	7.30pm
3,10,17,24	Seniors Café	Village Hall	3-4pm
3,10,17,24	Stonesfield Social	Village Hall	5-6.30pm
3,10,17,24	Zumba	Village Hall	7-8pm
3,10,17,24	Strong Nation HIIT	Village Hall	8.15-9.15pm
4-30	Pictures @ The Pub	The White Horse	pub hours
4,11,18,25	Gatehouse Pilates	Village Hall	9.30-10.30am
4,5,11,12	Hannah Bathe HIIT Class	Village Hall	7-7.45pm
4,11,18,25	Folk dancing	Village Hall	7.45-10pm
5,12,19, 26	Book Break	Stonesfield Library	12.30-2pm
5-31	Crowned cranes exhibition	Stow-on-the-Wold	
6,13,20,27	Baby & Toddler Group	Village Hall	10am-12 noon
7	Repair & Community Café	Village Hall	10am-2pm
7	Book sale - Gardening Club	Village Hall	10am-2pm
9	Village Hall Committee Meeting	Village Hall	6.30-8pm
9	Gardening Club talk	St James' Centre	7.30pm
9	Combe WI talk: Handwoven bags	Combe Reading Room	7.30pm
14	White Horse Arts	White Horse garden	11am-5pm
15	Combe Mill in Steam: Crafts & Skills	Combe Mill	10.30am-5.30pm
16, 30	Drama Club	Village Hall	8-9.30pm
17	White Horse Folk	The White Horse	8pm
18,19,25,26	Hannah Bathe HIIT Class	Village Hall	7-7.45pm
19,23,26,30	Taekwondo	Village Hall	5.30pm - 6.30pm
21	Combe Community Cinema	The Hub, Park Rd, Combe	7.30pm
27	MacMillan Coffee Morning	St James' Centre	9-11am
28	Combe WI Coffee Morning	Combe Reading Room	10.30am

## October

1	North Leigh History Society talk	North Leigh Mem Hall	7.30pm
4	Harvest Quiz Night	St James' Centre	6pm

# Notices & news

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## **Stonesfield Drama Club is back...**

Are you looking for a fun and engaging way to get involved with the Stonesfield Players, learn things about amateur dramatics, practise techniques and flex some acting muscles without having to jump on stage? If so, we'd love to see you and welcome you to join our new Drama Club. These relaxed and friendly sessions are perfect for everyone, existing or new members, keen to have fun and try out new things.

Activities will include:

- Improv- games
- Physical movement
- Play readings
- Characterisation
- Prop use
- Scene development
- Talks from guest speakers and more!

Sessions are free and will run **fortnightly on Monday evenings, 8pm**, at the **Village Hall**, starting **Monday 16 September**. Come along, make new friends, and enjoy the magic and fun of theatre. All are welcome!

Becki Johnson (07771 707818)  
rebeccasj@btinternet.com

### **Dog walking**

Weekends, school holidays, and Mondays and Fridays (Mondays and Fridays after 4pm)  
£10 per hour

**Tristan Lonsdale**

**To108@icloud.com 07858 587149**

## **Macmillan Coffee Morning**

It's time for another Macmillan Coffee Morning, and everyone's invited!

Please come along and support our annual community fundraiser for Macmillan Cancer Support, at St James' Centre, on Friday 27 September, 9–11am. There will be delicious cake, tea, coffee, a bottle stall raffle and plenty of good company! If you would like to donate a bake or a bottle, please contact Jane O'Gorman on [janeogorman9@icloud.com](mailto:janeogorman9@icloud.com) or stop by at Wellswood, Churchfields. Thank you.

We look forward to seeing you!

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## **White Horse Folk returns**

Join us on Tuesday 17 September at 8pm for the return of folk music to The White Horse.

Bring your instruments, songs, poems or just yourselves to enjoy the evening.

Everyone welcome.

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## **Corrections from FoSS**

Huge apologies to St James church for the typo in our fete article on the cover of the August *Slate*. We do of course know who you are - can we blame the tired end of a long term? We were also corrected that the church has indeed had a stall at the fete before; we are a new committee and hope that we will be forgiven!

The FoSS Committee 2023/4

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## Triathlon triumph (From p1)



By 10.30 am, we were in 30 mph winds and pushing towards a very cloudy summit. Once in the clouds at around 700 metres altitude, we had very little visibility, at times less than 10 metres, but Samuel pushed on, knowing that if we were still walking uphill, we still had some work to do. We summited Snowdon at 12:15pm, in 40mph+ winds, only four and a quarter hours after first setting off. It was an incredible effort from 8-year-old Samuel.

The mountain was quieter than normal that day and the café and train were shut due to winds being forecast for 50mph gusts later in the day. With that in mind, we quickly sheltered for lunch and made a slow walk down. Samuel completed the entire challenge in 7hrs 27 minutes. Two days later he was back climbing mountains in much sunnier conditions, as we saw out the rest of our trip.



Samuel's response to completing the challenge: 'It was easy!' Oh, to have the energy of an 8-year-old!



We would like to thank every generous donor and well-wisher who has encouraged and supported Samuel on his challenge. We also want to thank Samuel's Grampy Pete for driving the support vehicle and walking with us, and also Paul and Charlie (aged 7) for walking with us up Snowdon and for their company around camp.



