



Issue No 568 May 2026

## The Spring Show



Welcome to Stonesfield: Richard Morris

The White Horse Spring Show opened last month and features a great variety of work by some 20 artists, several of whom have not shown at the pub before.

Exhibits include paintings from Paul Bates, Kerry Burniston, Robin Letchford, Mister Cubes, Sophie Shearer and Rachael Sherlaw-Johnson; prints from Stuart Parker; etchings by Jenny Lines; photo-montage by Richard Morris; textile art from Ann Lowe; botanical drawing by Diana Parker Letchford; mixed media work by Claire Fyfe-Jackson; woodblock prints from Horatio Fiendish; collage by John Taylor and Trisha Williams; illustrated children's poetry by Juliet and John Taylor; and photography by Diane

Bates, Linda Bull and Skye Drew. Something for everyone!

The exhibition period encompasses the Oxfordshire Artweeks festival which runs across the county from 2-25 May, with North & West Oxfordshire's designated week being 9-17 May.

Within the village, Hannelore Meinhold-Morgan (art pottery - p20) and Claire Fyfe-Jackson (mixed media and recycled metalwork - p10 & 20) will be opening their studios on the weekends of our designated week.

Continued on p5

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## Dates for your Diary - May

1-3	Woodstock Bookshop Festival		(see News section)
1,8,15,22	Baby & Toddler	Village Hall	10am-12 noon
1-31	Pics @ Pub: Spring Show	The White Horse	pub hours
4,7,11,14	Taekwondo	Village Hall	5.30-6.30pm
4,11,18,25	Monday Coffee	St James' Centre	10-11.30am
4,11,18,25	Hannah Bathe HIIT	Village Hall	7-7.45pm
4,11,18,25	Baby & Me Postnatal Yoga	Village Hall	10-11.15am
4,11,18,25	Bump & Me Antenatal Yoga	Village Hall	7.30-8.30pm
4,25	Monday Bank Holiday - pub open	The White Horse	11.30am-7pm
5,12,19	Stonesfield Social	Village Hall	5-6.30pm
5,12,19,26	Zumba	Village Hall	7-8pm
5,12,19,26	Zumba Strong	Village Hall	8-9pm
5,26	Tuesday - pub closed	The White Horse	
6	Parish Council Meeting	Village Hall	7pm
6	Annual Parish Council Meeting	Village Hall	7.30-8.30pm
6,13,20,27	Folk Dancing	Village Hall	7.45-10pm
6,13,20,27	Pilates	Village Hall	9.30-10.45am
6,13,20,27	Hannah Bathe Strength & Condition	Village Hall	7-7.45pm
7,14,21,28	Upholstery Group	Village Hall	9.30am-12.30pm
7,14,21,28	Hannah Bathe Strength & Condition	Village Hall	7-7.45pm
7,14,21,28	Book Break	Stonesfield Library	12.30-2pm
9-17	Oxfordshire Artweeks	North & West Oxfordshire	(p20)
10	National Mills Weekend	Combe Mill	10.30am-4.30pm
11	Stonesfield Gardening Club	St James' Centre	7.30pm
12	Folk session	The White Horse	8pm
12,19	Seniors Café	The White Horse	3-4pm
12,26	Quiz Night	Sports & Social Club	8pm

**Continued on p4**

## Dates for your Diary - May

14	Stonesfield Players AGM	St James' Centre	8pm
15	Summer Quiz Evening	St James' Centre	6pm
16	Music: Dead Silence	Sports & Social Club	8.30pm
17	Bridewell Gardens Open Day	Wilcote	11am-4pm
18,21,25,28	Taekwondo	Village Hall	5.30-6.30pm
19	Quiz Night	The White Horse	8pm
27	Charity Bingo	Sports & Social Club	7pm
30,31	Roman Villa Open Day	North Leigh	11am-5pm

## June

2	Quiz Night	The White Horse	8pm
6	Repair Café	Village Hall	10am-2pm
25-27	Stonesfield Players: Mercy of Sisters	(booking necessary - see p8)	

## Caption Competition results

Many thanks to all of you who sent in responses to our caption competition for the photograph (below) which appeared in April's *Slate*.



No prizes, but here are some of the best.

- It wasn't just the coat that came out of the closet that night Paul's daughter
- The new bear species spotted locally has been named *Orsi major* by David Attenborough Tony Davis
- Wow, Melania has really let herself go... Rhian Griffiths
- Aunt Sally's game! Anna Pearson
- Looking 'chirpy' Paul! J P Orsi
- Paul celebrates after being selected to star in RuPaul's Drag Race Tony Davis

Thank you to Paul Orsi who allowed the photograph to be used.

Another competition in due course!

Paul & Diane Bates, Publishers  
publisher@stonesfieldslate.uk

# Notices & news

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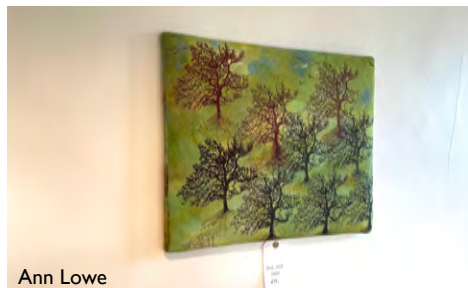
## Monday Bank Holiday Coffee

There are two bank holidays in May and we will be serving complimentary coffee in the St James' Centre on both days. Why not come and join us? 10-11.30am on 4 and 25 May.

Mary Wells

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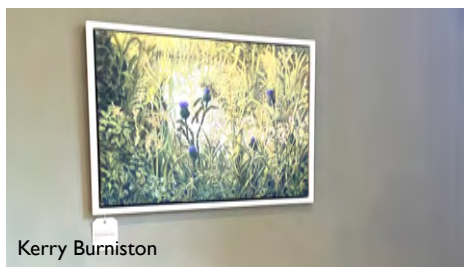
## The Spring Show (cont from p1)



### Stonesfield artists out and about.

Some of our artists and craftspeople are showing their work further afield: Claire will be showing her work alongside Fredrica Craig, Genny Early and Tony Davis at the group event Art More Lovely at Heyford House in Lower Heyford; Jenny will be showing at Oxford Printmakers Cooperative in Oxford; Ann will be participating in Oxford Textile Artists' event at the Oxfordshire Museum in Woodstock; and Joseph Bull is exhibiting his ceramics, together with Jynsym Ong, at Radley College, Abingdon, on 5-7 and 12-14 May. Venue opening days and times can be found at [www.artweeks.org](http://www.artweeks.org).

Looking ahead to future events at the White Horse, the period June to mid-July



will be devoted to two of our newcomers who will be exhibiting a large body of their work for the first time.

If you would be interested in showing your work later in the year, please do get in touch with us via the email address below.

Trisha Williams for Pictures @ The Pub  
([triywnwil003@gmail.com](mailto:triywnwil003@gmail.com))

Team: Kerry Burniston, Jenny Lines, Ann Lowe and Trisha Williams

Claire Renshaw for The White Horse  
Community Pub

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## Calling all amateur pianists!

Are you interested in joining a piano meet-up group? The group would meet once a month or on alternate months to share their interest in piano music and performance. At each meeting participants would be invited to perform a piece they are working on. It will be a very informal atmosphere and all abilities will be welcome. Location would be my home in Combe - tea, biscuits and piano provided! Please email me.

