

WESTON-ON-THE-GREEN

# TheVillageNews

JUNE/JULY 2025



Photo: Annie Cooper



BLENHEIM PALACE

# WHAT'S ON | Experience a whole year of unforgettable memories in 2025

## MAY

Roof Top Tours A new experience..... All Month  
Jousting..... 3rd - 5th May  
Dogs allowed in May ..... 6th - 31st May  
Blenheim 7k..... 18th May  
Giffords Circus ..... 22nd May - 2nd June  
Blenheim Palace Food Festival..... 24th - 25th May  
May Half Term - 'Pip and Posy' in Adventure Play . 24th May - 1st June  
Armchair talks (Stables Café). .... 27th May

## JUNE

Blenheim Palace Triathlon ..... 7th - 8th June  
Nocturne Live ..... 18th - 22nd June  
Blenheim Palace Flower Show ..... 27th - 29th



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Term**



## Village Directory

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Peter Driver: 01869 350569

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chair@weston-sos.org

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Village Hall Secretary

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Village Hall Bookings

Jordie and Andrew Wilson:

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### COMMUNITY VAN BOOKING

Graham Barnett: 01869 350707

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WESTON SOCIETY

WESTON WALKERS

FOOTPATH WARDEN

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GARDEN CLUB

Toddy Hamilton-Gould: 07748 088335

GOLDEN LEAVES

Peter Driver: 01869 350569

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NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

NEIGHBOURS' NATTER

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### THAMES VALLEY POLICE

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# From the editor

'April is the cruellest month'. Forgive me for re-quoting T.S. Eliot but it is so apt for Bob and Paula Hessian whose lovely cottage burned down at the beginning of April. As their daughter Kate wrote on the GoFundMe page she set up to help raise money towards rebuilding their family home of over 50 years, 'only 2 rooms were unaffected directly by fire but all have smoke and water damage.'

Jordie and the Village Hall Committee quickly swung into action and arranged a coffee morning to raise money towards this endeavour. This was Weston at its best, with many volunteers baking delicious cakes to tickle the tastebuds of the huge turnout – so many people wanting to support the Hessians at this terrible time.

For those of you who are not on the Weston FB page (er, that'll be me then) so don't have access to the link, if you'd like to help the Hessians, please go to GoFundMe.com and search for Kate Newman and the page will come up. At the time of writing, an amazing £14,000 has been raised.

Here's hoping the rebuilding will get underway very soon so that two wonderful villagers, plus Barn Owls, can resume their rightful place at Newby Cottage – or should that be New Built Cottage now ...

*Alisa*



Deadline for August/September edition:  
3rd JULY 2025



## From the Rector

**Gareth Miller**

*Rector of the Akeman Benefice  
and Area Dean of Bicester & Islip*

Did you watch the funeral of Pope Francis? It was deeply moving. By the time you read this there will be a new Pope – poor man!

One of the most fascinating aspects of Francis's funeral was the large number of young people there. I watched some of them being interviewed, including a very articulate contingent from St George's Cathedral, Southwark.

There is a lot of anecdotal evidence, backed up by statistics, that the young are increasingly yearning for faith. Perhaps unsurprisingly they are tending to gravitate towards evangelical churches, but also to

the Catholic Church. The wishy-washy middle of the road churches are not attracting so many! That said, we have seen a small but significant increase in both interest and attendance among younger folk within our Anglican village churches.

Giles Coren, the columnist, brought up a nominal Jew, wrote in a Times article a few months ago how he and his wife turned up at St Bride's Church, Fleet Street, and the Rector offered to marry them 'without a quibble'. He was very struck by that. Then, years later, when his son, 'brought up in no tradition at all' said he wanted to go to church, 'we walked up the road to our local one the following Sunday and went in. And we've been going ever since.'

His son wanted to go to church. And I have heard other similar stories. The confident atheist of the past few generations may have assumed that the next generation will simply take the baton and, before too long, all the churches will be empty. But it turns out that peoples' hearts and souls are far emptier than the churches. People are slowly returning to our churches, and more often than not they are turning up at churches that aren't all hip and cool, but to ancient practices and expressions of faith. They are longing not for froth and exuberance, but for meaning and depth.

One of the panellists on Beyond Belief on Radio 4 was Kate Smurthwaite, a humanist, who had said in a video that she doesn't have a faith 'because I am not stupid'. Mercifully, in discussion she qualified this very patronising stance, and an interesting debate ensued between her, Giles Fraser (the host) and the other panellists.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer, the Lutheran pastor who was hanged at Flossenbug in April 1945, reminded us that faith is something that has to be sought: 'The gospel which must be sought again and again, the gift which must be asked for, the door at which a man must knock.' But that truth is met with this equal truth from Jesus: 'Ask, and it will be given to you; search, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened for you. For everyone who asks receives, and everyone who searches finds, and for everyone who knocks, the door will be opened.' (Matthew 7.7-8.)

