



Issue No 565 February 2026

## Stumbling into 2026



Stonesfield Stumblers 2026: Chris Bartle

At 11.16 on 1 January 2026 over 80 hardy Stonesfield residents, plus many dogs, marshalled at The Cross ready for the 2026 Stumble. This year the weather was kind, dry and not too cold. After the obligatory group photograph the party started off down High Street in the direction of Well Lane, collecting a few stragglers along the way.

Across the ridge path, past Lodge Farm, back through the woods and down The Ridings we went, although some people took a shortcut wanting to get in first at The White Horse.

By the time the last walkers arrived at 'our pub' it was busy, but everyone got served quickly and the bacon butties went down well. Many thanks to Craig for this great start to 2026.

Also a big 'Thank You' to Graham Rutson for helping maintain an unbroken 30+ year Stonesfield tradition.

If you missed it this year then hopefully we will see you on 1 January 2027 for the next Stumble!



Filing down Well Lane



Crowding into the pub

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[www.stonesfield.online](http://www.stonesfield.online) or via QR code



## February

1-28	Pics @ Pub: Two Artists	The White Horse	pub hours
2,9,16,23	Baby & Me postpartum yoga	Village Hall	10-11am
2,9,16,23	Monday Coffee	St James' Centre	10-11.30am
2,5,9,12	Taekwondo	Village Hall	5.30-6.30pm
2,9,16,23	Bump & Me antenatal yoga	Village Hall	7-8.15pm
2,9,23	Hannah Bathe - HITT	Village Hall	7-7.45pm
3,17	Quiz Night	Sports & Social Club	8pm
3,10,24	Stonesfield Social	VH Clubroom	5-6.30pm
3,10,17,24	Seniors Café	The White Horse	3-4pm
3,10,17,24	Zumba	Village Hall	7-8pm
4	Parish Council meeting	VH Clubroom	7-8.30pm
4,11,18,25	Pilates	Village Hall	9.30-10.45am
4,11,25	Hannah Bathe - Strength & Condition	Village Hall	7-7.45pm
4,11,18,25	Folk Dancing	Village Hall	7.45-10pm
5,12,19,26	Upholstery	VH Clubroom	9.30am-12.30pm
5,12,19,16	Book Break	Stonesfield Library	12.30-2pm
5,12,26	Hannah Bathe - Strength & Condition	Village Hall	7-7.45pm
6,13,27	Baby & Toddlers	Village Hall	10am-noon
7	Ladies' Breakfast	St James' Centre	9am
9	Community Café - Scouts	Village Hall	10am-2pm
9	Gardening Club AGM & talk	St James' Centre	7pm
10,24	Quiz Night	The White Horse	8pm
12	Bingo	Sports & Social Club	7pm
16,19,23,26	Taekwondo	Village Hall	5.30-6.30pm
17	Pancake Party	St James' Centre	3-5pm
17	Folk session	The White Horse	8pm
21	Band night (TBC)	Sports & Social Club	8.30pm
25	Lunch Club Drop-in	St James' Centre	11am-12.30pm
26	MegSoc: Members' Social	St James' Centre	7pm

# Notices & news

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## Patricia Chancellor

Patricia, who lived in Stonesfield for many years with her husband Richard and four daughters, died peacefully on 17 October 2025, aged 95.

Although she moved to join family in Norfolk in 1996, her heart remained in Stonesfield. She retained very close ties with friends in the village, and thanks to Jenny Haviland kept up to date with monthly village news via the *Stonesfield Slate*.

She asked that her ashes be interred at St James's Church where she will join her daughter Nicky.

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## Hazel Parsons

With deep sadness – our lovely mother, Hazel May Parsons, has passed away. Her funeral service is on 19 February, 11am, at St James's Church.

Clive and David Parsons

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## Two notes of appreciation

Many thanks to Mrs Hill and to the staff for inviting me to Stonesfield Primary School to talk to the children about writing books. I was most impressed by the enthusiasm of the children, the dedication and professionalism of the Head, the Staff and the ethos of the school. It was a pleasure to be there.

Wendy Lynch

Were you, like me, lucky enough to receive a festive hamper thoughtfully donated, put together, and delivered during Christmas week? Tea, coffee, hot chocolate, long-life milk plus many other very useful store-cupboard items.

May I, on behalf of all the other recipients, extend sincere thanks to everyone involved with this annual act of kindness, and send warmest wishes for a happy and healthy 2026!

(name provided)

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## Ladies' Breakfast

There will be a Ladies' Breakfast on Saturday 7 February in the St James' Centre starting at 9am. Come and join us for breakfast, followed by a short talk by Linda Soderberg.

All welcome. The cost is £5. If you would like to know more please get in touch with Bina (891293), Kathleen (891733), Muriel (891479) or Suzy (891552).

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## Come to a Pancake Party!

Children and adults are all invited to a Pancake Party on Shrove Tuesday (17 February) in the St James' Centre. Come any time between 3pm and 5pm.

Pancakes and drinks all free of charge!

For further information email [stonesfield@stonesfieldparishchurch.org](mailto:stonesfield@stonesfieldparishchurch.org)

## Swing into action - help us to rebuild our playground

At Stonesfield Primary School a critical need has now arisen; we are trying to raise enough money to replace the playground equipment and play tower which is now rotten below ground level and has become unsafe to use. We spoke to pupils to find out what they wanted to help us redesign and rebuild the playground for all to enjoy. You can watch our video here: [www.crowdfunder.co.uk/p/help-us-to-rebuild-our-playground](http://www.crowdfunder.co.uk/p/help-us-to-rebuild-our-playground)

Friends of Stonesfield School (FoSS) is a registered charity made up of a group of dedicated parents and volunteers that works to support education and enrichment for all pupils at Stonesfield Primary School. The primary school has 72 pupils aged 4-11 years and is at the heart of our village community. We would love to be able to raise enough money to replace



our play equipment and provide new equipment that enhances outdoor play. If you would like to make a donation, this can be made via the crowdfund website above or by scanning the QR code.

Your contribution however big or small is so valuable to us! Thank you.