Jeremy Dwight  
[jeremydwright@hotmail.com](mailto:jeremydwright@hotmail.com)

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## Community & Repair Café



The next Community & Repair Café will be held on Saturday 6 June in Stonesfield Village Hall - 10am-2pm.

The last Repair Café was well attended and we repaired or sharpened 72kg of goods so we are helping reduce or delay waste as well as restoring all manner of items to working order and, at the same time, serving the community. We are looking for anyone who would like to join the team; there are a variety of connected tasks from publicity and reception to carrying out repairs. If you have skills to offer, please contact [stonesfieldrepaircafe@gmail.com](mailto:stonesfieldrepaircafe@gmail.com).

Please bring your items before 11.30 to ensure you will be seen and please restrict the number of things you bring to no more than three which are for your personal use only. If you can, please let us know what you are bringing via the Gmail address below. The Community Café team will be ready to welcome you from 10am with tea, coffee and a wide selection of cakes, followed by a light lunch served from 12 noon until 2pm.

Mike Sofroniou and Susan Rudlin  
[mikesofroniou@gmail.com](mailto:mikesofroniou@gmail.com)

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## Stonesfield Players Safari Supper

The Stonesfield Players are holding another Safari Supper on Saturday 18 July at 7pm. Do join us for an evening of gastronomic delights and lots of fun, all mingled with a wander around the village to a different venue for each course.

The evening will begin at The Old Bakery. Come along and enjoy a four-course meal, ending together for cheese and biscuits. All are welcome. If anyone is interested in hosting please get in touch.

Attendance is by booking only. Tickets are £19.50 per person and can be booked with Ros Mengech by Friday 10 July.

Ros Mengech (07852 584688)  
[ros\\_mengech@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:ros_mengech@yahoo.co.uk)

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## Stonesfield Players AGM

Please come along and support your local Players AGM on 14 May at 8pm at the St James' Centre.

We will be reviewing our year and updating you on our plans for 2026/27.

We are looking for new committee members; in particular we are seeking people who have experience (or would like to increase their experience and skills) in publicity/social media or website management. If you would like to know more please contact us: [stonesfieldplayers@gmail.com](mailto:stonesfieldplayers@gmail.com)

We are a friendly and supportive group who love to support and/or perform with the Players. We look forward to seeing you on 14 May!

Sandy Hayes, Chair  
Stonesfield Players

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## Stonesfield Tree Planters

### An update after one of the hottest and driest years

In the autumn of 2022 we planted 91 trees along the Stonesfield Straight and to date we have had help with the planting from 62 volunteers and the Forest School (who planted 18 wych elms grown from seed collected in Baggs Bottom). In total we have now planted 1,592 trees in and around Stonesfield, sponsored 1,600 trees in a tropical forest in Madagascar and installed the Cotswold National Landscape stone on the Straight. Many thanks to everyone who has so generously contributed and been involved.



CNL stone installed by your donations

Surveying the trees on the Straight last month, we are able to report that we have had a 15% loss; the hope was to keep loss at under 20% so this is better than expected after one of the driest and hottest years on record, and is testament to the preparatory work done before planting.

Interestingly, as one goes out along the Straight, the trees on the right side had a higher loss than those on the left side and the trees on the left side have grown faster and taller (so far). It is noticeable that tree

Preparing to plant on the Straight



loss is greater if there is local blackthorn. The small leaf lime trees (30 planted) have the best survival rate and are just coming out of their protective sleeves, so we can expect more red ribbons this autumn.

This planting season we have planted 36 trees including 22 goat and grey willow trees, known as sallows, in the field to the right as one goes down Combe Road. Goat willows have early blossom, which is a timely banquet for bees. Willows have 23 associated aphid species, 452 invertebrate species (oaks have 423) and 160 lichens thrive on willow. Footman moths thrive on lichens and we have recorded four footman moth species in the last year. Willows are undoubtedly key members of any local ecosystem.

Hopefully we will have a better year for trees and more will appear above the hedge line on the Stonesfield Straight.

John Sampson

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## The Stonesfield Players perform *Mercy of Sisters*



**Thursday 25 - Saturday 27 June**

Our evening begins with pre-performance (and interval) prosecco served in the pretty garden of the St James' Centre. At 7.30pm the Players will present *Mercy of Sisters* by Grace Bartle, a dark comedy-drama centred around a 50th birthday party, where simmering sibling rivalry is set to explode!

Tickets are available from Suriya Express or can be bought online at [www.buytickets.at/thestonesfieldplayers2/2164687](http://www.buytickets.at/thestonesfieldplayers2/2164687)



Box Office for enquiries: 07976 619960

Please note that the play contains adult content and is not suitable for under-14s.

Chris Bartle

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## Summer Quiz Evening

Our Summer Quiz Evening will take place on Friday 15 May, 6pm, at the St James' Centre.

It's time for another evening of fun and good company! Bring your family, friends, or come on your own - everyone very welcome. Buffet supper 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 (898757)

Churchwarden

[stonesfield@stonesfieldparishchurch.org](mailto:stonesfield@stonesfieldparishchurch.org)

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## Lavender End Aromatherapy

Hello, I'm Lucy, the face behind Lavender End Aromatherapy here in Stonesfield. Now just over a year into my journey as a qualified aromatherapist, I'd love to share a little more about what I offer and how I can support you.

I provide bespoke aromatherapy massage treatments exclusively for women, designed to nurture both body and mind. Every session begins with a complimentary consultation, allowing me to create a personalised blend of essential oils tailored specifically to your needs. From there, all you need to do is relax, unwind, and let the stresses of daily life melt away.

My treatments can support a wide range of concerns, including stress and anxiety, hormonal imbalances, muscular aches and pains, and overall relaxation and wellbeing. I aim to create a calm, welcoming space where you can truly switch off and restore balance.

I offer a loyalty card scheme for returning clients, convenient parking, and a

treatment room with full accessibility. Gift vouchers are also available, along with a small range of handmade aromatherapy products, including bath salts, rollerballs, and my ever-popular dog biscuits. Evening appointments are available to fit around busy schedules.

Alongside my work as an aromatherapist, I am also a fully qualified early years teacher. Moving forward, I will be offering small-group relaxation sessions for children (up to four per group), designed to support anxiety, improve sleep, and help build emotional resilience in a gentle and nurturing environment.

Finally, I'd like to say a heartfelt thank you to everyone who has supported my business over the past year - it truly means so much. If you feel in need of some time to relax, reset and recharge, I would love to hear from you.

Lucy Martin (07552 653000)  
lavenderend8@gmail.com

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**White Horse news**

First of all, I would like to thank everyone for their continued support as we continue to grow and provide you with the best pub we can. Can you believe it's been nearly two years already? I would also like to say a big thank you to my team for their hard work and effort. It never goes unnoticed and I am very lucky to have you all.

Another positive step forward is that this year we have again been awarded third place in CAMRA's North Oxon Pub of the Year. A nice way to glide into Spring. A massive thank you to everyone who voted for us.