At the time of writing Samuel has raised £3,408 with gift aid. The page is still open for anyone still wishing to donate.

Rob and Lisa Lee



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## **Pictures @ The Pub...**

New work on display at The White Horse, running until mid-October, will feature poetry by Diana Parker Letchford, poems for children by Juliet Taylor with illustrations by John Taylor, and mixed media collage by Trisha Williams. Chris Davies' paintings of Stonesfield and the Evenlode will also remain on show.

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## **... and White Horse Arts**

We are holding our first crafts event under canvas in the pub garden on Saturday 14 September, 11am-5pm. A diverse range of handmade work will be on offer including (at the time of writing) ceramics, paintings and prints, sculpture, mixed media works, stone carving, collage, jewellery, papercraft, painting on slate, decorative boxes, recycled tin decorations, journals, sketchbooks and cards. Please come!

Trisha Williams for Pictures @ The Pub  
trwynwil003@gmail.com

Claire Renshaw for The White Horse

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## **Village Hall news**

Amazing news – it's taken since April when we first went digital, BUT we now have the booking line number operational!

Apologies for the massive delays, extended also by BT, but we are now contactable again on the **booking line number: 01993 898919.**

We are looking forward to things getting back to normal after the long lazy days of the summer holidays, so your favourite groups should all be back to normal weekly schedules.

The Community Cafés are continuing with the return of the Seniors Café and Stonesfield Social on Tuesdays from 3

September, and the Repair Café will be in situ on Saturday 7 September to take care of any broken but much-loved items you might like to try to save.

We also have a new Drama Club being run by the Stonesfield Players starting on Monday 16 September, so do look for the information on that in this issue.

If you do want to start a weekly group, or a new activity, please do get in touch and we will try to accommodate you.

The AGM for the Village Hall Committee will be on 25 November, so there is still plenty of time for people to get involved and join us. We have a lovely committee, full of ideas to improve the hall and add to our list of activities, so please do consider joining us. It's only four meetings a year so requires very little commitment, and we love what new people can bring to our group – all are welcome, so please do get in touch. We have a meeting scheduled for 9 September so do come along and meet us, and let's see what we can do for our community.

Jacqueline Carthew (898919)

Booking Clerk for Stonesfield Village Hall  
stonesfieldvh@gmail.com

## **Book Sale**

### **7 September**

10am - 2pm

at the Repair Café

All proceeds to Community Café

Pay what you like

Card payment accepted

**Stonesfield Gardening Club**

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## **A new society!**

There has been a great swell of interest in the various events in Stonesfield this summer to celebrate the bicentenary of the naming of Stonesfield's own dinosaur, Megalosaurus.

In some of these activities we have worked with the Oxford University Museum of Natural History, which is building partnerships with local groups who have an interest in their own fossil history and in the Museum.

We also know there are a number of people here who are interested in local history at a broader level. Would you be interested in joining with us in a society to explore them? We are thinking not only about dinosaurs and other fossils, but about archaeology, the Roman villas (we used to have two!), the traditional local industries of mining, gloving, iron ore in Fawler, standing stones, maybe the history of long-standing village families...

If enough people are interested, we are proposing to set up a group to arrange occasional talks, maybe walks and even visits on these subjects and more – your ideas are welcome! We already have contacts with experts who could share their knowledge.

Please could you let us know if you are interested? Please contact us as soon as you can so we can start work!

Viv Kendall (891803)

Trisha Williams (891960)

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## **Age UK Oxfordshire's Homeshare Service**

This service from Age UK Oxfordshire carefully matches older people who are looking for help or companionship at home (the Householder), with another person who can lend a hand, and who needs affordable accommodation (the Sharer).

In return for the accommodation the Sharer gives the Householder up to ten hours of their time each week in a combination of companionship and practical help.

Each Homeshare match is individual, and is carefully agreed. It may include some cooking and light housework, help with computers and technology, maybe some shopping or gardening, spending time together over a meal or cup of tea as well as occasional trips out. The reassuring presence of another person in the house overnight is often an additional benefit for the Householder. A Homeshare match does not involve any personal care.

Monthly fees are payable to Age UK Oxfordshire by both Householder and Sharer and cover the costs of the safety checks, the setting up and facilitation of the match, and the provision of regular, ongoing personal support. The Householder pays from £150 per month, the equivalent of £5 day. The Sharer pays £200 per month. The fees help Homeshare Oxfordshire to operate as a sustainable scheme, so more people are able to benefit.

The Sharer makes a contribution to the Householder of an agreed amount towards household bills. To find out more, please contact 01865 410670  
homeshare@ageukoxfordshire.org.uk  
www.homeshareoxfordshire.org.uk

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## **A Reluctant Farewell**

It was cold, wet and foggy with vestiges of snow on the ground when I first encountered the warmth of a Stonesfield welcome. Walking down Brook Lane in 1993, after viewing a house in Churchfields, I met Marion Hall. She assured me that leaving the green, leafy Cheshire Plain for the beauty of a Cotswold village would prove to be a decision neither Anne nor I would ever regret. She was right!

Our thirty-plus years here, amongst many I can call friends, have been the happiest period of our lives – full of memories, smiles and laughter.