Friends of Stonesfield School





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## Lunch Club Drop-In

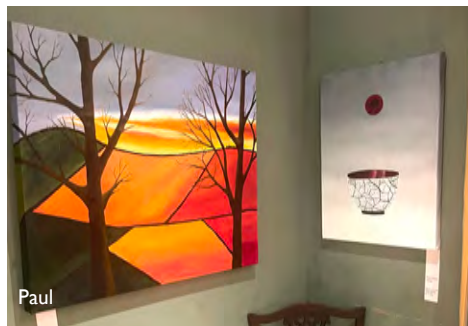
Come along and pop into Lunch Club on Wednesday 25 February between 11am and 12-30pm. Enjoy a coffee and share time with us all at St. James' Centre.

A raffle and a bring and buy table will be there to browse, everyone is very welcome.

Kathleen Albért

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## Pictures @ the Pub



We hope you may have had the opportunity to take in our New Year exhibition of work by Paul Bates who paints in a wide variety of subjects and styles, and Jenny Dingwall's lino-prints featuring scenes of Combe, Oxford and elsewhere in our county. If not, there is plenty of time to do so – the exhibition will continue throughout February.



We are very pleased to let you know that several artists new to the White Horse have

come forward recently and expressed a wish to show their work, and in the coming months we can look forward to seeing woodblock prints, 'digital paintings', animal art and house portraits. These will be 'firsts' for the Horse and we hope you will be delighted with the diversity of work produced by our artistic community!

If you would like to exhibit your work later in the year, please get in touch with us via the email address below – we look forward to hearing from you.

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

Pictures @ The Pub team: Kerry Burniston,  
Jenny Lines, Ann Lowe and Trisha Williams  
Claire Renshaw for The White Horse  
Community Pub

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## How Does Your Garden Grow?

Are you pleased with your garden? Having spent time tending your favourite plants do you wish that others could enjoy what you have created?

Stonesfield Gardening Club would love to give you that opportunity as we hold our bi-annual Open Gardens event on 28 June this year.

It involves welcoming people into your garden from 2 to 5.30 in the afternoon, chatting to visitors who will be very appreciative of the chance to look 'behind the garden gate'.

If you think this is something you would like to consider, drop me an email and I can come to chat to you about it.

Diane Bates  
Secretary SGC  
diane@bateshome.co.uk

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## Festive Folk

A week before Christmas we were treated to a wonderful folk evening at the White Horse, with the focus on festive songs. Nick and Judith and friends entertained us during the evening, with the addition this time of Larry who had flown in that morning complete with harmonica.



Larry, who is in a rock band in his native North Carolina, happened to be visiting with his Canadian wife, a shareholder of the pub, and, as avid *Slate* readers, they knew that there would be a folk night they could join in with!

Regular attendee Jim, who is keen on blues music, was only too happy to accompany Larry in a wonderfully impromptu evening – just what Nick and Judith hoped their sessions would be. Thank you, Larry, for coming such a long way to be with us, and we look forward to a return visit.

Next folk evening will be on 17 February, 8pm at the White Horse.

Diane Bates

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## Please could you give me a lift?

That's what some of our village neighbours need from time to time, when they have to get to the doctor, dentist or hospital and they don't have family or friends close by or able to help. It can be a real problem as buses are often not available at convenient times, and also getting to the hospitals can need two buses....

That's where we can help. We have a team of drivers who use their own cars to take Stonesfield people to their medical appointments door to door, wait for them and bring them home. It's always really appreciated and it's so rewarding to be able to meet that need.

Could you spare an hour or so, maybe once a month to become one of our drivers? It needn't be more often than that, and we will pay your expenses. If you could consider being a volunteer driver with us and would like more information, please give me a call or drop me a line.

Viv Kendall (891803)

Stonesfield Voluntary Transport Scheme  
[stonesfieldvts@gmail.com](mailto:stonesfieldvts@gmail.com)



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## White Horse news

First of all, I would like to thank everyone for their continued support over the past year as we continue to provide you with the best pub we can. I would also like to say a big thank you to my team for their hard work and effort, especially over the festive period - your hard work and effort never goes unnoticed and I am lucky to have you all.

Our dog calendar has sold really well and thank you to those who popped in to purchase one. We have raised £690 at the time of writing (mid-January) and all monies will be donated to The Oxfordshire Animal Sanctuary. We still have a few calendars left in case anyone has missed out. If you want to learn more about the Sanctuary, please visit [www.oxfordshireanimalsanctuary.org.uk](http://www.oxfordshireanimalsanctuary.org.uk).

Rock 'n' Roll Bingo will be returning – date to be confirmed – and over the next month or two I will be bringing back some live jazz. Please keep an eye on our socials, the Nextdoor app and our website for updates on these events.

I am continuing work to finish the Aunt Sally pitch so it won't be long before we can have a game or two. Also, I will be looking to put a team together to represent the pub so if you're interested do keep your eyes peeled for more details.

Keep watching our socials for more upcoming deals and events:

We look forward to seeing you soon!

Craig Tipper (01993 672059)

The White Horse

[info@thewhitehorsestonesfield.com](mailto:info@thewhitehorsestonesfield.com)

Facebook: The White Horse pub Stonesfield

instagram: [thewhitehorsestonesfield14](https://www.instagram.com/thewhitehorsestonesfield)

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## Stonesfield Swifts 2025

A fabulous year for swifts with twenty nests recorded.

The sites comprised of natural sites, S Bricks, bespoke internal nest sites and, for the first time to my knowledge, a box being used.



A Stonesfield Swift

Swifts can take a while to switch on to boxes so this is very encouraging and in this instance patience and the perseverance of call playing has paid off.

Insects were in plentiful supply and young swifts were fledging from mid-July in some cases.

On still, late summer evenings some of the flying displays were really spectacular.

It should be noted that previously recorded nest totals were around eleven to thirteen so to this point with the increase in sites it's been a success story. Thanks to everyone who has been involved.

With the continuing issues swifts face nationally there will always be work to do to help secure the future of Stonesfield's swifts

Paul Wren



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## Village Hall News

Welcome 2026! A new and busy year already for us at the Village Hall. Our electrics have been upgraded. We are planning a revamp of the kitchen – already you will see new things appearing – updates will be gradual to allow for less user disruption. We have many plans and hope to continue to update the village hall to make the place more welcoming – any feedback or comments will be welcome.

In conjunction with the Parish Council on the evening of 18 March we are holding free defibrillator first aid training. We are lucky enough to have a couple of defib machines around the village, and we welcome villagers to learn how to use one. It is always useful to be prepared - hopefully your training will never be used, but just in case! Please email me if you would like a space on 18 March.