Our annual Easter Bunny Hunt is nearly complete; there are still a few out there so

keep your eyes peeled and if you find one bring it to the pub to exchange for a prize. There are prizes for both adults and children.

I am looking to do some more jazz evenings and live music over the coming months so keep an eye on our website and socials for full details.

The Aunt Sally pitch is complete and available to use. We have a team who will be playing in the Wychwood League. Home matches are every other Thursday night at 8.30pm so why not come down and show your support - you never know, you may want to join us or just have a go through the summer months. (See p28 for result of inaugural match)

Just a reminder that we will be open on the May bank holidays, Monday 4 and Monday 25 May – bar open 11.30am-7pm and food served 12 noon-3pm - and we will be closed on Tuesday 5 and Tuesday 26 May.

Keep an eye on our socials for more upcoming deals and events.

We look forward to seeing you soon.

Craig Tipper, The White Horse  
info@thewhitehorsestonesfield.com / 01993 672059 /

Facebook – The White Horse pub Stonesfield  
Instagram – thewhitehorsestonesfield14  
www.thewhitehorsestonesfield.com

<p><b>Local Private Carer available</b> Monday-Friday, Hourly rate Experienced, reliable, trustworthy and kind-hearted <b>Victoria 07930 342087</b></p>
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## **St James' Centre – available for hire**

A reminder that St James' Centre (opposite the school) is available for hire - a perfect venue for family gatherings, children's parties, meetings, workshops, fitness groups, fundraising ventures etc. The Centre offers two light, spacious rooms, with a well-equipped kitchen and beautiful garden. If you would like to have a look round, need further information, or wish to book, please email me.

Ruth Sellar

St James' Centre Bookings Administrator

sjsbookings@gmail.com

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## **Friends of Stonesfield School**

**Save the date for the fete!** Saturday 20 June on the School Field! If you would like a stall, we have plenty of space. Please email us at [info@fossteam.org](mailto:info@fossteam.org). Thank you!

Friends of Stonesfield School

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## **Artweeks: Open Studio in Stonesfield**

Claire Fyfe-Jackson will be exhibiting at Sarts Cottage, The Ridings, opening on Saturday and Sunday 9 and 10 May, and 16 and 17 May, 11am-6pm. The exhibition is a continuation of the exploration of hedgerows, verges and odd corners of the Oxfordshire, Suffolk and Cornish countryside and her garden using mixed media, print and sculptures of recycled metal. There will also be a jewellery sale.

[clairepote16@hotmail.com](mailto:clairepote16@hotmail.com)

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

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## **Stonesfield Village Hall news**

It's all change at the Village Hall! Our very own Handy Andy has started decorating and doing all the little maintenance jobs needed, and after the horrific wrong colour incident we are now starting to look much better. Lots more to follow with some exciting ideas!

April was another busy month with the Easter holiday so some of our regular classes had a break. This will also be the case for May as we are lucky to have two bank holidays and half term at the end of the month.

Pickleball! Are you interested in some pickleball coaching? Playing open games? We are lucky to have secured Miles who will be running some extra sessions - more information is on p29.. Do get in touch if you are interested at [info@stonesfieldvillagehall.com](mailto:info@stonesfieldvillagehall.com)

The Hall and Club Room are a great hire for parties, events, training and meetings with a well-stocked kitchen to cater for up to 100 people, and an alcohol licence. Hire charges start at £9.20 per hour. Please see our website – booking is easy and the calendar and booking is all online.

Don't forget the Community Café slots for 2026 are available for local groups to fundraise on the first Saturday of each month.

Claire Renshaw

Stonesfield Village Hall Bookings

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

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

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## Folk Festival



Morris dancers in Broad St

The Oxford Folk Festival took place one weekend in April when the city was full of morris dancers and musicians.

Our very own Henderson Hooper played a set at Modern Art Oxford, well supported by groupies from Stonesfield.



Nick & Judith at MAC

A couple of days later they were in action again, this time at the monthly folk get-together at the White Horse, with another enthusiastic audience and help from other local music makers.

If you sing or play an instrument and would like to join in the fun just come along on the night. Next date 12 May from 8 pm.

Diane Bates

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## The Woodstock Bookshop Festival

The early May bank holiday weekend celebrates the second year of the Woodstock Bookshop Festival. Run by bookshop staff and local volunteers, the festival in its current format is a mix of fiction, poetry, science, the arts, family-friendly events, and music. Events take place in a variety of town centre venues including the Town Hall, the Oxfordshire Museum, Hampers Delicatessen, St Mary Magdalene Church and St Hugh's Centre. The team at the Woodstock Bookshop are grateful to all these neighbours for their support, as well as to everyone in the local community who has helped with planning, organising and taking part.

This year's festival begins on Friday 1 May with an evening of poetry led by local poet Esther Lay. On Saturday 2 May there will be a bonanza of children's and family events, including readings by best-selling children's author Anna Kemp, craft activities led by Denise Beaumont of *Alice the Palace Postwoman* fame, and a chance for older children to hear exciting *Propellor Man* tales with authors Gerard Lewis and Lizzie Shannon-Little. Saturday afternoon offers a deep dive into science with field-leading speakers on topics such as proteins, plant genomes and medical advances in heart and brain conditions. Take your seat in the Town Hall to hear more! For fans of crime fiction, Saturday evening has a treat in store, as celebrated local authors Cara Hunter and Simon Mason join forces with new crime writer Anna Beer. On the afternoon of Sunday 3 May a performance by Oxford School of Drama is followed by interviews with distinguished local authors Melanie and Ross King. To round off the festival with a

dose of beautiful classical music, on Sunday evening Maria Razumovskaya will perform piano pieces by Franz Schubert.

Tickets are available from [www.ticketsource.co.uk](http://www.ticketsource.co.uk), via the website [www.woodstockbookshop.co.uk](http://www.woodstockbookshop.co.uk), or on the door (subject to availability).

Alison Kelly

The Woodstock Bookshop

## **North Leigh Roman Villa Open Days**

North Leigh Roman Villa Volunteers have announced Open Days in 2026 when the villa's 4th century mosaic will be open to the public. The mosaic building will be open 11am to 5pm on the following dates:

Saturdays and Sundays:

30 and 31 May

27 and 28 June

25 and 26 July

8 and 9 August

22 and 23 August

19 and 20 September

For more details about access to the site and its history, please visit:

[www.english-heritage.org.uk/visit/places/north-leigh-roman-villa/](http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/visit/places/north-leigh-roman-villa/)

Follow us on X: @villa\_north or Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/northleighromanvilla>

To join Friends of North Leigh Roman Villa or to arrange a special opening, please email: [nlrvols@gmail.com](mailto:nlrsvols@gmail.com)

Matthew

North Leigh Roman Villa Volunteers

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## **Combe Mill**

Combe Mill is a late 19th century Grade II listed water mill on the River Evenlode which was the workshop for the Blenheim Palace estate. It has a steam beam engine, a restored waterwheel, line shafting, a collection of tower clocks and all the machinery runs as it used to in its day.

On Saturday 9 May Banbury Amateur Radio Club will be in attendance. The mill will not be 'in steam' but is open for self-guided tours.