Being concerned that boredom might follow the intense activity of a busy English Department and a National Examination Board, we both joined a variety of societies and clubs in the village – the Church family, the History Society, the Stonesfield Society, Meals-on-wheels, the village choir and several others. The Friday Club was a small group of ageing but enthusiastic men who tried to keep the Church Yard tidy and develop a path to the Old School. I can clearly see in my mind's eye the picture of Frank Hall, surrounded by us all also leaning on garden tools, recounting vivid tales of the Ox and Bucks in France after the invasion and then in Palestine. George Dawe always provoked laughter with his many stories, especially the one of how he had set himself on fire in his own greenhouse. John Clifford and Roy Hyde aided and abetted it all with their own Army and Wartime escapades.

Lunch Club became a major part of our lives for the next twenty-plus years, after Anne and a small group of committed ladies founded it to give older, less active

villagers some social interest and a super cooked lunch. Day trips and interesting visits and talks became a highlight of club proceedings. A list of well over 40 volunteers, all willing to give time and energy for the benefit of the village, ensured its dynamic development, to the extent that Oxford County used it as a bench mark for excellence.

That I eventually became involved in local politics was due to the eloquent persuasive powers of Avis Ushaw, whose Chairmanship I followed on the Parish Council. When Derrick Millard became ill, I was again persuaded, this time by Barry Norton, to stand for the District Council. Stonesfield and surrounding villages elected me and this led to seven years of great interest and frenetic activity.

All this leads up to my saying a most heartfelt thank you to all of Stonesfield for making our time here the best and most colourful time of my life. Stonesfield is a jewel amongst villages and its residents are blessed living here within its friendly, welcoming embrace.

To you all, my gratitude is immense and it is with some deep regret that we now leave and give ourselves up to the joys of Ducklington, to live adjacent to our daughter. To all who remain - enjoy and take care of a very special place.

Richard Bishop



**The White Horse**  
**Open for meals and drinks**

The White Horse is a community owned pub.

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

The White Horse, The Ridings, Stonesfield, OX29 8EA



## Harvest Quiz Night

Are you ready for a challenge, fun and good company? Come and join in the Harvest Quiz Night on Friday 4 October at 6pm – bring your family, friends, or come on your own to St James' Centre. Everyone is very welcome. Buffet supper is at half time – all free of charge.

It would be helpful to have an indication of numbers, so if you know you would like to come, please contact me.

Lindsey Sellar, Churchwarden (898757)  
stonesfield@stonesfieldparishchurch.org

## Combe Mill in Steam – Crafts and Skills

We have invited crafters from the local area on 15 September, including the Oxford Guild of Weavers, Spinners & Dyers, who will be bringing their big wheel, needle felting, lace bobbins, decoupage, children's clothes and much more.

Combe Mill is a late 19th century restored water mill, on Blenheim Palace Estate by the River Evenlode. All machinery will be running in steam and volunteers will be on hand with lots of interesting information. Come along and see the blacksmiths in the forge: you might even like to make a poker. The tea room will be open, and also the BBQ, gift shop, tombola and raffle.

Ever thought of volunteering at Combe Mill? If you come to a steaming event you can see where your interests lie and perhaps join the team.

Crafts and skills day is on 15 September, 10.30am to 5.00pm.

Dogs on leads are most welcome and parking is free.

Adults £9.00, seniors £7.50; accompanied children are free.

We are also open every Wednesday for self-guided tours with volunteers around.

Adults £5.00, seniors £4.00, accompanied children are free and the tea room is open.

Combe Mill

Blenheim Palace Sawmills, Combe OX29 8ET

## HOW SAFE IS YOUR ELECTRIC BLANKET?

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Make sure your blanket is safe to use this winter.

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for free refreshments  
and information about keeping safe and well.

### SEPTEMBER 2024

Monday	16th	Oxford City
Tuesday	17th	South Oxfordshire
Wednesday	18th	Cherwell
Thursday	19th	West Oxfordshire
Friday	20th	Vale of White Horse
Monday	30th	Oxford City

### OCTOBER 2024

Tuesday	1st	South Oxfordshire
Wednesday	2nd	Cherwell
Thursday	3rd	West Oxfordshire
Friday	4th	Vale of White Horse

Limited collections from your house for those who are unable to get to us. Please tell them when you make your booking that you need a collection.

**BOOKING INFORMATION.** To book your safety check appointment  
Call: 01865 895999 Option 3 or Email: [duty.officer@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:duty.officer@oxfordshire.gov.uk)  
Online Booking: <https://service.oxfordshire.gov.uk/blankettesting>  
(Pre-booked appointments only on a strictly first come first served basis)



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## Combe Women's Institute

We are very much looking forward to welcoming members and guests to our meeting at the Reading Room on 9 September, when our speaker Analiza Jones will be talking about handwoven bags from the Philippines.

Meetings are held on the second Monday of each month in the Reading Room, from 7.30-9.30pm. Membership is open to all women over the age of 18 years. Subscription until the end of the year is just £36.00. Guests are charged £5 per meeting (max 3 meetings a year as a guest).

Please join us there on Saturday 28 September from 10.30am for a traditional WI Coffee Morning. Money raised will be used to help fund our speakers and events throughout the year.