Don't forget that community café slots for 2026 are available for local groups to fundraise on the first Saturday of each month. The hall and club room are also a great hire for parties and events, with a stocked kitchen to cater for up to 100 people.

Claire Renshaw

Stonesfield Village Hall Bookings

info@stonesfieldvillagehall.com

www.stonesfieldvillagehall.com

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## Ladies-only Strength & Conditioning classes in Stonesfield

Looking to get stronger, fitter, and more confident—without the need for expensive gym memberships or high-impact exercises? Our Body Conditioning classes in Stonesfield are designed just for you!

Using weights and low-impact exercises, these sessions focus on building strength, improving fitness, and boosting your overall well-being. There's no jumping, just effective, controlled movements in a friendly and supportive environment.

### Class Details:

**When:** Wednesdays & Thursdays at 7pm

**Where:** Conveniently located in Stonesfield—no need to travel far!

**Who:** All ladies welcome, from beginners to those with more experience

**What to expect:** Small groups for personalised attention and a welcoming, supportive atmosphere

Booking is essential, as spaces are limited.

To reserve your spot or find out more, contact Hannah on 07974 100076.

Join us for a fun, empowering workout that helps you get stronger and feel fantastic.

Hannah Bathe (07974 100076)

More details - P29



## 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.

**Please call or email to book transport  
in February: Viv Kendall  
01993 891803 or stonesfieldvts@gmail.com**

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## **The tail end of Megalosaurus...**

A reminder that Oxford University Museum of Natural History's exhibition *Breaking Ground* has been extended until 13 April 2026. The exhibition focuses on the work of William Buckland and Mary Morland, our very own Megalosaurus and other fossils of Stonesfield. Admission is free.

OUMNH, Parks Road, OX1 3PW  
[www.oumnh.ox.ac.uk](http://www.oumnh.ox.ac.uk)

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## **Emergency Food Aid**

Are you struggling, having a bad week or not been well (or know someone who is)? We can supply you with a supermarket voucher to ease the pressure. Please don't struggle, your lovely community wants to help you!

Contact Kate Harris (07766 913117)

[Kateharris58@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:Kateharris58@yahoo.co.uk)

6 Brook Lane

Donations of vouchers or cash towards this initiative are always welcomed.

Supported by Stonesfield Food Group

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## **Dinner by Donation update**

It has been great to meet and feed so many of you over the last three months of 2025. You might be wondering what it's all about... Well, it's a sort of Secret Supper Club based at my house in Brook Lane. I've got a big dining table, the sofas go up on blocks to table height and somehow I manage to squeeze up to 18 people in for a three-course dinner! Did I mention I like to cook??

The guests arrive with a bottle or so of plonk (or not plonk). They mingle and

chatter till I yell that dinner is about to be served. Three courses arrive as and when they are ready. More chatter, more vino (they don't call me CookaholicKate for nothing!). It's all very relaxed, no taxis needed, no dress code, although wellies in Brook Lane are recommended! I'm often asked about payment which is entirely up to you, but I would say as a guide the average has been £28 per person (so maybe £25 as a minimum). It is ALL going to supporting local Community groups.

We have involved Stonesfield Scouts and they have earned badges for table laying, meet and greet, table waiting and LOTS of washing up! We've supported the Scouts raising £1,350 over three events for the next stay away.

So what's next? I am now a registered food venue and have a 5-star rating from the Food Inspector.

I will be holding monthly dinners throughout 2026, and we will be supporting Stonesfield Pre-school, Friends of Stonesfield School (FoSS), Chrissie's Owls, Lunch Club, Emergency Food Aid.

Do you know a club or group that needs some funds raised? Would you like to be on my mailing list for dates, menus and booking details?

All enquiries to [kateharris58@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:kateharris58@yahoo.co.uk)

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## **Combe Women's Institute**

2026 certainly started well: we had a record attendance of members and visitors and thanks to an excellent talk from Prof Martin McNally we learnt so much about why our bones are so truly amazing. We must all be grateful that we live near the Nuffield Orthopaedic Hospital and for the amazing work that they all do!

WI meetings are held on the second Monday of each month in the Reading Room, Combe from 7.30–9.30pm. We also have a walking group who meet monthly on an ad-hoc basis to enjoy moderate length walks in the beautiful surrounding countryside, and a social group who meet on the last Thursday of the month to enjoy outings to nearby places of interest – both groups usually involve tea and cake!

WI membership is open to all women over the age of 18. We are fortunate to have a thriving membership of women from both Combe and Stonesfield and we have an interesting programme of speakers, outings and activities in line with the Women Institute's main principles of encouraging friendship, tolerance, learning and community spirit.

If you're not sure the WI is for you then consider coming along as a visitor for one or two meetings to try us out; visitors are charged £6 per meeting. Capacity in the Reading Room is limited so please call or email before coming to ensure that there'll be space on the evening.

Our speaker for the February meeting on Monday 9 February is Nicholas Gill and he'll be telling us about the life and songs of George Gershwin.

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 Connect

This is the local magazine for your neighbouring village. You can read the latest issue at [www.combeconnect.co.uk](http://www.combeconnect.co.uk).

[editor@combeconnect.co.uk](mailto:editor@combeconnect.co.uk)

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## The Big Plastic Count is back!

**UK HOUSEHOLDS  
ARE THROWING  
AWAY AN  
ESTIMATED\*  
1.7 BILLION  
PIECES OF PLASTIC  
A WEEK – THAT'S  
90 BILLION  
PIECES PER YEAR**

\*Assuming the data from our households are typical across the UK



**Save the date: 9-15 March 2026**

Get ready to count again! For one week in March, thousands of people from households, schools and communities across the country will take part in the UK's biggest people-powered investigation into household plastic waste.

By counting every piece of plastic packaging we throw away, together we'll uncover the true scale of the UK's plastics crisis and call on the government to do more about it. Will you join us?

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

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## Contributions to *The Slate*

The editorial team and publishers are conscious that not everyone has access to email and/or a computer.

If you are in this situation and would like to submit something for publication, please get in touch with the Editor in order to make alternative arrangements. We are happy to collect something handwritten from you or to take it down over the phone.

The Editor's name and contact number appears on page 2 of each issue.

# Politics & local affairs

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## Stonesfield Parish Council

**Website** Stonesfield Parish Council have created a website dedicated to Parish Council business. This will be found at [www.stonesfield-pc.gov.uk/](http://www.stonesfield-pc.gov.uk/) The village website, [www.stonesfield.online](http://www.stonesfield.online) will continue, but without Parish Council information This site will be maintained by *Stonesfield Slate* volunteers. If you originally subscribed to [www.stonesfield.online](http://www.stonesfield.online) for email updates you will continue to receive these unless you choose to unsubscribe, which you can do at any time by clicking on the links within the email.