### St Mary's Church, Weston on the Green warmly invites you to join in our services in June and July

1st June	11:00	Morning Worship
8th June	11:00	Holy Communion, Chesterton
15th June	11:00	Holy Communion
	15:00	'3 at 3' Family Service, Bletchington
22nd June	11:00	Marriage vows renewal, Middleton Stoney
29th June	10:00	Service at Bletchington Village Hall with Silver Band
6th July	11:00	Morning Worship
13th July	18:00	Choral Evensong with the Akeman Choir, Chesterton
20th July	11:00	Holy Communion
	15:00	'3 at 3' Family Service, Bletchington
27th July	10:00	Benefice Service, Hampton Gay

Please note: the times are subject to change. The monthly schedule is posted on the front door of the church as well as the bulletin box at the East gate.

For other services across the Akeman Benefice please visit:  
<https://www.akemanbenefice.org.uk/church-services>

#### From the Register

Wedding: 3rd May 2025 Andrew Hill and Carol Hoffman



# Church news

This is my last Church News update written as the Churchwarden. I have decided to step down for health reasons, although I intend to continue as the church Treasurer. This is not an easy decision. As I am writing this, I realise that I have been active in church work since I was a teenager. I am a firm believer that our church, regardless of denomination, has a vital role to play in our complex society. It can and does provide comfort and solace to those in need. The church has a deep history of caring and continues to have the potentiality to do good works, despite the current problems it faces.



It has been an honour to serve in our community. I have tried to integrate our church into the Weston community, with the help of my fellow Warden, Peter Driver. One of his many talents is being a chef. His meals are simply remarkable and draw the community together with the Big Breakfast to start our Christmas season, and his monthly Golden Leaves lunches. Working with the Ministry Team and the PCC has been a privilege for me. Our church effectively brings together the aptitudes of a diverse group of individuals.

I have been impressed by the Weston community's generosity of spirit through such actions as the donations received from Friends' Produce sold through the Village Pantry. Bob Hessian, our



Electoral Roll Secretary, managed to complete the current update of the roll despite the trauma of the fire. Most recently, Jordie Riches helped the church to obtain a Commonwealth Graves plaque, so visitors to our churchyard are aware of the war graves on the site. It is these actions, both large and small, that make a positive difference in our lives. There are several highlights of my tenure as church warden. First the gathering of about 30 villagers to help with clearing up our churchyard. This action was built on the voluntary group known affectionately as the 'Holy Order of the Blessed Lawn Mowers'. There was an outstanding sense of communal purpose. Secondly, the decoration of the church for Remembrance Sunday with the highly imaginative poppy displays both inside and outside the church, combined with the stunning floral display.

One memorable service was centred on people's favourite hymns which were sung, and the selector explained the reason for selection. In many respects it was a moving service because one gained the sense of comfort gained from the combination of music with meditation. The church building has excellent acoustics, and it was a pleasure to have the young people sing the introduction to the opening carol at our Lessons and Carols Service. Our church is good at celebrating. The most significant service was the centennial of WWI Armistice which

attracted 120 people. I realised that while the Commonwealth Nations made great sacrifices, the impact of two world wars was almost overwhelming on British society.

So, I thank you for granting me the opportunity to serve. Our community and church rely heavily on the voluntary efforts of our villagers. It enhances the fabric of our lives in Weston on the Green. Believe me the effort is worth it!

Eric Bohm

## BENEFACT NEWS

**Special Deanery Pentecost Service** is on Pentecost Sunday, 8th June at 3.00 pm at Home Farm, Caversfield OX27 8TG. This will include FIRE-EATING (participation not compulsory!).

**The traditional Lamb Ale Service** is on Trinity Sunday, 15th June at Kirtlington at 10.45 am. All are warmly invited to attend, before joining in the other festivities in the village.

In **mid-June** a party from this benefice will be visiting our link parish of Mönsterås in Sweden.

**Renewal of marriage vows.** A special service will be held at Middleton Stoney Church on Sunday 22nd June at 11.00 am for those who would like to renew their vows. For more information do get in touch with the Rector.

**The Annual Open-Air Service** is on Sunday 29th June at 10.00 am at Bletchington Village Hall with the Bletchington Silver Band.

# Chair's comments

The Parish Council will have held its Annual General Meeting (May 7th) and elected the Chair for the coming year. I have served in this role for a several years and with each election reflect on how much I have learned about the village and also about both the District and County council. There is no doubt that we are entering a time of change both in the planning system and in how local government will work into the future. I attended an event at Oxfordshire County Council on 3rd April which was put on specifically for parish councillors and clerks. Highlights for me were the Tree Team, Developer Schemes and S106, Highways, Local Government Organisation plus a chance to talk with representatives from across the organisation during an informal lunch.

Rian Harris, Community Tree and Woodland Opportunity (CTWO) Officer, discussed the range of work that is done across Oxfordshire. The team had just completed work begun in the autumn of 2024 including tree maintenance and orchard planting. Every tree in the county that has been planted by them is on the tree map plus a record of its age and maintenance (care). This work fed into our Parish Council's keen interest in biodiversity and so I was

prompted to talk with him during the break. I told him about the oak tree at the top of North Lane and he knew about it and quickly identified it as one of the veteran trees in the county – very important to biodiversity in the area. He was delighted when I reported that the 35 tons of concrete had been lifted off the roots. He also seemed interested in the work led by David Williams in the village – planting 300 trees and 250 bushes between now and the end of the growing season. I invited him to meet David and walk around the spinney and the areas where trees have/will be planted.