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

Julia Sharpe (891058)

Secretary Combe WI

[combewi@oxfordshirewi.co.uk](mailto:combewi@oxfordshirewi.co.uk)

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## Combe Community Cinema

On 21 September, Combe Community Cinema offers Present Laughter – A National Theatre live production. This multi award-winning production of Noël Coward's provocative comedy stars Andrew Scott (Vanya, Fleabag), Sophie Thompson (Four Weddings and a Funeral) and Indira Varma (Mission Impossible).

Booking is via [ticketsource.co.uk](https://ticketsource.co.uk): £12.00, or £13.00 on the door if seats are available. Doors and bar open at 7.00pm, screening at 7.30 pm and show ends at 10.30pm.

The Hub, Park Road, Combe

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## Crowned cranes exhibition

Claire Carroll is an award-winning photographer based in Stow-on-the-Wold. An exhibition of her recent work will be on display at Atelier 8, Park Street, Stow-on-the-Wold, from 5-31 August. This exhibition features a series of images of Japanese red crowned cranes taken on a visit to photograph the courting rituals of these beautiful black and white birds (with a little red!). She was struck by the shapes and patterns of the virtually monochrome cranes against the snow-white background and the images she has created have an almost abstract quality.



For further information and details of opening times please contact

Claire Carroll 07774 862511  
[claire@clairecarrollphotography.com](mailto:claire@clairecarrollphotography.com) or  
Atelier8, 8 Park Street, Stow-on-the-Wold,  
GL54 1AQ

[hello@atelier8.uk](mailto:hello@atelier8.uk)

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## Soldiers of Oxford Museum, Woodstock

Marking the Woodstock-based museum's tenth anniversary and commemorating 110 years since the start of the First World War, Soldiers of Oxfordshire Museum is currently hosting a Great War art exhibition, and is running an art competition for young people over the summer, which will culminate in its own Journeys through War exhibition this October.



Now taking entries, the competition is open to children and young people from ages 7 through to 18, and will be divided into three age brackets: 7-10 years; 11-14 years; 15-18 years. Prizes will be awarded for the top entries from each category.

The museum is looking for entries that are inspired by the museum's own collections and tie into the theme of Journeys through War. These could take the form of art portraying a glider pilot's flight to Normandy on D-Day, the journey made by the many evacuees that came to Oxfordshire during the Second World War, or even the journeys made by carrier pigeons used to send secret messages during wartime.

Submitted work can take inspiration from museum collections from the First and

Second World Wars, but could take in more recent events or even earlier conflicts. The deadline for entries is 29 September 2024, with more information and an entry form available at [www.bit.ly/summerartcomp](http://www.bit.ly/summerartcomp).



Currently, the museum is hosting John Noott's collection of First World War art in *The Art of the Great War* exhibition, which runs until 22 September 2024.

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## North Leigh History Society

Our History Society has a new season of talks lined up! It begins on Tuesday 3 September at 7.30 pm when Simon Randall will be giving a talk on *The Civil War in the Cotswolds*. On 1 October Dr Simon Townley will be talking about the work on Chipping Norton recently completed by the Victoria County History (now British History Online).

We meet on the first Tuesday of the month in North Leigh Memorial Hall, OX29 6SA at 7.30 (doors open at 7pm). All welcome. Members £20 per year, visitors £4 per talk. Further details are available from Diana Power 01993 882301, or Robert Kyte at [kyterobert@gmail.com](mailto:kyterobert@gmail.com) and 01993 880368.

# Politics & local affairs

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## Stonesfield Parish Council

**New Councillors:** At the Parish Council meeting on 14 August, the Council welcomed two new Councillors: Ursula Rice and Claire Renshaw, and Jess Huband was co-opted to fill the remaining vacancy. Cherie Carruthers was introduced as the new Responsible Finance Officer (RFO).

**Council sub-groups:** The meeting received reports from the District Councillors (Cllrs Genny Early and Tim Sumner), and from the Parish Councillors concerned with the Neighbourhood Plan (Cllr Simon Warr) and SAFER (Cllr Mick Heduan). These sub-groups and the Common working group were re-confirmed as working groups under direction of the Parish Council.

### Other areas of interest:

Representatives from the Parish Council were confirmed for each of the following areas:

1. Playing Fields – Cllr David Brown
2. Village Hall – Cllr Claire Renshaw
3. Solar Panels – Cllr Simon Powell
4. Finance – Cllr Phil McArdell; Cllr Ursula Rice to be added as signatory
5. Neighbourhood Plan – Cllrs Simon Powell, Simon Warr and Jess Huband
6. Stonesfield Community Trust – Awaiting response from Trust
7. Stonesfield Action For Enhanced Road safety (SAFER) – TBC
8. Village Transport Network (VTN) – TBC

9. Biodiversity – Cllr Ursula Rice
10. Major Events (Blenheim / Cornbury etc) – Cllr Jess Huband.

**Planning applications:** No objections were raised by the Council to the following planning applications:

Application No 24/01878/HHD – two storey side extension, first floor rear extension, garage conversion and porch, Karinya, Churchfields, and

Application No 24/01523/HHD – Front single storey extension and alterations to garage to form a pitched roof, 2 Busby Close.