**January meeting** The Parish Council met on 7 January 2026 at the Village Hall. Councillors discussed a range of local issues affecting the village, with updates from County and District Councillors, working groups, and Blenheim Estate.

**Planning and Development** There were no new planning applications to consider at this meeting. However, the Council continues to monitor the proposed Combe Road / Manor site development closely.

**County and District updates** County Councillor Andy Graham reported progress on several projects, including plans for improvements at Judd's Garage Junction, which may include traffic lights, pedestrian facilities, speed reductions, and improved bus shelters. Consultation is also under way on proposed changes to Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue Services, and the Parish

Council will be submitting comments. District Councillors provided updates on Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) payments, which will begin for new planning permissions approved after 31 January 2026. A portion of these funds will come directly to parish councils for local infrastructure projects. Information was also shared about the Oxfordshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy.

**Neighbourhood Plan** The Neighbourhood Plan has reached an important milestone, with WODC now processing the Regulation 15 draft. A Regulation 16 consultation is now underway [see separate piece p13 - editor]. The Parish Council agreed to begin exploring the feasibility of affordable housing in the village, working with Community First Oxfordshire.

**The Common and Parish Land** Councillors approved a programme of works on the Common, including repairs and replacement of gates, pollarding of willow trees along the riverbank, and clarification of repairs to cricket pitch fencing. Quotations will be sought, and specifications for the work will be prepared. The Council also agreed to explore options for rabbit-proof fencing at the allotments, including discussions with Blenheim Estate and possible grant funding.

**Finance and Grants** Routine payments were approved, including reimbursements for Remembrance wreaths and equipment servicing.

Two grants were awarded:

- £355.90 to the Pub Group for a shared 360° video-conferencing device, which will also be available for Parish Council use.
- £250 towards churchyard grass cutting and maintenance, recognising the churchyard as a valued village asset.

**Blenheim Estate update** Blenheim Estate reported a £2,500 donation to the village pre-school, strong uptake of commuter travel passes, and ongoing liaison regarding events and traffic planning. Duck shooting has ceased, and steps are being taken to improve communication around shoots. Work to replace gates and stiles at Stocky Woods is expected soon, and a decision on the proposed solar farm is anticipated in May.

**Next meeting** The next Parish Council meeting will be held on Wednesday 4 February 2026 at 7pm. Residents are always welcome to attend.

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## Neighbourhood Plan

Stonesfield Parish Council has submitted the Stonesfield Neighbourhood Plan to West Oxfordshire District Council which can be viewed by entering 'Stonesfield Neighbourhood Plan' in the search bar at [www.westoxon.gov.uk](http://www.westoxon.gov.uk).

The 6-week statutory Regulation 16 consultation on the Stonesfield Neighbourhood Plan is open for comments from Monday 12 January to 5pm on Monday 23 February 2026. We invite your comments about the draft Stonesfield Neighbourhood Plan within the above consultation period. Please email [planning.policy@westoxon.gov.uk](mailto:planning.policy@westoxon.gov.uk) before 5pm on 23 February 2026.

If you don't have a computer or smartphone, you can use the public computers at the village library. Staff there will help you locate the site.

The published Neighbourhood Plan on the WODC website has been amended to take account of as many of the comments received between February and May 2025 as possible. Where comments fell within the remit of the Plan, changes were made, including significant additions on young people and wellbeing. All feedback from last year's consultation has been published. We encourage everyone to read the amended Plan – it's important that as many residents as possible write to the District Council with comments; in support as well as with objections.



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## From our County Council

### Household Waste Recycling Centre booking system

Oxfordshire County Council are introducing a new booking system to help reduce queues, ease traffic on nearby roads, and make visits to the Household Waste Recycling Centre (HWRC) quicker and easier.



From the 14 January 2026 you will need to book a time slot to visit an HWRC. To book, you need to select your site, specify the type of waste you are bringing, and the date and timeslot. Bookings can be made up to two weeks in advance or up to 30 minutes before you visit (subject to availability).

Once you have booked your visit:

- You will receive a confirmation email with all the details you need, ensuring everything is clear so you have no surprises on the day.

On the day:

- You will need proof of address to show you are an Oxfordshire resident and are eligible to access the HWTC's for free. This can be a driving licence, council tax or utility bill.
- Please sort the recyclable items in your waste before you arrive on site. This will help speed up your visit and help Oxfordshire to recycle even more.
- If you are unable to sort everything before you set off, don't worry, there will be sorting areas available on site to make this easier.
- The onsite team will greet you when you arrive, direct you to a bay and will answer any questions to help you recycle as much as possible.

Find out more about the new booking system [www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/hwrcbooking](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/hwrcbooking)

Jeffrey Farrell (07394 843133)

HWRC Manager, Waste & Circular Economy Team

[jeffrey.farrell@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:jeffrey.farrell@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

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## Thames Valley Police

### Frosty mornings and unattended cars

Who likes a nice warm toasty car on a frosty morning? Thieves do! As temperatures drop, we're seeing more drivers leaving their cars running on the driveway to defrost while they get ready inside. Unfortunately this creates the perfect opportunity for opportunistic thieves, who actively look for unattended unlocked vehicles with the keys still in the ignition. Moreover, many keyless cars can be driven away if the engine is already running, even if the key fob isn't inside the vehicle. So a thief could jump in and drive away – the car will not automatically shut down. It takes just seconds for someone to jump in and drive off, and in many cases insurance won't cover the loss if the car was left running unattended. So please, don't make it easy for them. Stay with your vehicle while it defrosts, use de-icer or a scraper, and make sure your car is fully secured before walking away. Stay safe, stay warm, and stay with your car.

### Driving in fog

In foggy conditions, visibility is already reduced. Driving without headlights makes it much harder for other motorists, cyclists and pedestrians to see you - increasing the risk of serious collisions.

*Please remember:*

- Always turn on your headlights in fog, rain or low-light conditions
- Use dipped headlights (not full beam) to avoid dazzling other drivers
- Slow down and increase your following distance

A small action can make a big difference. Let's all do our part to keep the roads safe.