*Rian Harris and David Williams*

I've included a photo of them meeting and heading off on their walk. I'll be interested in learning

about their conversation and any possible outcomes.

Robin Rogers, Director of Economy and Place, discussed Developer Schemes and S106. He explained the complexity of allocating funding and that it was his job, recently appointed, to allocate the rather large sum they have as reported in the press. Our concern is modest in comparison to most. We have been allocated £5,000 for a new traffic signal at the entrance to the village as S106 money from the Southfield Development. I was hoping to speak to someone from his team at the networking lunch but there was no representative in attendance. That was frustrating; we have been asking with the help of our former OCC Councillor Nigel Simpson for several months when this money would be available. No one answers our emails or returns calls. We will continue to pursue this issue for the safety of residents.

The third session was with Sean Rooney, Head of Service – Environment and Highways. Topics discussed were infrastructure, speed limits, and a focus on potholes. He explained that quick fixes on potholes aren't the solution as they crack and shrink easily. Increased flooding is hard on roads and the water gets under repairs



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causing another pothole. I spoke with Sean separately and he was able to recommend an area team leader that might be more aware of concerns in our area. That was helpful and the Clerk informed me that she has a direct line to this person and has had some success sorting out local issues.

Although time-consuming, it is useful to attend these Council Days. Our Parish Council has signed the Oxfordshire Councils Charter which should enhance our working partnership with OCC's councils. We need to be able to voice the concerns of our village and expect to be heard, understood and responded to in a timely fashion. Meeting those with responsibilities and also having an opportunity to speak directly to Cabinet members is very helpful.

The Annual Village Meeting was held on 22nd April. I updated those who attended on a wide range of projects, some ongoing and others being planned. The focus of the meeting was a presentation by Dr. Susan Davis entitled 'Planned development in the Bicester region: impacts on Weston on the Green'. There is so much information in the news about infrastructure, planning rules and growth that it can be hard to discern what applies to our village. Susan put the presentation together very logically and wove the themes together to present a very full and clear picture of what could be ahead of us and the region. The presentation will be on our website for all villagers to read, <http://www.westononthegreen-pc.gov.uk>

We are preparing the Neighbourhood Plan Review (NP). Our plan has been very helpful in providing a framework in a number of areas: housing, environment, design and protecting our history and historic appearance. However, the danger is that if we don't appear to be managing our own growth, we may be directed to grow. In the NP Review, we have an opportunity to have a second look at some policies and possibly rephrase them, to reflect on those policies which have been most mentioned in officer's remarks on



housing applications, and which have led strength to objections to specific projects. That work has started and is being led by Diane Bohm and Susan Davis. There will be opportunities for you to express your views and ask questions. If you are relatively new to the village, you may want to have a look at the Neighbourhood Plan which can be found on the Parish Council website referred to in the paragraph above.

A key project to be aware of is the council's 'Flood Resilience' project which is currently being developed. We have applied for some grant funding and won't hear back for a month or so. However, even without this specific funding, it is clear that all communities need to look ahead at increased rainfall with the consequential field run-off, gushing and flooding streams and overloaded sewers. If any reader has an interest in this area, do please join the group that is focusing on this topic.

All readers will know how proud we are of the community bus. We have recently learned that we will not be able to apply for OCC funding

this year as funds are tight and we received a grant last year. In order to keep the bus on the road we will need financial support. There is a good chance that we will have to replace the vehicle. If you know of a source of funding or if you would like to contribute, please contact us. The elderly, ill, and lonely really appreciate the service.

We have purchased a battery-operated defibrillator for the playing field. It will be installed shortly. Instructions for use are on the machine.

Finally, we need a volunteer to lead some playground development.

We need volunteers over the summer to help with some minor outside work. It's a great way to meet new people and to contribute to the village. If you are interested in parish council work or would like to know more about it, please contact any of the councillors or the clerk. All contact info is at the front of the magazine.

Enjoy the summer!

Diane Bohm

# Planning update

Planning applications relating to the parish are discussed at each Parish Council meeting and a report is placed on the Parish Council website. Full information regarding each application is available via the Planning and Building section on the Cherwell District Council website.

## BUILDING APPLICATIONS:

### Decisions Received – Permitted

25/00142/CLUE - North View, North Lane

25/00361/AGN - Land North of Filling Station adjacent to the track south of The Chequers Inn, Northampton Road

24/02685/F – Southview, Northampton Road

### Decisions Received – Refused

24/03356/PIP - Land North East Of Knowle Farm, Knowle Lane  
Planning Permission in Principle is sought for the provision of 2-4 dwellings.