**Parish Clerk:** The Council noted that recruitment of a new Parish Clerk is under way.

**Biodiversity:** The Council will be developing a Biodiversity Policy and the work will be led by Cllr Rice.

**Next meeting:** The next meeting of the Parish Council will be held on Wednesday 4 September at 7pm, at Stonesfield Primary School.

Cherie Carruthers  
Locum Clerk and RFO, Stonesfield Parish Council  
rfo@stonesfieldpc.uk

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## **Neighbourhood Planning**

The Neighbourhood Plan is continuing to take shape as each of the strands of work is moving towards a conclusion. The Steering Group was mindful that the new Government planned to revise some of the planning laws, which meant redrafting the National Planning & Policy Framework (NPPF). Consultation has been launched on changes to the NPPF, which it is hoped will enable a new document to be published in Autumn 2024.

We have been through the proposed changes and the protections for Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, such as the Cotswolds AONB in which we are situated, are unchanged. This will mean that the Housing Needs Assessment we undertook and the various policies that we have drafted for the Plan will not alter.

However, the emphasis on building more homes across the country has meant that most local authorities will need to meet much higher targets for building homes. West Oxfordshire District Council will now have an annual target of 889 homes per year; an increase of 62% from the previous target of 549. This will impact the rewriting of their Local Plan, with which our Neighbourhood Plan will need to be consistent.

A public consultation in late 2023 on where new homes should be built in the District strongly favoured building in existing towns rather than villages, as they have all the facilities, employment and transport links. Major building development (10 houses or more) in villages in the AONB, under the new NPPF, would still need to demonstrate exceptional need and public interest for that settlement.

The Housing Needs Assessment we undertook did not demonstrate a need for more market housing in Stonesfield. However, there was a small need for some social housing. This could be located to minimise harm to the AONB and protect the landscape and scenic beauty; National and local planning policy requires that great weight be given to these protections.

Richard Morris

Chair, NP Steering Group

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## **From our District Councillor Citizens Advice**

As newly elected Councillors, we had an introductory session with CA in Witney. In the 2023-2024 period, they helped 8,620 people on 33,261 issues. In the Stonesfield and Tackley ward specifically, they served 95 individuals and opened 116 cases. They assisted clients in the Stonesfield & Tackley ward to increase their annual income by £75,810, and were able to get over £14,000 of debt written off. Fifty-two percent of clients have a disability or long-term health condition and the primary issue was help with Universal Credit claims and appeals. Thank you to Citizens Advice for the important work they do, and for being a friendly help to so many people. Call them on 0808 278 7908 or go to [www.citizensadvicewestoxon.org](http://www.citizensadvicewestoxon.org).

## **Equality and diversity training**

All district Councillors were invited to undertake equality and diversity training. The session was a useful prompt to think about how to make sure that all voices are heard.

## **Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

One item we are reviewing is our current waste services. WODC has contracted with

Ubico for waste collection, street cleansing, grounds and other ancillary services since 1 April 2015. The key performance metrics of missed bins and container deliveries have improved.

As the service has stabilised, the service will focus on more strategic elements in the coming months, which include looking at greening the fleet and transitioning away from standard fuel vehicles. Ubico has put a zero-emission Dennis Eagle eCollect through its paces, making collections from homes across the district and collecting over 94 tonnes of rubbish over a 2-week period to show the electric collection vehicle can perform in a large rural district.

The introduction of Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) starts with local authorities in 2025. EPR will see waste producers (for example manufacturers) paying for their portion of waste services rather than citizens paying through general taxation. DEFRA is overseeing this new approach to waste funding in the UK and has already begun collecting from producers. EPR is likely to have a significant positive impact on WODC's waste budget.

### **Botley West Solar Farm**

Oxfordshire County Council has notified WODC that archaeological trial trenching for the Botley West Solar Farm commenced on 12 August. This is necessary to understand the archaeological potential within the area of the proposed solar farm. There will be machinery on site starting in the Vale of White Horse, but moving north through West Oxfordshire shortly afterward and the trenching is to be complete by the end of 2024. The presence of machinery and activities on site may create concern, but the trial trenching is

part of the necessary survey work to be undertaken by the developer. It does not represent the start of development and is not related to the construction of the solar farm itself.

### **Biodiversity**

Verge management and cutting – I have been contacted by residents with concerns about the timing of cutting verges, removing flowering plants before they have set seed, and the impact on insect populations. The approved WODC Nature Recovery Plan 2024-2030 (<https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/media/nvtbkoob/nature-recovery-plan-2024-to-2030.pdf>) has an objective to: 'Promote and showcase wildflower grasslands and good verge management for biodiversity for Town and Parish Councils and other land owners'. We aim to work out management plans that are appropriate for different areas.

Genny Early

Genny.Early@westoxon.gov.uk

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## **More news from West Oxfordshire**

### **Community Infrastructure Levy**

West Oxfordshire District Council is holding a public consultation on the introduction for the first time of a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) to help fund new and improved infrastructure across the district.

CIL will complement existing Section 106 developer contributions, which apply to larger development schemes and which mitigate the impact of the development they apply to directly. CIL will be applied to smaller developments that are not generally subject to Section 106 contributions.

WODC Leader Cllr Andy Graham says that introducing CIL will help to ensure that new developments are supported by the right investment in supporting infrastructure. A proportion of the money received through CIL will be passed directly to the local Town or Parish Council within which the development is taking place so that decisions on how the money is spent are taken locally.