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## **Strengthen your cybersecurity today**

Fraud and cybercrime are now the most common crimes in the UK. Criminals often hack email and social media accounts to take over your online life. Once inside, they can: reset passwords for banking, shopping, and payment apps; steal money or make purchases in your name; use your social media to target friends and family.

### **The solution**

Police Cyber Check is a free, mobile-friendly tool created by the South East Cyber Crime Unit. It gives you step-by-step actions to improve your cybersecurity in priority order.

### **What you'll get**

- Clear guidance split into three levels – Foundation, Improver, Enhanced.
- Action cards with links for popular platforms and apps.
- No sign-up required – optional progress saving via email (we never store your address).

### **Why use Police CyberCheck?**

- Free and official Police resource.
- Mobile friendly and easy to follow.
- No installation or technical jargon.

Start now – visit  
[www.cybercheck.southeastcyber.police.uk/ref/6](http://www.cybercheck.southeastcyber.police.uk/ref/6)

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## **Neighbourhood Watch**

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

Deanna Asplundh

Stonesfield Neighbourhood Watch  
Coordinator

## **Do you have a story to share?**

We hope you have enjoyed the news, history, nature, other articles and photographs which have appeared in *The Slate*.

We're hoping to find more Stonesfield residents who will contribute their own articles, poems, drawings or photographs to publish throughout the year.

If you have a story to tell, or anything to share, please send it to us.

The Editor

[editor@stonesfieldslate.uk](mailto:editor@stonesfieldslate.uk)

# Education, culture & more

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## Stonesfield Primary School

Happy New Year everyone! It feels like only yesterday that I wrote my very first entry for the *Stonesfield Slate*, yet here we are four months on – and what four months it has been. So much has happened at Stonesfield School, and as we start a new year I wanted to take a moment to reflect, update you, and say a heartfelt thank you.

Autumn term was full-on in every sense. In October 2024, Ofsted judged the school to be *Requires Improvement*. Shortly afterwards, between February and May, a number of families chose to leave, and our pupil numbers dropped to around 70. Unsurprisingly, this created a great deal of uncertainty and anxiety for many of our remaining families. A significant part of our work since then has been about nurturing trust, offering reassurance, and creating hope during a challenging time.

My role as Executive Headteacher has been largely strategic. I have deliberately stayed out of the day-to-day operational running of the school, which has been expertly led by Aisling Hill, our Head of School. Our roles are very different, but equally rewarding, and we work closely together with a shared vision for Stonesfield. Moving a school out of *Requires Improvement* demands real focus on processes, systems, robust action plans, and clear strategies for improvement. I am confident in saying that the support and challenge from our governors and the local authority have helped push us to a much stronger place.

Staffing has been a huge priority. Since July, I have appointed a Head of School, a Year 5/6 teacher, a Year 3/4 teacher (who was sadly later deployed to Scotland), an Early Years teacher, a new Business Manager, and a new cleaning company. We are now at full complement, with a talented and committed team firmly driving the bus towards our destination of *Good*. Staff morale has improved dramatically, with positivity and stability now the norm.

Teaching and learning have also seen significant development. We have introduced new pedagogical approaches, written a new School Improvement Plan, established a clear monitoring cycle, and produced a Teaching and Learning Handbook. Many policies have been rewritten, the learning environment has had a complete overhaul, and expectations are high and consistent.

Communication with families and the wider community has improved hugely. We have a new website, a refreshed and redesigned newsletter, and regular opportunities for parents to come into school, see learning in action, and give feedback. We are once again involved in our local community and have re-established strong links with neighbouring, larger schools.

Our curriculum has been rewritten, and new assessment practices have been introduced. A major piece of work has focused on behaviour and classroom expectations, and I am proud to say the school is now beautifully calm, orderly, and

purposeful. We have also appointed an incredible music teacher who teaches every class; the standard of performances in the church and at community events has risen notably and is a real source of pride.

Inclusion remains central to our work. We have written our Inclusion Code and are working closely with the Mulberry Bush Specialist School to deepen staff knowledge and confidence across a range of areas. Recent advisory visits have confirmed the significant progress we are making, though we know there is still work to embed and refine this term.

As you can imagine, all of this progress has come at a cost. The loss of families has placed the school into a deficit budget, and if we were to lose any more pupils, the risk of closure would become very real. Stonesfield is a wonderful village, and it needs a thriving school at its heart.

So, my plea as we begin this new term is for your continued support. If you have skills you can offer, grants you know of, time you could give, or ideas to share, please do get in touch. It truly does take a village to raise a child – and with your help, we can ensure Stonesfield School continues on its positive journey.

Thank you, as always, for your support and belief in our school. Here's to an exciting term ahead.

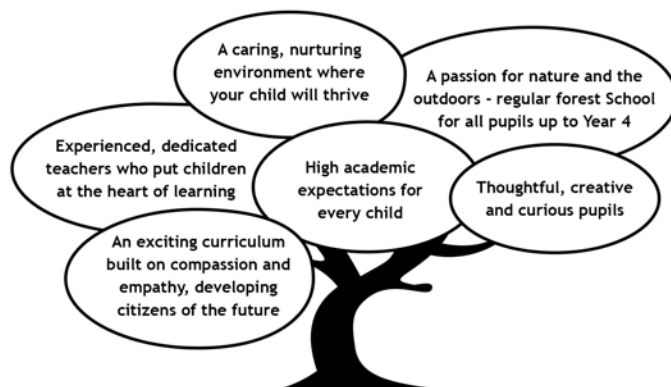
Mrs Kim Rogers  
Executive Headteacher

## Stonesfield Primary School

Learning together to achieve our best.



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



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

Tel: 01993 891687  
Office email: [office.2353@stonesfield.oxon.sch.uk](mailto:office.2353@stonesfield.oxon.sch.uk)  
Headteacher email: [head.2353@stonesfield.oxon.sch.uk](mailto:head.2353@stonesfield.oxon.sch.uk)

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## Stonesfield Library

Note our new phone number:  
01865 815181

Opening hours:

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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## 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 to: [homelibraryservice@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:homelibraryservice@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

Deborah Wilson (01865 815181)

Library Manager

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## Nature notes

### Citizen scientists and Guardians for the Evenlode river

What a great start to the new year: a cormorant was seen flying low along the Evenlode river immediately followed by an iridescent kingfisher in the sunshine.

We know that the Evenlode is in trouble and is not the river she can and should be. I find it helpful to think of the three waters that flow in our environment impacting the Evenlode river.