### Applications - Awaiting Decision

25/00139/F - Part of OS Parcel 0006 Adjacent and North of Normandy, North Lane  
Demolition of existing buildings and the erection of five detached single and two-storey dwellings together with access, parking and garaging, amenity space, landscaping and drainage works.

25/00449/REM - Reynards Lodge, North Lane  
Reserved Matters application to



24/00804/OUT - Access (with Construction Traffic Management Plan), Layout (with part drainage), Scale, Appearance, Landscaping and Biodiversity (with Construction Environment Management Plan).

25/00356/DISC - Kelberg Ltd, Northampton Road  
Discharge of Conditions 3 (construction management strategy), 4 (Arboricultural Method Statement), 5 (surface water drainage), 6 (biodiversity method statement) and 8 (lighting details) of 24/00893/F.

25/00582/F and 25/00583/LB - Williams Cottage, North Lane  
Demolition of existing outbuilding and erection of replacement single-storey outbuilding, garden shed and associated landscaping.

25/00418/F and 25/00486/LB – The Manor Hotel, Northampton Road  
Restoration and extension of Rupert's Cottage to provide additional guest accommodation and leisure facilities; re-instatement of the former outdoor swimming pool; construction of a new events pavilion; restaurant extension within the Manor's west courtyard; relocation of guest car parking away from the Manor's principal elevation; screening of the existing plant and biomass boiler area; restoration of wider landscape features including the historic moat and bridge.

25/00931/F - Oak View, North Lane  
Single storey replacement porch extension.

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# Cherwell Swift Conservation

Our swifts come back from Africa in May and quite possibly there will be some nesting near where you live. You may see them when out walking, flying low over roof-tops or making screaming calls as they go. No other British bird behaves like this. It's an indication there are nest sites nearby. You might even be lucky enough to spot one returning to its nest hole under the eaves of a building.



## How can you help?

The population of swifts is nearly 60 per cent lower than it was 25 years ago. In 2021 it was moved onto the Red list of birds of greatest conservation concern (along with house martins and green finches) because of this decline. So swifts need all the help we can provide or they will vanish from the UK. In colder wet weather they feed over local ponds, lakes and reservoirs but on fine days they will be high overhead, feasting on flying insects.



Noting down when and where you see swifts can help the Cherwell Swifts Conservation Project by increasing knowledge of local populations, enabling the protection of nest sites and asking for new ones in buildings through the planning process. Swift bricks can be included in the fabric of new buildings, including home extensions, and nest boxes can be fitted to existing buildings.

Please go here for more information about these amazing birds and how to get involved in swift conservation - <https://www.cherwell.gov.uk/connect-with-nature>



## BICESTER FOOD BANK

EMERGENCY FOOD  
FOR PEOPLE IN CRISIS



A collection is held on  
the first Saturday of  
every month,  
9.00 am–12.00 pm  
outside the Weston  
Pantry.

All donations of  
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Village Hall, and the  
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**Busy Needle for the finishing  
touch to any room.**

At the end of March, sixty-five villagers with a lot of competitive spirit joined us for our Quiz Night. It was the most tightly contested quiz we have held to date, with the lead changing hands numerous times across the evening. From picture rounds of musicals, Mr Men characters, famous bears and famous bridges to an 'On This Day' round and TV themed music questions the teams were tested on their general knowledge.

The eventual winners were 'Scoutcasts' with 82 points, closely followed by 'Chat BCD' with 80 points with third place going to 'Engales' with 78 points. The 'Westerfield Boomers' and 'Harvesters' were fourth and fifth with 77 and 75 points respectively. We had great fun writing the quiz and thank you to everyone who came along and entered into the spirit of the evening. Our thanks also go to James and Jim for running the bar with aplomb, to Paul and Laura who worked tirelessly in the kitchen serving the food and to Dedi for the catering and providing us with a plentiful and delicious meal.

Our next event is taking place on Friday 27th June, 7pm to 9pm and is a 'Pimm's and Prosecco Evening'. Tickets are £10 per person for unlimited drinks and complimentary canapes. All are welcome to join us for this midsummer evening. Please could you RSVP to [westonvillagehall@live.co.uk](mailto:westonvillagehall@live.co.uk) by 22nd June to help us with the catering requirements.

An advance date for your diaries, and back by popular demand, is the Craft and Food Fair which will be taking place on Saturday 18th October from 10am to 3pm. More details will be in the next edition of the Village News.



On Saturday 10th May over sixty villagers joined us in the Hall to celebrate VE Day 80. The Hall was decorated with an abundance of cottage garden flowers and bunting. Villagers were welcomed with a glass of fizz on arrival and glasses were kept topped up all afternoon by Andrew and Laura.



Lunch was fish and chips (a nod to the fact this was the only food not rationed during the Second World War) and a selection of puddings. After lunch the D-Day Dollies took to the floor and entertained us with a fifty minute set of wartime classics and other popular tunes, including 'Somewhere Over the Rainbow', 'Edelweiss', 'Don't Sit Under the Apple Tree', 'Anything Goes', 'Goodnight Sweetheart' and those 1940s favourites, 'The White Cliffs of Dover', 'Wish Me Luck As You Wave Me Goodbye' and 'We'll Meet Again'. Villagers joined in with the singing and there were some misty-eyed moments at times.