The public consultation will be open between 2 August and 27 September. For more information and to contribute to the consultation, go to [www.yourvoice.westoxon.gov.uk/en-GB/projects/cil-dcs](http://www.yourvoice.westoxon.gov.uk/en-GB/projects/cil-dcs).

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### **Our new MP**

*The Stonesfield Slate* has contacted our new MP, Calum Miller, and invited him to contribute his thoughts and activities to the *Slate* each month. Understandably it takes a little while for newly-elected MPs to settle into all their new obligations and so we look forward to receiving input from him in future issues.

Editor

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### **Neighbourhood Watch**

Our Community Police report that another car has recently been broken into on Stonesfield Common, and also a number of vehicles stolen from Bladon, Leafield and Bletchingdon.

Deanna Asplundh  
Stonesfield Neighbourhood Watch  
Coordinator

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## **Thames Valley Police**

### **Thanks! from the Police**

A message from Thames Valley Police expresses thanks for local people's co-operation and patience with their security operation before, during and after the summit held at Blenheim Palace on 18 July. TVP really appreciated all of the patience and support shown to officers, staff and volunteers before, during and after the summit.

### **Scams**

Thames Valley Police are urging people to be vigilant for a number of different type of scams currently being used to make money. One is the use of advertising online, including pop-up advertisements and on social media, promoting opportunities for lucrative home working. The truth is that there is no job opportunity, and the scam is persuading people to pay for goods or services upfront and then those don't appear. TVP warns for caution when being asked for money in advance, or being told money can be made from playing games or by introducing more people to the scam. They advise people not to respond to a mobile number (beginning 07) or to a web-based email address such as @gmail or @yahoo, as genuine businesses usually have a landline phone number and/or their own email address.

Another type of scam is the courier scam, where a person buying something from you might claim they are too busy to collect an item and says they will use a courier who'll bring you the money. All you need to do is give them your bank details to pay the insurance, which can put your money or identity under threat.

There are many other approaches. If you become the victim of a scam, call your bank immediately using the number on the back of your bank card and report it to [www.actionfraud.police.uk/reportscam](http://www.actionfraud.police.uk/reportscam), or phone 03001 232040.

### **Antisocial behaviour**

A new Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) Mediation Service for Thames Valley is being introduced for residents of Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Milton Keynes. Mediation helps to resolve neighbour and community disputes that, if left, can escalate and cause significant harm and distress. Often these disputes don't meet the criminal threshold and can't be resolved by one agency alone.

Anti-social behaviour often occurs over time rather than in a single incident, and can include graffiti and vandalism, fly-tipping, littering and dog fouling, threatening behaviour and excessive noise. Problems in these areas should be reported to the West Oxfordshire District Council, Thames Valley Police or the housing provider.

If you feel that no one is dealing with the anti-social behaviour problems you are experiencing and you have already reported them to one of these bodies, you can request a new review of the case through an ASB case review or Community Trigger. Your case can be reviewed if you

have reported three separate incidents of anti-social behaviour in the last six months.

You can apply for a Community Trigger response via telephone, email or by post, to West Oxfordshire District Council  
Elmfield Offices  
New Yatt Road  
Witney, Oxfordshire  
OX28 1PB

01993 861000

[ers@publicagroup.uk](mailto:ers@publicagroup.uk)

.....

### **Police and community support:**

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

Woodstock Neighbourhood Police Team

### **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:**  
**Viv Kendall 01993 891803 or [stonesfieldvts@gmail.com](mailto:stonesfieldvts@gmail.com)**



# Education, culture & more

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## Stonesfield Library

The Library (telephone 898187) is open as follows:

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

Val Phillips (891455)

Friends of Stonesfield Library

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## Summer Reading Challenge 2024



Have you read your six books during the summer holidays? Not yet? Don't worry – there's still time to complete the challenge.

The Summer Reading Challenge finishes on Saturday 7 September.

All successful 'finishers' receive a certificate and medal. Make sure you get yours from the library!

Bryony Mallows

Friends of Stonesfield Library



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## Home Library Service

The Home Library Service is free and there is no charge for requests or late returns. To register for this service or for further information, telephone your local library or the Home Library Service on 01865 810259, or email [homelibraryservice@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:homelibraryservice@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

Deborah Wilson (898187)

Library Manager


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## I'm a reader

Our very best wishes go to Eleanor Bailey, who has kept us supplied with such great articles for this column in recent years. Come back soon Eleanor!

Editor

**YOUR LIBRARY NEEDS YOU!**



**Time to spare?**  
**Looking for a new opportunity?**  
Friends of Stonesfield Library would like to meet you!  
We support the library service by sharing the opening hours with the professional manager.  
If you enjoy reading and helping people, this is the volunteering opportunity for you!  
We work in pairs and carry out a variety of tasks during a session (usually one session of 2-3 hours per month).

**Interested?**  
**Come along to Stonesfield Library to find out more or contact Mike Pollitt on 01993 891856.**

# Clubs, societies & sport

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## **Stonesfield Gardening Club**

Our meeting in September will feature the welcome return of Rosy Hardy of Hardy's Cottage Garden Plants, speaking to us on the subject of Seasonal Perennials for Pollinators. As usual she will be bringing with her some gorgeous plants for sale (she will take cards!), so no doubt that will be as tempting as ever.