Firstly the water in the sky held by the clouds flowing over us. The heat of climate change evaporates more water into clouds so we get more intense rainfall. We can see

the effect of heavy rainfall as the Evenlode turns brown with silt from run-off into the river and the natural floodplain fills up. We can't get across the bridge.



The flooded bridge

The excess silt clogs up the river rushing downstream and settles on the river bed. Our sewage treatment plant (Finstock) can't cope with too much rain water and has to release raw sewage into the river. Near the river the floodplain has additional run off which can have nitrates and phosphates. Sewage sludge sold to farmers as a fertiliser is more concerning and contains a cocktail of environmental toxins including forever chemicals. It is hoped that Defra's Environmental land management schemes can support our farmers in caring for river floodplains.

Secondly there is the water that flows underground. If the floodplain is full, walk the Common; go down to where the slope joins the floodplain and watch the underground water emerging. The concern is more in the hot summer months as the river flow reduces, abstracting water can impact the flow of the river and then the wildlife.

The third water flow is the Evenlode herself as she flows by and through us. This is where citizen scientists and guardians are fully involved.





Citizen Scientist John

The Evenlode river is 45 miles long with a catchment area of 166 square miles before she joins the Thames at Cassington. In 2024 citizen scientists did 820 surveys from 160 sites on the Evenlode. The Environment Agency did 173 surveys at 18 sites. This gives you some idea how important citizen scientists are and the monitoring we do.

We have a small team in Stonesfield and are looking for anyone who would be interested to meet us, see what we do and consider joining us for as much or as little as you like. We test for nitrates, phosphates, turbidity, low phosphate, e-coli and riverfly invertebrates. We report on the river into national and local databases.

The cormorant and the kingfisher know there are some fish in the Evenlode; this is confirmed by the Environment Agency who monitor fish at 33 sites on the Evenlode by electro fishing. Their records have seen a diminishing population of fish since 1990. There are still brown trout in the river, mainly in the headwaters (Kingham, Daylesford, Oddington, Chadlington stream). Two sites near Stonesfield were surveyed in 2024 (Ashford Mill, Lower Ridings farm): both

had a 'good mix of species' including one pike at each site. As an apex predator pike are a positive sign for the river. During riverfly invertebrate surveying we do catch smaller fish not seen by electro fishing. A better size for the kingfisher.



Tadpoles

Please do get in touch if you would like to know more and possibly join us.

[John.sampson9@btinternet.com](mailto:John.sampson9@btinternet.com)

## Witney Music Society

In February, the prize-winning Ensemble Renard will present a programme of works for wind quintet by composers including Mozart, Milhaud and Ligeti. The concert is at 7.30pm on Friday 13 February at High Street Methodist Church, Witney.

Tickets (£18, £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 at [www.witneymusicsociety.org.uk](http://www.witneymusicsociety.org.uk).

## Combe Community Cinema



On 27 February we shall be screening the National Theatre performance of *The Audience*. Written by Peter Morgan, who subsequently wrote the hit TV series *The Crown*, the play centres on the weekly meetings or 'audiences' that Queen Elizabeth II (played here to great acclaim by Helen Mirren) had with her Prime Ministers – every one from Winston Churchill to Tony Blair. Critical reviews were overwhelmingly four and five star.

**Ben Brantley (NYT):** 'Helen Mirren is so good as Queen Elizabeth II in *The Audience* that the star of stage, film and TV never needs to worry about a scene being stolen from her.'

**Libby Purves (The Times):** Mirren's portrayal is 'tartly humorous and profoundly human' and 'makes *The Audience* a right-royal great night out'.

**Whatsonstage.com:** praised Mirren's 'magnificent performance' and the play's 'imaginative range, incisive intelligence and lack of sentimentality'.



Doors and bar open 19.00, play begins 19.30. There will be an interval. Performance ends 22.30.

Tickets £13.01 online, £12 on the door (if available)

Online booking is advisable  
[www.ticketsource.co.uk/combe-community-cinema/t-njozygm](http://www.ticketsource.co.uk/combe-community-cinema/t-njozygm)

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

The Hub, Park Road, Combe

## Combe Mill, OX29 8ET

Our Riverside tea room only will be open every Wednesday from 7 January 2026, 10.30am–3.00pm. Call by and enjoy a slice of cake and a cup of tea. You all are very welcome.

Advance notice: 15 March themed *Mill in Steam*. Combe Mill will be opening again to welcome all to our late 19th century Grade 2 listed building. In its day it was the workshop to Blenheim Palace estate by the River Evenlode. Steam beam engine, restored waterwheel, line shafting, collection of towers' clocks, with all machinery running as used in its day. Make a poker in our Dual Blacksmiths'

Forge. There's a tinkering area for children and much more. Tea Room and BBQ open.

Open: 10.30am to 5.00pm Admission:  
Adults £9.50, Concessions £8.50, children  
now FREE. Dogs most welcomed. Free  
parking. Ask about Gift Aid.

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## **Having the builders in - Part I**

### **How to find a reliable builder**

The next step is to get quotes and appoint a builder. At design stage, I always recommend obtaining a budget cost estimate before submitting a planning application. This gives you a benchmark to compare tender prices and negotiate more effectively.

Start by compiling a shortlist of builders through recommendations from friends, family, or neighbours who have undertaken similar projects. Look for contractors with experience in extensions and alterations and who understand UK Building Regulations. Cross-check recommendations with the Federation of Master Builders (FMB), NHBC, and Companies House to confirm the business is registered, financially sound, and has a good trading history. Online platforms like Checkatrade, Rated People, and MyBuilder can help identify names, but use them cautiously. Always dig deeper by searching online with the contractor's name alongside terms like 'complaints', 'court case', or 'scam'.

Aim to invite at least five or six contractors to tender, knowing that only half may respond. Provide identical tender packs, including the approved drawings, the schedule of works, and a covering letter. In your letter, ask for a fixed-price quote, copies of insurance certificates, details of trade memberships, and Health and Safety

policies. Set a deadline—typically 4 to 6 weeks—and ensure builders can visit the site. Keep a record of who came and when.

When tenders are returned, don't just look at price. Consider timescales, availability, and how carefully they reviewed the project. Exclude any who failed to visit the site. From there, you'll likely narrow it down to two or three contractors. Ask detailed questions about site management, waste disposal, and how they handle neighbour concerns. Carry out financial checks to confirm solvency, and verify Public Liability, Employers' Liability, and Contractor's All-Risk insurance. Request references, visit past projects, and speak directly with clients about workmanship, communication, and reliability.