We are so grateful to the singers who travelled from Weston-Super-Mare and Cwmbran to join us for our VE Day event. Our thanks also go to Paul and Mark who were busy washing-up in the kitchen, to Andrew and Laura who kept the drinks flowing all afternoon, to Mick for his wonderful VE Day celebration woodcuts, to Mandy



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*The winner of our VE Day 80 poster competition was Mia Buckland.*

who helped Jordie to set up on Friday afternoon, and to Jordie who planned and organised the event, arranged the flowers and wrote the souvenir booklet and finally to all the villagers who booked and attended the event, and who made it such a special occasion.



As part of the VE 80th Anniversary commemorations, Jordie, working with Eric and the PCC, has applied for a Commonwealth War Graves location sign to be placed at the Mill Lane entrance to St Mary's. The Church is the final resting place for four service men: Second Lieutenant E. S. Scott of the Royal Air Force; Second Lieutenant J. A. Humphrey, also of the RAF; Gunner William Wise of the Royal Field Artillery and Aircraftman 2nd Class Basil Thomas Mitchell of the Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve.



*Second Lieutenant J. A. Humphrey*

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission's initiative began in 2018 as part of the centenary of the end of the First World War, and the CWGC hope to put signs up at as many churchyards, cemeteries and burial grounds as possible that have war graves. The aim of the project is to increase awareness of these graves in the UK and to remind the

public that they need not travel abroad to find Commonwealth commemorations. The sign that will be put up at the Church will be installed, paid for and maintained by the Commission on a permanent basis and in this anniversary year it seems very appropriate to have requested to be part of this initiative.

Like other villagers we were shocked and saddened by the house fire at Newby Cottage in April and the destruction of Paula and Bob's home. However, we were pleased to be able to host a fundraising coffee morning and to see so many villagers support the event. Our thanks go to all the villagers who baked cakes for us: Mandy Jones, Kate Newman, Pam Holley, Lyn Barnett, Laura East, Toddy H-G, Ruth Pangu, Bill Lawrie, Jan Ricketts, Sally Cole, Annie B-C, Wendy Williams and Peter Driver - their kindness and generosity was overwhelming, as was the generosity of all those who attended. We raised an incredible sum of £1,825 for Paula and Bob on the day and we just wanted to thank everyone who came along and showed their support.



# PHONE BOX LIBRARY

## Opening Times for 2025

The phone box is open Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Saturday, from early morning until 4.30 – 5.00 pm when it is then locked up for the night.

Please feel free to borrow a book to read. We only ask that you return it in a good condition for the next person to borrow. Stock will be rotated on a regular basis.

Please could we ask that book donations are not left in the phone box. If you wish to donate books please email [westonvillagehall@live.co.uk](mailto:westonvillagehall@live.co.uk)

Many thanks and happy reading!



## 250 Club Results

### APRIL

1st prize: £18 No 52 Mary Warmington  
2nd prize: £12 No 109 Coralie Winckler  
3rd prize: £6 No 5 Jan & Len Ricketts

### MAY

1st prize: £18 No 19 Kay Brain  
2nd prize: £12 No 182 Mandy Jones  
3rd prize: £6 No 79 Pat Riches



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## Weston on the Green Memorial Village Hall

Friday 27<sup>th</sup> June 2025

7pm-9pm

A warm welcome awaits villagers at the  
Village Hall for a

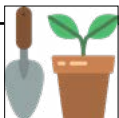
## **‘Pimm’s & Prosecco Evening’**



Tickets are £10pp for unlimited Pimm's & Prosecco.  
Complimentary canapes.

RSVP: [westonvillagehall@live.co.uk](mailto:westonvillagehall@live.co.uk) or call 350992  
by 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2025 to book a ticket

## **All welcome**



## Weston-on-the-Green Garden Club

The Garden Club started the year with their AGM held in the Village Hall on 19th March, attended by 12 members. Fiona Spensley had tendered her resignation before the meeting and was unable to attend, but in her absence was thanked for the work she had done over the past year. Toddy (as Acting Chair) reported that a new bank account had been opened giving members the opportunity to pay subscriptions online, the entry form for the forthcoming Spring Show on April 5th was available in the shop and online entries could be submitted, emails would be sent out to all members. David Johnson circulated the accounts with details of the new bank account. Two new committee members had been recruited, Sue Farrow (Secretary) and Fiona Singleton (Show Secretary). Toddy would take on the Chairman's role with David Johnson remaining as Treasurer. All those present enjoyed wine and nibbles after the meeting.



### OPEN GARDEN EVENINGS

There are a number of Open Garden Evenings planned over the summer starting with Mulberry Cottage, Church Lane hosted by Emma and James Bernard on Tuesday 20th May.