Rosy will be with us on Monday 9 September at St James' Centre and the talk starts at 7.30pm.

Diane Bates

Secretary Stonesfield Gardening Club

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

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## **Repair and Community Café – 7 September**

Once again the Community Café will be providing a wonderful range of cakes and light lunches while the repairers will be working hard to fix all your broken items.

We will look at anything from computer tech to sharpening knives, broken china, rickety furniture, and all electrical items. We look forward to seeing you at the Village Hall between 10am and 2pm – if you can give us advance warning, contact us at [stonesfieldrepaircafe@gmail.com](mailto:stonesfieldrepaircafe@gmail.com). There is a cutoff at 12.30, so be sure to come before that.

Mike Sofroniou

The logo for Stonesfield Pre-School & Daycare features the word 'Stonesfield' in a multi-colored, bubbly font at the top. Below it, 'Pre-School & Daycare' is written in a similar multi-colored, bubbly font. The letters are filled with various colors like red, blue, green, and yellow, and have a slightly irregular, hand-drawn appearance.

*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

(£7.10 per session) Cereal, toast and fruit juice included

### **Pre-School Sessions**

9am – 3pm daily for children aged 2–4 years (£19.35 per session)

### **After School Club**

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

(£18.00 per session)

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

## Stonesfield Food Group

### Emergency Food help

One of the aims of the Food Group is to support Stonesfield residents who are struggling to afford nourishing food. We are able to do this using the funds raised by the Community Cafés run alongside the Repair Café, and through other generous donations.

We are currently able to offer food parcels or emergency supermarket vouchers. If you, or someone you know, could benefit, contact Kate Harris, on 01993 898781 or via email at [kateharris58@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:kateharris58@yahoo.co.uk).

If you are able to, you can support the food parcel 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.

## Seniors' Cafe and Stonesfield Social

Both the Seniors' Café and the Social took a break over the summer. We are looking at the year ahead and considering some changes to how we work. We would like to find a self-employed chef and also a self-employed administrator to help us run the social. We are not able to employ people as such but would be happy for you to invoice us, and it would be a development for us to be able to offer some 'employment', albeit on a small scale. We will be back operating the Stonesfield Social on a Tuesday night at the Village Hall. Opening date will be advertised on our Facebook Group (search for The Stonesfield Social) so join up to follow what we are doing!

Get in touch if you want to cook/bake or help....

Julie Curren (07973 730907)

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

### Join Our Community Food Team!

Are you passionate about tackling food waste, cooking and community engagement? We're seeking a self-employed individual with cooking experience to prepare delicious, nutritious meals once a week for our community members.

#### Responsibilities:

- Assist in meal preparation using ingredients sourced from local food hub (collected & delivered by team member)
- Create diverse and flavourful dishes
- Ensure food safety and hygiene standards are met at all times.

#### Requirements:

- Cooking experience, preferably in a professional setting
- Knowledge of food safety practices
- Ability to work independently
- Passion for community building and food justice.

**Schedule:** Max one day per week (maybe less!)

**Location:** home-based or at Stonesfield Village Hall

**How to Apply:** If you're interested in joining our mission to provide healthy food options and build community connections, please send your resume and a brief cover letter outlining your relevant experience to [juliecurran0@gmail.com](mailto:juliecurran0@gmail.com) or 07973 730907.

*Join us in making a difference through food! Together, we can create a healthier, more connected community.*

### Join Our Community Food Team!

Are you passionate about tackling food waste and increasing community engagement? We're seeking a self-employed individual with administration experience to help with the running of the weekly Stonesfield Social.

#### Responsibilities:

- Organise our rota of chefs and helpers
- Run our email and Facebook communication
- Help with identification of funding opportunities and grant submissions.

#### Requirements:

- Ability to work independently
- Passion for community building and food justice
- Can supply references.

**Schedule:** Max one day per week (maybe less)

**Location:** home-based

**How to Apply:** If you're interested in joining our mission to provide healthy food options and build community connections, please send your resume and a brief cover letter outlining your relevant experience to [juliecurran0@gmail.com](mailto:juliecurran0@gmail.com) or 07973 730907.

*Join us in making a difference through food! Together, we can create a healthier, more connected community.*

# Stonesfield Environment Group

The Evenlode Catchment Partnership (ECP) have produced this great picture (below) covering the many aspects of their work. We are part of the Citizen Science movement that contributes our water sampling data to this group, and over 2000 datasets have been collected since 2015. This data is analysed and shared, and as more is gathered we improve the picture of the health of the Evenlode, from Moreton in Marsh through to Church Hanborough.

We went along to the Cream Tea and Cartography meeting in Combe. This is a group of other Citizen Scientists who are operating in the lower catchment area, that's our area and it's a great way for us to meet the other local Citizen Science groups.

What else has been keeping us busy? Our sampling of the riverfly populations in the river and continued tree planting – please get in touch if you want to join in.

Julie Curran  
juliecurran0@gmail.com

**Note:** Do look at this online: click on *The Slate* at [www.stonesfield.online](http://www.stonesfield.online), to see this and all our images in colour. This one can't be missed!