On Sunday 10 May, 10.30am-4.30pm, the Mill will be open 'in steam' for National Mills Weekend. All machinery will be working and demonstrated by our volunteers. The Tea Room will be open for refreshments to enjoy in the picnic area by the river, and there will be tombola and a barbeque. Dogs are most welcome. Free parking.

'In steam days': Admission: adults £9.50, seniors £8.50 and children free. Please ask about Gift Aid in order to increase your donation.

Combe Mill is open every Wednesday, 10.30am-3.30pm, until the end of October for self-guided tours with volunteers on hand to talk about Combe Mill and its history. Tea room open. Admission: adults £6, seniors £5 and children free.

Margaret Gruber (01993 358694)

Combe Mill Society [www.combemill.org](http://www.combemill.org)

Combe Mill, Blenheim Palace Sawmills, Combe, OX29 8ET

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## Combe Women's Institute

We would like to extend our thanks to Martin Conway for his fascinating talk on *Women of the Resistance*. It was an engaging and thought-provoking evening, and members greatly appreciated learning more about the important - and sometimes underestimated - role women played during the war years.

As we begin a new financial year, we are delighted to welcome 28 members who have signed up to enjoy the many benefits of WI membership. It's wonderful to see our community growing in line with the WI's core principles of friendship, tolerance, learning, and community spirit.

At our Annual Meeting in March, Sally was re-elected as President. We are also pleased to confirm Diane as Vice-President, Kathleen as Treasurer, and Julia as Secretary.

Our regular meetings are held on the second Monday of each month at the Reading Room in Combe, 7:30-9:30pm. Alongside these, members can also take part in:

- A monthly walking group, offering moderate countryside walks in the local area
- A social group, meeting on the last Thursday of each month for outings to places of interest - both groups involve tea and cake!

The WI is open to all women aged 18 and over. If you're curious about joining, you are very welcome to attend a meeting as a visitor for a suggested donation of £8.

Please note that space at the Reading Room is limited, so if you would like to visit, we recommend getting in touch

beforehand. We will always do our best to accommodate you.

Our next meeting is on Monday 11 May when Steven Bruce will be joining us to share stories from the world of buying and selling at auction. We look forward to seeing you there for what promises to be an entertaining evening.

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

Combe Connect 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)

**COMBE VILLAGE FESTIVAL**

★ SATURDAY 6<sup>TH</sup> JUNE ★

JUNIOR FOOTBALL TOURNAMENT FROM 9.30AM  
★★★  
BREAKFAST BAPS, TEA & COFFEE IN THE MORNING  
★★★  
BBQ & BAR OPEN FROM MIDDAY UNTIL LATE  
★★★  
OVER 35'S FOOTBALL TOURNAMENT FROM 1PM  
★★★  
LIVE MUSIC

★  ★  ★

BEER FESTIVAL WITH LOCAL BEERS

★  ★  ★  ★  ★  ★

TIMINGS SUBJECT TO CHANGE

# JULY 11<sup>TH</sup> & 12<sup>TH</sup>

**SATURDAY**  
12 - LATE

**SUNDAY**  
12 - 8PM



**4<sup>th</sup>**  
**ANNUAL FUNDRAISER FOR MND**

**£10 PER DAY PER PERSON**

**£5 12-17 YEARS, UNDER 12s FREE**



**DRESS IN YOUR BEST FESTIVAL ATTIRE**

**TICKETS ARE ESSENTIAL CONTACT THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH TO PURCHASE ACCOMMODATION AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST PUBLIC TRANSPORT IS ADVISED - PARKING IS LIMITED**



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## Open days at Bridewell Gardens

Bridewell Gardens provides a mental health recovery service for West Oxfordshire, supporting people who have experienced serious mental illness. Bridewell is a creative and inspiring walled garden and vineyard where people can find hope in recovery through gardening and working with nature.

In the words of one of our former gardeners: 'A small mental health charity with muddy paths, patient people, growing things - and absolutely no pressure to pretend everything's fine when it isn't.'

This year the walled garden and vineyard are open to the public for Open Days (11am-4pm) on:

17 May

14 June

6 September

We have a pop-up café in the garden serving tea and cake, high quality plants for sale, home-produced jams and chutneys, and our acclaimed sparkling wine.

Make a day of it, bring a picnic blanket and relax in the vineyard with friends and family. Dogs on leads are very welcome and families and children are encouraged to explore the site.

No booking required. There is a suggested donation of £5 per person.

Rachel Green

Bridewell Gardens, The Walled Garden,  
Wilcote, Oxfordshire OX7 3DT

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## Contacting *The Stonesfield Slate*

### 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.

### A reminder of *The Slate* email addresses.

To submit an **article**, please email **editor@stonesfieldslate.uk**. – deadline 15th of the month for the next month's issue.

To **advertise** – deadline 10th of the month for the next month's issue, or for general enquiries please email **publisher@stonesfieldslate.uk**

### No email?

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.

Paul & Diane Bates, Publishers  
publisher@stonesfieldslate.uk

The Editor

editor@stonesfieldslate.uk

# Politics & local affairs

## Stonesfield Parish Council

### April Meeting Report

The Parish Council met on Wednesday 1 April at Stonesfield Village Hall, with Councillors discussing local planning matters, finances, governance and updates from County and District Councillors.

### Planning matters

Councillors considered recent planning applications affecting the village. No objections were raised to:

- Alterations to dormer windows at Austins Farm, and
- A proposed detached garden office and TV room at 2 Busby Close.



Do you care about your village and want to help shape its future?

Now's your chance to get involved, share your ideas and represent your community.

- No experience needed
- Just a passion for Stonesfield and a willingness to help

Join us and make a real difference.

Interested? Get in touch with Kay the Parish Clerk, [clerk@stonesfield-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@stonesfield-pc.gov.uk)

Be heard. Be involved. Be part of Stonesfield's future.

### Councillor vacancies

The Council noted that there are currently three vacancies for Parish Councillors. No applications have yet been received, and the positions therefore remain open.

Residents are warmly encouraged to consider joining the Parish Council to help represent their village and have a direct say in local decisions; we're a friendly and supportive bunch, so please come and join us!

### County and District Council updates

County Councillor Andy Graham reported ongoing work to address potholes around the village, noting that several repairs have already been completed. He also highlighted:

- A new County flood mitigation grant scheme, offering up to £25,000 for parish-level projects.
- Issues around drainage works and the importance of protecting landowners and the environment.
- Free bus fares at Oxford Park & Ride sites until the end of May.

District Councillor Genny Early updated the Council on a number of wider issues, including:

- Concerns raised by West Oxfordshire District Council over proposed national planning reforms and their potential impact on local decision-making and environmental standards.

- Action being taken in response to Thames Water’s sewage discharges.
- New community safety work, particularly projects addressing domestic abuse and violence against women and girls, with a focus on challenges faced in rural areas.

**Parish Council Business**

- Councillors approved the minutes from the March meeting.
- The Actions Register was reviewed and updated.
- Financial payments were approved, including routine costs such as staffing, training, membership fees, software services and churchyard maintenance.
- A proposed new Parish Council logo was discussed. Councillors felt the design was too similar to the village football club’s emblem and agreed that an alternative design should be developed.
- Progress on the Neighbourhood Plan was noted. The Council agreed that the Neighbourhood Plan Working Group would respond to queries raised by the independent examiner.