Many homeowners rely on the tender drawings and schedule of works plus any agreed duration and payment terms as the basis of the agreement. However, you may prefer a formal building contract, such as the JCT Homeowner Contract or one from the Federation of Master Builders, for extra security.

With the contract signed and the builder appointed, you're ready to begin.

Jan Liberadzki BA Arch (Hons), MSc  
[www.jlda.co.uk](http://www.jlda.co.uk)

# Clubs, societies & sport

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## **Stonesfield Football Club**

If you are reading this, then we've both survived another Christmas, and the New Year is already a month old! Hope you are keeping warm. As ever at this point in the fledgling year it's all about clearing up the results from the tail end of last year and bringing in the new. The Firsts saw out the old year in style: a Raffy Rice hat-trick helped see off Kingham (6-0) in the second round of The Fred Ford. As expected, it was a one-sided affair as our boys made light work of what can sometimes be a tricky fixture. They also kept the momentum going in the league with two excellent wins at home to Eynsham AFC (5-1) and away at Bampton (3-1). An excellent end to a historic year sees them in 5th position in the league, 6 points off top spot but with three games 'in hand'. They've yet to play in 2026, so as it stands, they are in a very good position to retain their title: fingers crossed, all they have to do is win their games!

The Reserves have had a tough end to the old year and start of the new! They signed off 2025 with a disappointing loss (3-2) away at Charlbury in the league. The new year saw them host league leaders Leaffield Firsts, and their 'first-footers' plundered all three points with a 4-2 win. When you consider that Leaffield look like worthy Champions, even though we are at the half-way stage in the league, then I suppose you have to accept that at least our boys made them work for their win. The Reserves needed a morale-boost, and it duly arrived

in the second round of The Jack Busby against Chadlington. In a bad-tempered match that saw 5 players booked and a Chad player red-carded, a couple of well-taken goals by Jake Burden saw our heroes progress to the next round (2-1). While top spot in the league would appear to be beyond them (they are currently 4th), a second-place finish isn't beyond the realms of possibility, but they need to win most, if not all, of their remaining games. I am, as ever, hopeful!

I'll admit, I thought it wasn't going to happen this season, but The Fredo Committee has come out of cold storage and awarded the first Fredo of 2025/26. A hat-trick in an away fixture in the cup is always going to grab the headlines, but Raffy Rice has been threatening to do it all season. Raffy's goals subdued a spirited Kingham side who imagined a cup-upset was on the cards, but The Raffy fella ensured that was never going to happen. Another Fredo for The Combe Road: step forward Raffy, the first Fredo of the season is yours and richly deserved!

Tom Flanigan (891979)

## Stonesfield Gardening Club

I think as February is here we can start to ponder the new year in the garden, and the plans we might have – what worked well last year as well as learning from our mistakes.

In the White Horse pub garden we are thinking about what will survive if we have another dry summer, bearing in mind that we are all too busy to be up there watering every day, and what we can add for more colour. Will Barton does sterling service mowing the grass and we are hoping that the 'lawn' will recover after the hot, dry summer, the soggy winter and the heavy traffic!

For information, there is a new exhibition opening on 19 March at the Ashmolean Museum called *In Bloom: how plants changed our world*. 'This major new

exhibition takes visitors on a journey from Oxford to the farthest corners of the world and back, uncovering the global stories behind some of Britain's most beloved blooms – from roses and tulips to camellias and peonies.'

Our club AGM will be held in the St James' Centre on Monday 9 February, with a glass of wine as an incentive for attending. You will also be rewarded by a couple of interesting short talks, one by Tony Davis on the ten years he and Genny have been running A Blackbird Sang in the village and the other by Dr Lauren Daly on the latest research taking place at the Oxford Botanic Garden.

Diane Bates

Secretary Stonesfield Gardening Club

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

## Stonesfield Gardening Club

*Welcoming, friendly and sociable. Ideal for the non-gardener and the gardener.*

SGC membership offers you a range of benefits including:

- Free attendance to our talks
- Annual social & quiz evening
- Discounts at local garden centres

Membership for 2026 costs  
**£10.00** (or **£18.00 for a couple**  
at the same address).

Visitors welcome: £4/talk

### 2026 Events and talks

Feb 9	AGM & talk
March 9	Talk
April 25	Plant Sale
May 11	Talk
June 28	Open Gardens
July 13	Visit
Sept 14	Talk
Oct 12	Wine tasting & talk
Nov 9	Talk
Dec 14	Social & Quiz

See website for details

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



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## **Sports & Social Club**

We are back in full swing at the social club with pool, darts, hosting the quiz nights & dominoes. We have also had a few people show an interest in setting up an in-house crib league, so if you or anyone you know are interested please get in touch, whether picking up an old hobby or wanting to learn a new one; I'm sure you will be welcomed.

Unfortunately, we have had quite a turnover of staff over the Christmas period due to health and other commitments, therefore we are still advertising for staff. If you are interested please send your CV to [stonesfield.social@gmail.com](mailto:stonesfield.social@gmail.com)

Happy new year from all at SSSC.

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## **Woodstock Bowls Club**

Come along and try Bowls. A great way to meet people and have fun! Free coaching and equipment available, with the first three sessions free. Open sessions every Wednesday evening, 6-8pm. Indoor and outdoor bowling throughout the year; women's, men's, mixed league and friendly teams. Club socials and events are available to members. We're an inclusive club, with over 70 members of all ages and abilities. For more details, go to [www.woodstockbowls.co.uk](http://www.woodstockbowls.co.uk) or phone 01993 812325.

David Brown

### **STONESFIELD LUNCH CLUB**

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

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

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

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

# Church news

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## **Stonesfield Methodist Church**

### **Services for February**

- |    |      |   |
|----|------|---|
| 1  | 11am | David Sarbutts                                      |
| 8  | 11am | The Reverend Stephen Bywaters                       |
| 15 | 11am | The Reverend Andrew Biggs<br>Holy Communion Service |
| 22 | 11am | Andrew Maisey                                       |

A new year has begun its journey and with it my good wishes.

May 2026 bring happiness and peace-filled days, ever looking out for each other and for any that come our way.

A sincere thank you to everyone who supported the 2025 Bazaar. The afternoon was an enjoyable one, and the kind donations were greatly appreciated.