Editor



# Church news

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

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

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

**Rector:** Revd 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 - Life Learning**

Despite the decades which have passed since I left school, September for me will always be associated with the start of a new academic year. It has been a privilege to have been involved with education throughout my life, and I am more aware than ever of its importance. We never stop learning, even if we put plenty of distance between ourselves and the experience of school or college days. Our generation has had to learn far more and more quickly than any of those before us, as technological change is occurring exponentially. This requires constant adaptation and the management of a relentless deluge of new information. A university tutor once told me that even if they did not teach or research, there would not be enough time in the week to read all the new material constantly coming online

in their academic field. We are made to learn, but keeping up with new requirements in every area of our lives is demanding, and at times overwhelming. I am happy to learn new things and I love my computer, but sometimes I need to retreat into the simpler pleasures of life - enjoy tea from a pottery cup, feel wet grass beneath my feet, read an actual book, or enjoy the subtlety of a tomato from my own garden, before I have to battle with online passwords, forms, electronic devices and infuriating websites once again.

In the learning rollercoaster of modern life we may master online systems, gain great qualifications, travel to far-off places, train our bodies to run for England, own property, or nurture the best garden ever seen. All of this can give pleasure. But in our activity and our learning we must not neglect the most important thing of all - an understanding of ourselves, our hearts and minds, and an insight into the purpose and meaning of our lives. Our feelings, thoughts and beliefs direct and shape our actions and our choices, and affect all those around us. Learning about our own selves enables us to direct our energies more consciously, and more carefully. Learning why we are here is the foundation of meaningful living.

For all of us, recognising that there is a spiritual part to our being is vital as we seek to live more fully. Helping that spirituality to flourish can put everything else in its proper perspective. The church is many things, but its true function is to call

and recall us to a deeper understanding of the meaning and value of our lives. Learning that we are loved at the very deepest level by the one who made us, and who cherishes all things, re-orientates our whole life towards a deeper relationship with ourselves and with others. A relationship with the source of all life brings peace, and teaches us the value of all we do and all we are.

Revd Ralph Williamson - Rector

**Church services:**

**Sunday 1 September [Fourteenth Sunday after Trinity]**

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

**Sunday 8 September [Fifteenth Sunday after Trinity]**

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

**Sunday 15 September [Sixteenth Sunday after Trinity]**

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

**Sunday 22 September [Seventeenth Sunday after Trinity]**

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

**Sunday 29 September [Eighteenth Sunday after Trinity]**

8am	Stonesfield	Holy Communion [BCP/said]
11am	Combe	Harvest Festival (NB: note later time)
11am	Stonesfield	Parish Communion

**Wednesdays**

9.30am	Stonesfield	Holy Communion (every week)
11am	Combe	Morning Prayer (11, 25 September)

**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)

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## **Roman Catholic Worship**

### **Obedience**

We often have ambivalent feelings about obedience: on the one hand we can consider obedience as giving up some of our autonomy or independent agency. On the other hand, obedience to the laws of the country and acceptance about informal customs and practices, are generally seen as important and worthwhile.

In the New Testament, the focus on obedience is seen as a way to show love for God and a sign of salvation. Jesus emphasised the importance of obedience in one of his last messages to His disciples, saying, 'If you love Me, keep My commandments' (John 14:15), 'He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me' (John 14:21), and 'If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word' (John 14:23). Jesus also says, 'You are my friends if you do what I command' (John 15:14).

Jesus is offering a path to salvation for us if we accept what He requires us to do and believe in Him. This form of obedience of love can liberate and set us free from the weight of our past. This obedience to God's Will could be interpreted as the greatest expression of our free will as we are choosing a particular path to the exclusion of other options; it takes courage to be obedient.

### **Holy Mass**

Sunday Mass 9.15am

### **Weekday Mass**

Wednesdays 9.15am

Fridays: 9.15am

St Teresa's Parish Pilgrimage to Stonor: Saturday 14 September. For further information please contact Suze Mathews, [suzemathews899@btinternet.com](mailto:suzemathews899@btinternet.com)

For Parish updates, more information and further support, please go to [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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## **Stonesfield Methodist Church**

### **Services for September**

- Sun 1 11am To be arranged  
Sun 8 11am To be arranged  
Sun 15 11am The Reverend Andrew Biggs:  
Holy Communion Service  
Sun 22 11am The Reverend James Skinner  
Sun 29 11am Julie Biggs: Harvest Service

The Autumnal Equinox is heading this way, but September may still hold surprises. Could we be blessed with an Indian Summer to laze away, and miss out on any damp squibs that disturb the harvest reapers? One thing is for sure: those rich glorious colours will very soon reign once more up among the treetops and carry us onward. The beauty of God's world is doing what it always does. Thanks be to Him

For the harvests of the Spirit, thanks be to God;

For the good we all inherit, thanks be to God;

For the wonders that astound us, for the truths that still confound us,

Most of all, that God has found us, thanks be to God.

Fred Pratt Green, 1903-2000

Come to a Service soon.

Kathleen Albért (891733)

---

## **New Church thought**

Continuing with the theme of volunteering in the last few *Slates*, here's another quote from E. Swedenborg:

‘A community has as many bonds within it as there are good and useful things that are accomplished in it.’

Seems to me that Stonesfield has a lot of these!

Dale Morris (898210)



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