*Open garden evening at the Bernard's*

On Tuesday 10th June we will be hosted by Kelly and Neil Parkinson

at Westfield Court House, North Lane and on July 22nd we will be hosted by Tracy and David Johnson at The Dower House, Church Lane, all at 6.30 pm. Please check your emails closer to the open evenings, as we are dependent on the weather. Keep your fingers crossed that all our planned evenings can go ahead.

There will also be a coach trip to Waddesdon Manor to view the Christmas decorations in the house along with the light trail and Christmas Market. This will take place on Wednesday 26th November and further details will be emailed to members and appear in the next issue of The Village News.

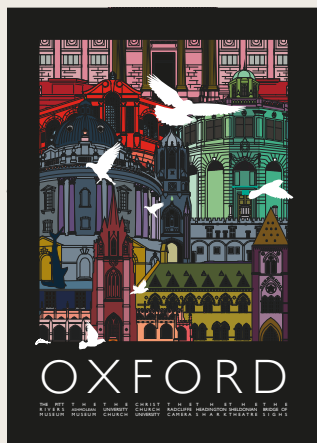
I would like to thank various

members of the Garden Club Committee and other members for taking on the maintenance of areas throughout the village. David Johnson for mowing some of the church-yard and other patches of grass. Clive and Helen Jackson for maintaining the roundabout at the entrance to Mill Lane and to others who discreetly tidy up as they walk around the village.

I'm sure this is taken for granted by many, but these volunteers really make a difference to the overall appearance for villagers and visitors to our lovely village.

I hope you all enjoy the Spring weather and Happy Gardening!

Toddy Hamilton-Gould



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## SPRING SHOW

The Spring Show attracted over 100 entries and the Village Hall looked amazing with a fantastic display of beautiful spring flowers and blossom. It was especially pleasing to see numerous entries from junior gardeners from the village. The decorated Easter bonnets were a particular highlight.



Our judge, **Rev. Felicity Scroggie** from Kidlington, was particularly appreciative of the huge effort made by all exhibitors with their imaginative displays. She and her husband greatly enjoyed judging the cookery (and tasting!) all the entries in the baking classes. Sue Farrow and Fiona Singleton worked hard all morning collating all the results and writing out the prize cards. A great crowd of villagers



arrived in the afternoon to look at the exhibits and enjoy tea and cake.

Children 11-16  
**Iolanthe Iosiphides**

Many thanks to Helen Jackson who did a fantastic job in the kitchen and to David and Tracy who ran the raffle and to all who provided the delicious cakes. Thank you to Neil Godwin who ran the Guess the Weight of the chicken which was won by Neil Whahby.

Other prize winners were:

**Louise Talbot:** Trophy for most points in the adult classes

**Toddy Hamilton-Gould:** Cookery trophy

**Roger Evans:** Art Trophy

David Johnson had provided some lovely medals for the Juniors who also won Easter eggs.

Children Under 10

1st **Ferris Whahby**

2nd = **Neil Whahby and Grace Everett**

3rd **Sophia Pickup**

The Autumn Show will take place on Saturday 6th September 2025 and will include a Plant Sale.





# VE Day 80 Celebrations

Weston commemorated the 80th anniversary of VE Day with the peel Village Hall hosting a wonderful lunch on the Saturday. The musical medley of classics from the era, encouraging everyone to join in (not Hessian was such a Doris Day fan?!).

Huge thanks to the Village Hall Committee who worked incredibly hard on the bunting and beautiful table arrangements, suppling delicious fish and





ing of the bells on the evening of the anniversary itself followed by the entertainment was provided by the brilliant D-Day Dollies who sang a that a huge amount of encouragement was needed – who knew Bob

ard to make it such an enjoyable occasion, decking out the hall with chips and ensuring that this special day didn't go unacknowledged.







## Weston Society

Weston Society met on Monday 10th March to hear a talk on the history of Radley Manor and village.

At the time of writing, the Society is due to meet next on Monday 12th May for a history of the Purton Ships Graveyard at the mouth of the River Severn, which you may have seen a glimpse of in a recent television programme featuring Clare Balding travelling along the Severn.

Our next meeting after that will be the AGM on Monday July

14th when our resident historian, Paula Hessian, was planning another talk on further historical aspects of our village. As you will be aware the majority of Paula's records were destroyed in the fire so we are discussing alternative arrangements!

We meet on the second Monday of alternative months, all are welcome free of charge to their first meeting, there is an annual subscription currently of £20 per person for anyone who then wishes to join, which enables us to pay for use of



Photo: Radley Manor

the Hall, pay for speakers and to share wine and nibbles after the meeting.



## Weston Walkers

Having had to cancel our February walk due to bad weather, it was good to be able to walk in March, even though few in number, from Bletchington around fields to Hampton Poyle, Hampton Gay and back to Bletchington.

Our numbers increased for the April walk, starting in Lower Heyford across fields through Northbrook, across to Goldwell Spinney and back round to Lower Heyford.

Our next walk, weather permitting,

will have been on Monday 12th May and Mondays 9th June and 14th July after that, meeting at Weston Village Hall at 1.30 pm.