**Governance and Policies**

Councillors reviewed a wide range of governance documents and policies, including standing orders, financial regulations, and policies covering data protection, biodiversity, and information security. These will be formally adopted at the Annual Meeting in May, with some additional clarification added to the Biodiversity Policy.

**Looking Ahead**

Items agreed for discussion at the next meeting include:

- Election of Chair and Vice Chair

- Review of policies and financial arrangements
- Appointments to council roles and working groups
- Setting the meeting schedule for the coming year

**Next Meetings**

The next **Full Council Meeting** will take place at Stonesfield Village Hall on **Wednesday 6 May 2026 at 7pm**, followed by the **Annual Parish Meeting at 7.30pm**. Residents are warmly encouraged to attend.

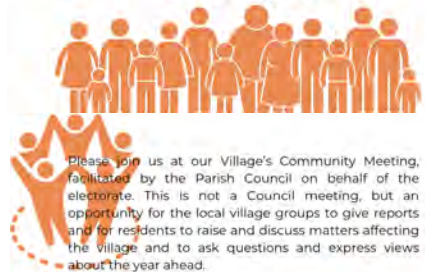
Kay Linnington, Parish Clerk  
 clerk@pcstonesfield.uk

**Annual Parish Meeting**

**6 May 2026 at 7.30pm  
 Stonesfield Village Hall**

You are invited to Stonesfield’s Annual Parish Meeting! hosted by Stonesfield Parish Council, this is not a Council meeting, but a chance for residents to raise and discuss matters affecting the village and to ask questions.

Refreshments will be provided.



The Chair will open the meeting. The Parish Council will present brief reports to let you know what the Council has been working on for the last year and its future plans. The Chair will then invite others to give their reports.

If you have any questions you would like to raise it would be helpful if they could be submitted in advance of the meeting. Submit your questions via email to our Parish Clerk, Kay - [clerk@stonesfield.pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@stonesfield.pc.gov.uk)



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## **Neighbourhood Plan update**

The Stonesfield Neighbourhood Plan is proceeding to the next stage following the six-week public consultation organised by the West Oxfordshire District Council under Regulation 16 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations (2012). An independent examiner has been appointed; he has studied the draft Plan and all its supporting documents, and visited Stonesfield to take a look at specific issues and locations.

The examiner has raised a number of questions, for which responses are currently being prepared by the Steering Group. He will then prepare a fact check report and a final report to the District Council and the Parish Council. The final report is likely to ask for a number of modifications to the Plan, and when these have been implemented he will recommend that the WODC organises a referendum for Stonesfield residents.

If more than 50% of those voting in the referendum vote 'yes', then the Neighbourhood Plan becomes part of the statutory development plan.

Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

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## **West Oxfordshire District Council**

### **Planning processes**

West Oxfordshire District Council (WODC) has responded to a Government consultation on proposed changes to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) highlighting significant concerns: -nature recovery and climate resilience are treated as secondary considerations rather than fundamental planning principles; nationally set planning rules will lose the

value of local input to improve building developments; and local plans must continue to play a strong role in shaping development at the local level, reflecting the unique needs and circumstances of individual areas. This includes safeguarding net zero energy standards at Salt Cross Garden Village.

### **Thames Water**

Following the 'Dirty Business' docudrama in February, featuring Ash Smith and Peter Hammond from Windrush Against Sewage Pollution (WASP), highlighting the large-scale release of untreated sewage to our rivers, WODC Councillors have asked the Leader to write to the Prime Minister to ask that Thames Water be brought back into a special administration regime [SAR] and then some form of non-profit, public ownership; and also to request that Thames Water report on a quarterly basis to WODC on how much raw sewage has been pumped into West Oxfordshire rivers and the progress towards preventing this. Please consider signing the Windrush Against Sewage Pollution (WASP) petition for the UK Government: Hold a referendum to bring the water industry into public ownership. [www.petition.parliament.uk/petitions/762640](http://www.petition.parliament.uk/petitions/762640)

### **Community Safety**

West Oxfordshire Community Safety Partnership (WOCSP) brings together local organisations with a shared goal of creating safer communities in which to live, work and visit. They work to prevent and reduce crime, disorder and fear of crime, and to develop safer communities. Among the priorities for 2024-2027 is work to address Domestic Abuse and Violence Against Women and Girls. The

Council's Youth Development officer, the Violence Against Women and Girls Coordinator and a small subgroup has designed a theatre-based intervention and secured significant funding from the Council. Domestic abuse in rural areas can be distinctly different from abuse in urban settings. It lasts longer, policing is largely inadequate, and rurality and isolation can be deliberately used as weapons by abusers. Support services are scarce – less available, less visible and less effective. For more information, please read: *Captive & Controlled: Domestic Abuse in Rural Areas*. **If you need help** and would like to talk to someone please contact the National Domestic Violence Helpline website or call the Freephone Helpline on 0808 2000 247.

Genny Early, District Councillor  
genny.early@westoxon.gov.uk

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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.

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)

Deanna Asplundh  
Stonesfield Neighbourhood Watch  
Coordinator

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

## 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)

# Education, culture & more

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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

\* Closed Bank Holiday Mondays

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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## Oxfordshire Artweeks 2-26 May

More than 60 venues in and within five miles of Stonesfield will welcome you in during the second week of Oxfordshire Artweeks, from 9-17 May.

In Stonesfield, Hannelore Meinhold-Morgan's Boot Barn Pottery, with its decorative, functional and often surprising pottery inspired by life's natural wonders, is one of two perennially popular open



Hannelore Meinhold-Morgan

studios. The other is the home gallery of Claire Fyfe- Jackson whose delicate mixed media paintings and prints, and stylised recycled metal flowers in warm and coloured tones with touches of text, and perfect for vintage bottles, are all inspired



Claire Fyfe-Jackson

by the Oxfordshire countryside and her Stonesfield garden.

Further afield Kingfisher Studios, Kidlington, promises a large and varied exhibition with art and creations by nine artists and makers ranging from large mixed media paintings and homely pottery to silver jewellery and designs in contemporary stitch.

Here, for example, Sarah Roche uses the process of wet felting to 'paint' the beauty around her and Natalia Podpora creates delicate intricate papercuts of curving leaves, organic shapes, and hints of human faces and figures.

In Wootton-by-Woodstock, Tabitha Grove draws on her background as a costumier and a performer. In Woodstock itself, St Mary Magdalene Church will be packed with artists and an extensive range of artworks across diverse media, including photography that shows local views in intriguing light and colour, bold collage, ceramics inspired by ammonites, and much more. Directly opposite, in the Oxfordshire Museum, Oxford Textile Artists are presenting *Reflections* - an exciting variety of very different works all created with fabrics and stitching, whilst in the neighbouring SOFO Museum artists Anita Joice and Pippa Hetherington explore *The River Boundary*.

Katie Hellon is in North Leigh and is exhibiting drawing and an installation in her newly-designed and built garden studio. In Wilcote Riding, you'll find 16 artists exhibiting ceramics, painting, sculpture, jewellery and a contemporary textile installation in a lovely rural gallery venue with open studios, and in the neighbouring workshop, woodworker Rob

Furlong presents his bespoke furniture created with a love of natural materials.