All are very welcome to the World Day of Prayer Service to be held on Friday 6 March at 2pm. The Service has been planned by women of Nigeria, a country suffering sad unrest right now, with many families struggling to survive without support.

Readers are needed for the Service, do get in touch if you wish to take part. The Service will be followed by light refreshments.

He leads me beside still waters.

He restores my soul.

Psalm 23:2-3

Kathleen Alb  rt (891733)

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## **New Church thought**

The church I belong to does not believe that faith, on its own, is enough. It needs to be confirmed in heart and mind by being linked to actual, useful living, based deep down on what we love.

This quote from Swedenborg's *Secrets of heaven* seems fitting for this particular time of year. 'A life of faith without love is like sunlight without warmth - the type of light that occurs in winter. ... Faith rising out of love, on the contrary, is like light from the sun in spring, when everything grows and flourishes.'

Winter has many uses, but even so... roll on the passing of winter and the change to spring!

Dale Morris

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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 – Lent**

Ash Wednesday falls on 18 February this year, and marks the beginning of the Christian season of Lent. After the death and resurrection of Jesus, the first Christians prepared for Easter with no more than a few days of fasting, but by the year 325AD the observance of Lent as a penitential period of forty days was well established. The choice of forty days followed the examples of Moses, Elijah and, of course, Jesus himself in fasting for that period. For those of us today who enjoy deliveries from Sainsbury's or frequent visits to the Co-op, the idea of spending six weeks deliberately 'going without' seems hard to comprehend. In the first few hundred years the fast was very strict, often with only one meal a day being eaten, and all meat, fish and dairy disallowed. In Europe, this strictness was relaxed after the 8th century, when fish and dairy products were gradually permitted, but even in the 15th Century it was expected that nothing would be eaten

until noon. At the start of Europe's Reformation, the Reformers publicly rejected the fasting which the church required, and some let it be known that they ate sausages in Lent as an act of defiance. Thereafter the people of Europe were divided about fasting (and much else) for several centuries. In the Church of England any kind of fasting is entirely optional, and in 1966 the Roman Catholic Church ruled that strict fasting was only required on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday. Christians have 'observed' Lent in different ways, but all Christians agree that outward devotions are only symbols of the desire to be in a spiritual state of humility and openness for the celebration of Easter.

Times have changed, and old religious practices and customs are no longer widely followed here. Yet we are as aware as ever that Easter is about God's grace, and the gift of abundant and eternal life in Jesus, the Saviour. So how might we appropriately prepare to remember this today? In our time, few people fast for religious reasons, but what, I wonder, can we each do to prepare our hearts and lives to be receptive to the message of life, to spiritual grace at Easter? I suspect there are many options, and perhaps the best will involve acts of kindness or generosity to others, because unless we can be truly generous to one another, it will be hard for us to accept that God's gift of abundant life in Jesus Christ has been given to us so freely.

Revd Ralph Williamson - Rector

## **Church services:**

### **Sunday 1 February [Candlemas]**

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

### **Sunday 8 February [2nd Sunday before Lent]**

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

### **Sunday 15 February [Sunday next before Lent]**

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

### **Ash Wednesday 18 February**

9.30am	Stonesfield	Holy Communion with ashing
11am	Combe	Holy Communion with ashing

### **Sunday 22 February [Lent 1]**

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

### **Wednesdays**

9.30am	Stonesfield	Holy Communion (4th, 18th, 25th); Morning Prayer (11th)
11am	Combe	Morning Prayer (4th), Holy Communion (18th)

## **Stonesfield and Combe Lent Group**

Everyone is very welcome to join in 5 special Lent Thursday afternoon meetings (weekly from 26 February) – in the St James' Centre, 2.30pm – 4pm.

Each Lent, we delve into a new aspect of Christian faith, and this year we're looking at the Eucharist - or Holy Communion.

## Roman Catholic Worship

### Good Intentions

‘Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters.’ Colossians 3:23

By now in February all those new year resolutions might have fallen away; we may have had every good intention to behave differently, filled with strong motivation, but sustaining the effort is often too much. The difficulty is that motivation, as an emotion, can fluctuate and vary. However, an intention is more about the deliberate aim with action and a focus and an articulated outcome and therefore perhaps more achievable.

As Christians our motivation is about aligning ourselves with God’s purpose, but to achieve that is how we live our lives as the journey to accomplishing that. Good intentions can require deep self-examination about motive. We can see in the Old and New Testaments the recognition of balancing the tension between what we want and what God may require of us and how that is demonstrated through behaviour:

‘A person may think their own ways are right, but the Lord weighs the heart.’  
Proverbs 21:2

‘I the Lord search the heart and examine the mind, to reward each person according to their conduct, according to what their deeds deserve.’ Jeremiah 17:10

Our motivation lays the groundwork for our intentions, which in turn become actions. It serves as a reminder that while we may aim to do good, the motivation behind those actions matters substantially. The Gospels help us to learn how our

intentions are often judged not only on their outcomes but on the heartfelt motivations.

‘But the things that come out of a person’s mouth come from the heart, and these defile them.’ Matthew 15:18

‘If I give away all my possessions, and if I give over my body to hardship that I may boast, but do not have love, I gain nothing.’  
1 Corinthians 13:3

‘Serve wholeheartedly, as if you were serving the Lord, not people.’  
Ephesians 6:7

### Holy Mass at St Teresa’s, Charlbury

Sunday 9.15am

Wednesdays and Fridays 9.15am

For parish updates, any further information and further support,  
[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)

### St Teresa’s Charlbury Parish Lunch Party

You are warmly invited to join us for a parish lunch party on Saturday 14 February, 12.30-2.30pm.

**Venue:** Charlbury Memorial Hall **Cost:** £10 per ticket for adults (includes a two course lunch, wine, soft drinks), children under 16 go free

This is the parish’s major fundraising event for Aid to the Church in Need – a charitable organization which supports persecuted Christians worldwide.

To book your place please contact Mike Flanagan on  
[mike.flanagan@clothesource.info](mailto:mike.flanagan@clothesource.info)

Roman Catholic Community in Stonesfield



Bespoke massage treatment and products using essential oils for women and children from my relaxing aromatherapy room in Stonesfield

- Parking
- evening appointment
- personal service
- loyalty scheme

For help with anxiety/depression/sleep problems and hormonal issues

Contact Lucy Martin 07552 653000

Lavenderend8@gmail.com

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