All are welcome to join in as and when, there is no commitment to every month, so if you wish to enjoy sociable company, conversation and exercise please come along and join in or speak to me.

There are now also several local walks to enjoy published on the Weston on the Green Parish

Council website, under Health and Wellbeing.

If while out walking you encounter any problems with overgrown vegetation, damaged stiles or footbridges, or any other issues, please let me know for Weston Parish or Katie Holt (01869 350219) for Bletchington Parish, in order that they can be reported to the County Council for repair.

Graham Barnett 07974 774159



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## Oxfordshire Way across the School Field

As regular walkers over the School Field will know, since the footpaths have been fenced off it is often difficult or even impossible to wade through flooded furrows.

This issue has been reported to Oxfordshire County Council Countryside Access Officer on a number of occasions and she and her team have been out to inspect it.

Their solution was to erect a bypass boardwalk over the worst areas but the Delivery Team see it as a seasonal issue which the path endures, so have postponed the work.

In order to get some action on this we need as many people to report the problem as often as possible when the path is under water, by copying and pasting the following link into your internet browser to access the Countryside Access map and file a report.

<https://publicrightsofway.oxfordshire.gov.uk/standardmap.aspx> or email [countryside@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:countryside@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

Thank you.  
Graham Barnett



## Walking in Oxfordshire

All the information you need to get walking in our beautiful county.

And talking of the flooded School Field path, now that summer's here and the floods have receded into a distant memory, make the most of the summer months and head out into the fields.

'Walking in Oxfordshire' has loads of interesting walks, both local and slightly further afield, all to download and print for free: <https://www.walkinginengland.co.uk/oxfordshire>.

It also has books of walks, details of all the walking groups in the county and much more. Whether you want to walk on your own or with a group, all the information is there in one place.



Photo by Annie Cooper





# Bus Tracker

for  
Weston-on-the-Green

Bus Service 24

Get the timetable  
for this bus service  
wherever you are:

**bustimes.org**

Just put in your  
postcode to  
access the full  
bus schedule

## Weston on the Green Community Bus



### ADDITIONAL DRIVERS NEEDED!

Weston on the Green Community Transport is in need of additional volunteer drivers. If you are over 30 years of age with a clean driving licence, no accidents in last 5 years and have spare time during the day, please consider helping to maintain this invaluable Community asset.

Mainly local trips to hospitals or surgery

**Contact Graham Barnett on 01869 350707**

Everyone is welcome to ...

## Neighbours' Natter



**2025**

**Weston-on-the-Green Village Hall**  
**Thursdays June 12<sup>th</sup> & July 10<sup>th</sup> 10am - Noon**  
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# Bob's Barn Owls update

Following the fire at our cottage, I've been asked many times: 'How are the Barn Owls?'

I remember watching them earlier on the nest box camera as they were preparing to fly off for an evening of hunting. No eggs had been laid at that point - the smoke and fire would have quickly made them fly off to somewhere safe. When I returned the following morning, to find the complete destruction of the roof, I could see that the nest box had been destroyed by the fire. However, I did see two owls flying around the surrounding area, probably confused by the disappearance of their home.

Over the next few days, some of the residents of Knowle Lane saw them flying close by. I contacted my colleagues at the Oxfordshire Barn Owl Conservation Group and

they supplied me with a new nest box and also advised on where to site it.

With the help of John Miller, the nest box has now been erected at the bottom of the garden. No camera connected at the moment but a few days later John told me that he had seen a barn owl sitting on top of the box. So we are hoping that the female has started to lay. We will find out in two week's time when someone from the conservation group will inspect the box using a fibre-optic scope.

There's a lot of folklore associated with owls, especially barn owls. In English literature, barn owls have a sinister reputation and are usually associated with death. However, I've found these two gems: in the USA, if you hear an owl-cry, you must return the call or else take off an item of clothing and put it



on backwards. And in Transylvania, farmers used to scare away owls by walking around their fields naked!