Charlbury will burst into bloom with an enviable array of artists including printmaker Jon Mackay who, in his home studio, creates handmade screenprints including posters for some of the world's best-known artists and festivals.

For more information, and to choose where to head first, visit [www.artweeks.org](http://www.artweeks.org)

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## **Improving Your Home: Part 2 - Garage conversions**

Converting a garage into a habitable space can be a cost-effective way to add value and functionality to a home. For households with off-street parking or unused garages, it's a logical first step in improving usability. Integral garages are usually easier to convert since they share services and insulation, while detached garages may be more complex.

The first step is to check the structure. Many garages are built with a single skin of brickwork, an uninsulated floor slab, and no damp-proof course. Floors may be uneven or lower than the main house, so raising them can improve access and insulation. Older garages may need reinforcement, and all conversions must meet Building Regulations for light and ventilation.

In most cases, garage conversions fall under Permitted Development, provided the work is internal and doesn't enlarge the building. However, restrictions apply to listed buildings, homes in conservation areas, and properties where removing the garage would eliminate the only parking space. To be certain, it is advisable to apply for a Lawful Development Certificate

confirming that Permitted Development rights apply.

Building Regulations approval is mandatory. Structural stability is crucial, and any changes to load-bearing walls will require a structural engineer's assessment and calculations. If the garage is attached, fire-resistant doors and walls will be required, with safe escape routes. Kitchens and bathrooms need mechanical extract ventilation, plumbing must comply with water efficiency standards, and all electrical work must be carried out by a certified electrician.

Replacing the garage door is the most visible change. Typically, it is replaced with a window and infill to match the existing masonry, so the new elevation blends with the original house.

Additional windows or roof lights can improve natural light. Since garages often provide storage, think about built-in solutions elsewhere. Privacy is important if the garage faces the street, and the design should match the style of the main house. Future-proofing with wiring for smart technology may also be worthwhile.

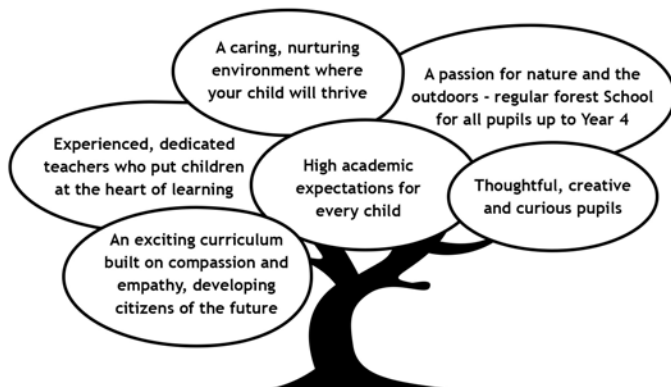
Jan Liberadzki BA Arch (Hons), MSc  
[www.jlda.co.uk](http://www.jlda.co.uk)

## 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)

# Clubs, societies & sport

## Short Mat Bowling

### England U21s show strength and leadership in Wales International

At the end of March, Carmarthen saw the England Under-21s take on Wales in a competitive international fixture, finishing 36–52 in favour of Wales. A special highlight for the England side was Dyllan England from Stonesfield who was selected as England U21 Captain, a fantastic achievement and a proud moment for both him and the local community. His selection reflects not only his ability on the mat but also his leadership, commitment, and dedication to the sport. To captain your country at such a young age is a significant honour, and one he carried with confidence and maturity throughout the match.

The match was also a proud moment locally, with seven players from Charlbury selected to represent England U21s - an incredible achievement for the Club and a testament to the strength of its junior development. Adding to this, Dyllan, and his brother Thomas took to the mat, highlighting the growing talent emerging from the local area.

While the final scoreline favoured Wales, it does not truly reflect how well this young England team performed. Facing a Welsh side with greater age and experience, the England U21s showed resilience, skill, and determination from start to finish. There were strong passages of play where England matched the opposition and demonstrated the depth of talent coming through the ranks.



England U21 Short Mat Bowling team in Wales

The team's conduct was also outstanding. They represented England with pride, respect, and professionalism supporting one another, staying composed under pressure, and embodying the true spirit of the game.

Congratulations to Wales on their win, but equal credit must go to England's U21s not just for their performance, but for their attitude, teamwork, and the exciting future they represent for the sport. A proud weekend for all involved, and an especially memorable one for Captain Dyllan England alongside his teammates including the strong Charlbury contingent who continue to showcase the future of the sport.

If you would like to find out more or get involved, you can contact Charlbury Bowls Club via their website: [www.charlburybowls.co.uk/](http://www.charlburybowls.co.uk/)

Kate England



**A fun sport for all the family!**  
Charlbury Bowls Club welcomes new members from aged 7 and upwards - taster sessions available by arrangement.  
Great facilities: all bowls equipment provided to play on a well-maintained green in the summer and our two short mats in the clubroom all year.  
Registered Bowls England coaches.  
We have a well-stocked bar too!  
Contact: [enquiries@charlburybowls.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@charlburybowls.co.uk)  
Ian Lever: 07585328171  
Or Jackie Hague: 07714642302  
74 Ticknell Piece Road OX7 3TW  
What3words address: [spillage.curly.farms](https://www.what3words.com/spillage.curly.farms)  
[www.charlburybowls.co.uk](http://www.charlburybowls.co.uk)

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## Stonesfield Tennis Club

Stonesfield Tennis Club membership is open to all at very competitive subscription rates. While many memberships are annually renewed or due on April 1, you can join at any time and receive a 12-month membership from the date of joining. See the links from our website or drop us a message.

The two astro-turf tennis courts were re-laid in 2018 and are in excellent condition with plenty of court availability. In addition, club members receive automatic membership (and discounts) of the adjacent Stonesfield Sports and Social Club.

Coaching services will again be provided by Alex Dillon: L3 qualified coach. Most coaching activities are conducted on a Tuesday with lunch and evening adult sessions and afternoon children sessions. Please see information on our website or the contact details below.

email: [stonesfieldtc@gmail.com](mailto:stonesfieldtc@gmail.com)

website: [www.clubspark.lta.org.uk/  
StonesfieldTennisClub](http://www.clubspark.lta.org.uk/StonesfieldTennisClub)

facebook: [@stonesfieldtennisclub](https://www.facebook.com/stonesfieldtennisclub)

instagram: [@stonesfieldtennis](https://www.instagram.com/stonesfieldtennis)

Coaching enquiries: Alex 07876 194008 or email [alexandergjd@gmail.com](mailto:alexandergjd@gmail.com)

Jane Rust

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## The Megalosaurus Society

Recently the Society has been given or loaned much material in the form of albums, scrapbooks and press cuttings relating to Stonesfield. We thought readers might be interested in the following article, apparently written by a resident of the village, which appeared in the *Witney Gazette* in 1961. It is interesting to see what our river was like 65 years ago ...

### Stonesfield doesn't need the sea ....

- Stonesfield is as far from the sea as any English village can be, but it has an effective substitute in the River Evenlode. The large field adjoining the river at its nearest point to the village is common land, free to all comers by ancient and inviolable right. A right, moreover, of which residents and visitors have been swift to avail themselves during recent fine weekends.
- A stretch of the river here is navigable for craft of the collapsible canoe and inflated rubber mattresses type, and these may be seen making a good rate of knots – or not so good when going against the current – between the shoals at Brook Lane and the bridge at Ashford Mill. Now and again they entangle themselves with the lines of youthful anglers who appear to catch very little else, but that is all part of the fun.
- There is bathing for everyone, from the timorous paddler to the bold diver who at one point has a good ten feet of water in which to prove his skill. For the more staid there are sloping hillsides from which one may contemplate the youthful energy that is being spent with prodigal abandon – and when the bathers, boaters and fishermen have gone home

for tea their places are taken by darting moorhens and majestically sailing swans.

- The swans hold undisputed sway over Stonesfield's Lido after dusk. Undisputed, that is, by the daylight merrymakers, though perhaps they are not entirely alone. If any place in Oxfordshire has ghosts, surely it is this. There ought to be the ghosts of the Romans who came along the edge of this very river, following a track that was ancient even in their day. Not far away in space, though 4,000 years distant in time, a maker of flint arrow-heads pursued his trade. Perhaps he comes here too when no local antiquarian is around to see him.
- Saxons raided the peaceful inhabitants of this quiet valley. Mercians and Wessex men quarrelled over it, so did Cavaliers and Roundheads. Next warplanes droned over it and were sometimes ill-mannered enough to drop unwanted gifts from Germany, yet it has absorbed all the history that has ever happened, and its ghosts, if indeed they walk at night, have all become accredited Stonesfield residents.
- And why not? There is no law to prohibit ghosts from enjoying the privileges of copyholders and haunting Stonesfield Common if they so desire.

If you would like more information about the Society, please get in touch with us at [megsoc25@gmail.com](mailto:megsoc25@gmail.com).

Viv Kendall and Trisha Williams, Co-Chairs.

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## Stonesfield Gardening Club

April is the month that members of the Gardening Club show what green fingers they really have and produce plants for sale at our annual plant sale. This year was a bumper one in terms of plants offered and income generated, so that means all the more for local charities!



*In Bloom at the Ashmolean*

For those of you wanting a rest from your own gardening, the Ashmolean Museum's newest exhibition is called *In Bloom* and is a review of plant hunting from its earliest days, right up to the present when we are rather more aware of what we might be doing to the places we take plants from.

Those great plant hunters from the 1600s, John Tradescant elder and younger, were also great friends of Elias Ashmole who founded the Ashmolean, so the museum is rich in botanical books, drawings and paintings. There are some quite astonishingly modern looking plant pressings and paintings on display, dating back centuries.

Plant hunting began as wealthy landowners wanted more exotic plants for their gardens, but then grew to include all the medicinal (opium poppies),

recreational (tea) and industrial (rubber) plants that were found to have other uses.

The Victorians were well known for their love of the exotic, but of course this has come at a price in some areas where the introduction of, for instance, *rhododendron ponticum* has proved really invasive.

The exhibition ends with some really striking modern pieces of artwork from local artists, reflecting on new ways to interact with the natural world. Well worth a visit, the exhibition is on until 16 August.

Diane Bates

Secretary, Stonesfield Gardening Club

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

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## Sports & Social Club

The patios have been cleaned ready for the nicer weather - just in time for cricket, Aunt Sally and enjoying the longer days.

Our May charity bingo event is being held in aid of Katharine House Hospice in memory of Simon Hadland. Donations of prizes would be greatly appreciated, as well as your support on the night. Our charity pot on the bar will also be added to the total raised.

Sports & Social Club

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## Stonesfield Football Club

Pride of place this month goes to the Reserves who have won the Jack Busby Memorial Trophy for only the second time in our Club's history - the first time was the Millenium in 2000!

In the semi-final they beat FC Mills, 2-1, to set up the final against Bampton Town - and what a final it was! Stonesfield were the better team and created loads of chances but it was Bampton who struck first with a lovely strike that sailed over James Lenhandt (Big Lennie) into the net. Our boys kept their heads up and battled away: the Bampton keeper made save after save, but he could not stop the equaliser from Jake Burden who thumped the ball home and sent the large (and very vocal) Stonesfield support wild! Inevitably, the game finished 1-1 and it went to penalties.

Stonesfield Firsts with The Premiership, Fred Ford (by default) & The Henry Hawtin trophies

If the Bampton 'keeper was man-of-the-match, it was Big Lennie who stole all the headlines with two fabulous penalty saves to give our boys the trophy (3-2 on penalties.). To say the Stonesfield support were happy would be a massive understatement. Massed behind the goal, with scarves, hats, flags and even pyro, they celebrated in style as our big hero made the saves. The legend of the Stonesfield Ultras was born when he saved the last penalty!

Great to see our Ressies win some silverware for all their hard work over the last few seasons. Their league form has been very good with a 2-1 win at home to Yarnton B and a spectacular 8-1 win against Carterton Town. The only blemish was in the league at Bampton where the home team won 3-0. In fairness to our lads, they had lost some players to the



**Back row**, left to right: Ollie Wynn, Liam Harris, Dan Newman, Harrison Connolly, Max Brand-Wiggins, Mike Phipps, Jamie Langton, Jack Barker, Will Barker, Brian Clarke

**Front row**, left to right: Sammy Hart, Carry Rice, Jordan Newman, Tom Green, Marc Jordon, Raffy Rice, Jake Burden, Conor Allmond

Firsts that afternoon and suffered accordingly. They currently sit in third place; four points clear of Charlbury and favourites to hold on and win promotion again. If they do, the Stonesfield Ultras will go ballistic!

The Firsts have had a great run in the league this month and sit in top spot following great home wins against Hanborough (2-0), Heyford Athletic (4-1) and Charlbury Town (4-2). In the Fred Ford semi-final they came up against Siege who have already won Division 1. They gave our team a bit of a lesson, thumping them 5-2. Not our Firsts finest hour, but that beating does seem to have helped them focus on beating teams in the league. Our boys are now firm favourites to be Premiership Champions for the second season in a row. Fingers crossed they manage to win it, but there are still some hard games against very good sides to come.

The much-coveted Fredo Award has some serious competition this month. First contender is Cary Rice for his hat-trick against Charlbury. Second contender is Marco Babic for his three goals against Carterton. Third contender is Big Lennie for his two stunning penalty saves to bring the cup home to Stonesfield. In the end it was a 'no-brainer': with silverware in the trophy cabinet, a winners' medal around his neck and being the inspiration for the Stonesfield Ultras, Big Lennie gets the Fredo all to himself. Step forward Big Yin, the Fredo is yours!

Tom Flanigan (891979)

## Aunt Sally is back – and what an opening night!



The White Horse on their way to a win

We finally kicked off Aunt Sally at The White Horse with our first league match of the season in the Wychwood League and what a brilliant start it was – a hard-fought game against SSSC's A team, a great atmosphere and a great win to open the campaign. Huge congratulations to the team and everyone involved – you did us proud!

And an extra thank you to those who helped to build such a fantastic pitch. It's a real joy seeing that vision come to life and being enjoyed by the whole community. Here's to a great season ahead at The White Horse.

Craig Tipper

The White Horse, Stonesfield

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## Learn & Play Pickleball

A new opportunity to take up a fast-growing racquet sport has arrived in Stonesfield. Miles Walkden, of nearby Charlbury, has established a community group called 'Learn & Play Pickleball – Stonesfield', offering residents a chance to try this increasingly popular game.

Pickleball - a hybrid of tennis, badminton and table tennis - has seen a surge in popularity across the UK in recent years. As the national governing body Pickleball England reports, the sport now boasts hundreds of venues and thousands of players nationwide.



With Learn & Play Pickleball, the goal is simple: make the sport accessible to local people by offering lessons, lending paddles and balls, and organising friendly games. 'What's great about pickleball,' says Miles, 'is that it's easy to learn, easy to play - and a lot of fun.' Importantly, pickleball's inclusive nature makes it suitable for a wide range of ages and abilities including players using wheelchairs. Learn & Play

Pickleball welcomes anyone who'd like to give the sport a go.

Anyone interested can search for 'Learn & Play Pickleball – Stonesfield' on Facebook, or contact Miles on 07765 894945, or by email to: [miles@L2PP.com](mailto:miles@L2PP.com).

With fresh energy, friendly games and a sport that's easy to pick up, Stonesfield may soon discover a new favourite pastime.

Miles Walkden

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# Church news

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

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[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: Abundant Living**

The first full moon in May is known as the Flower Moon, because May is the month when nature begins to blossom in earnest, and spring is in full swing. This full moon is also a 'micromoon', because the moon is at its furthest point from Earth, making it look smaller than usual. This year the Flower Moon is on May the 1st, which means that there will be two full moons in May, the second being called the 'Blue Moon'.

The first Holy Roman Emperor, Charlemagne (around 800AD), called May

the 'month of joy' because of the coming of spring, and in Western Europe it is celebrated as such in many songs and poems. With good reason Shakespeare called it 'the merry month of May', and Thomas Hardy wrote that 'the May month flaps its glad green leaves like wings, delicate-filmed as new-spun silk.' Our villages look beautiful at this time, and our hearts rise with the promise of coming summer.

In the church calendar, this month is also full of joy, as the Easter season celebrations of Christ's resurrection continue until Ascension Day on 14 May, and Pentecost comes on its heels, on Sunday the 24th. At Pentecost we remember the giving of the Holy Spirit to the disciples, to the church, and to us, reminding us to recognise and allow the work of God's power, grace and creative energy in our lives. As the first disciples felt the rush of new life following the resurrection of Jesus, we also ask for the spiritual dynamism of God's presence in us, to live abundantly, in love and thankfulness. I hope and pray that your life will be abundant this May. Please come and join us as we worship together.

Revd Ralph Williamson



## Church services

### Sunday 3 May [Easter 5]

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

### Sunday 10 May [Easter 6]

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

### Sunday 17 May [Easter 7]

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

### Sunday 24 May [Pentecost]

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

### Sunday 31 May [Trinity Sunday]

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

## Wednesdays

9.30am	Stonesfield	Holy Communion
11am	Combe	Holy Communion (6th), Morning Prayer (20th)

Lindsey Sellar  
Churchwarden

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## Stonesfield Methodist Church

### Sunday services for May

3	11am	to be arranged
10	10am	United at Long Hanborough (no service at Stonesfield)
17	11am	Eddie Fowler
24	11am	The Reverend Charles Harris Holy Communion Service
31	11am	Local Arrangement

### Day of Ascension

For me there's nothing like a good book, especially one with a happy ending. The conclusion of a well written story is often very emotional, whether it be happy or sad.

I wonder how the Risen Christ felt at the end of His earthly story, was He overjoyed beyond all measure, or could there have been a touch of sadness. His enormous gift had been given and His ultimate sacrifice made. His journey was done, and the future path laid clear for all. Alleluia!

There is a higher throne than all this world has known

where faithful ones from every tongue will one day come.

Before our God we'll stand, made faultless through the lamb;

believing hearts find promised grace:  
salvation comes.

StF 337. Keith Getty and Kristyn Lennox

Come to a Service soon.

Kathleen Albért (891733)

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## **Roman Catholic Worship**

### **Be prepared to be transformed**

So we are ambassadors for Christ; it is as though God were urging you through us, and in the name of Christ we appeal to you to be reconciled to God. For our sake he made the sinless one a victim for sin, so that in him we might become the uprightness of God. (2 Corinthians 5:2-21)

Lent, that period of abstinence and preparation, and Easter with its terrible pain and suffering followed by joy at the Resurrection, are now behind us. If, however, either is to have purposeful meaning in our lives, we could reflect on the profound transformational consequences of those events long ago. This transformation allows us to become new and different people in terms of priorities, values and spiritual commitments. Lent prepares us, as a period of spiritual training, to understand the nature of Jesus's actions at the Last Supper. His death on the Cross and Resurrection, and its transformational consequences for us to become those different people.

The Gospels are full of stories about transformation, something or someone becoming different: the Parable of the Mustard Seed is an example:

He put before them another parable: 'The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that someone took and sowed in his field; it is the smallest of all the seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches.' (Matthew 13:31-32)

The Parable of the Mustard Seed shows us that something that starts small and humble - the seed, can transform something far larger, with more potential and possibility. In other words this parable isn't just about change, it's about transformative hope for the future.

### **Holy Mass at St Teresa's, Charlbury**

Sunday 9.15am

Wednesdays 9.15am

Fridays 9.15am

### **What price religious freedom? A talk and discussion**

Sunday 10 May at 3pm (The Morris Room, The Corner House, Charlbury)

We now take our religious freedom for granted, but throughout the world people are disadvantaged and persecuted for their faith: Christianity, Islam, Judaism. Our expert speakers will help us explore the impact of this persecution not only on faith but on a wider society.

Our speakers are Elliott Banks, Lead Researcher, Aid to the Church in Need; and Fr Dominic Robinson SJ, Chair of the Justice and Peace Commission, Diocese of Westminster.

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For Parish updates and further information and support:  
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March 9	Talk
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May 11	Talk
June 28	Open Gardens
July 13	Visit
Sept 14	Talk
Oct 12	Wine tasting & talk
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Dec 14	Social & Quiz

See website for details

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

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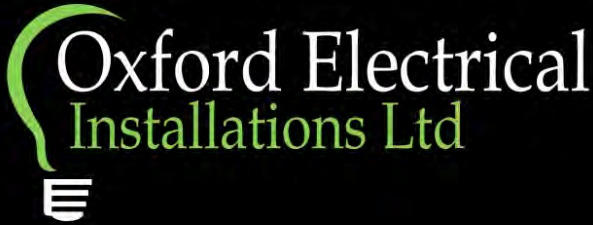


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## Pub

Mon - Closed

Tue - 3pm - 11pm

Wed - 11.30am-11pm

Thur - 11.30am-11pm

Fri- 11.30am-11pm

Sat - 11.30am-11pm

Sun - 11.30am-8pm

## Food

Mon - Closed

Tue - No food

Wed - 12 - 2.30 & 6pm-9pm

Thur - 12 - 2.30 & 6pm-9pm

Fri - 12 - 2.30 & 6pm-9pm

Sat - 12 - 2.30 & 6pm-9pm

Sunday - 12-4pm

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