Hoots of laughter everyone

Bob Hessian



*During the fire*



*The aftermath*

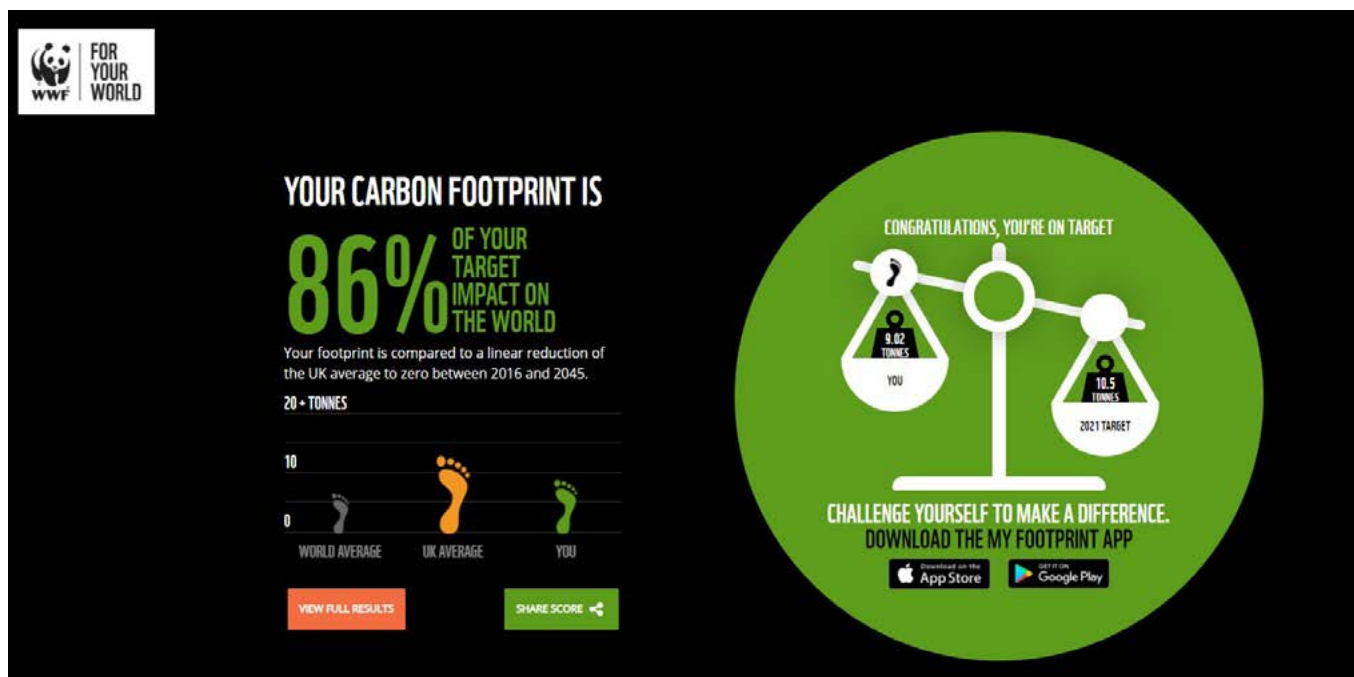
## Newby Cottage Fire

We would like to thank everyone who has contacted us to offer support, donate money and offer their services. Anyone who thinks they might have a contact that may offer us building supplies, either free or at a reduced price, please contact Kate on 07917 276624 or by email, [kate.newman001@gamil.com](mailto:kate.newman001@gamil.com)

Once again, we are truly grateful for everyone's support, thank you.

Kate, Neil, Bob and Paula

# Akeman Green Corner



The Eco Church group in the Akeman Benefice would like to help and encourage all of our parishioners to think about and care for the environment.

We will be providing regular tips and updates for how we can all do our bit, because lots of us doing small things over a period of time can be much more impactful than a few of us doing larger things. One quick and easy way to start considering your impact on the earth is to calculate your own personal or household Carbon Footprint. There are lots of

free online tools such as this one <https://footprint.wwf.org.uk/> that enable you to do a quick calculation with minimal input information, but which can help you learn how to start reducing your environmental impact.

For more information about the Akeman Benefice Eco Church group or what we are doing in our churches, please contact Charles Darby [cdarby@mebdesign.co.uk](mailto:cdarby@mebdesign.co.uk) or Joanna Clifford [joannaclifford.akeman@gmail.com](mailto:joannaclifford.akeman@gmail.com)



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- We get 50p from every £1 ticket and a further 10p goes to other good causes
- Join your community in making where we live an even better place

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Supporters must be 16 years of age or older

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- Browse** Over 6,000 stores!
- Shop** Visit the store via the website or App, then shop as normal
- Raise** Give As You Live make a free donation to the Village Hall

Weston on the Green Memorial Village Hall  
**registered charity no. 264754**  
Thank you for your support



Alexandra House of Joy is a local charity seeking to provide a much-needed centre for young and older adults with profound learning disabilities and their primary caregivers, living in Oxfordshire. This charity has come about following the life and death of our daughter, Alexandra, who for 47 years gave us the absolute privilege of sharing in her world on a daily basis.

Continuing on from our very successful fundraising events in April and May, we've a couple more dates for your diaries.

### **Cheese and Wine evening, 12th July**

Kindly hosted by Pavers Shoe Store, Bicester Ave, Bicester this



will be held in the Boardroom and Terrace of Bicester Motion, Buckingham Road, OX26 5HA at 7.00 pm. There will be a raffle plus an auction of a Magnum Bottle of

Moët Chandon Champagne along with four tickets to the Bicester Heritage Scramble.

### **Family Fun Day and Dog Show, 9th August**

Join us at Whitelands Farm and Sports Centre, Bicester OX26 1AJ for a great event for all dog lov-ers! More information to follow.

If you would like to keep up with all our events and news and to purchase tickets, please visit our website, alexandrahouseofjoy.co.uk

Very many thanks for your interest and support.

Ian and Rachael Scott-Hunter and Team AHJ



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# June news

## Summer nature

### Seasonal Spotlight

For many of our local hedgerows, summer is berry season! If you're curious about your own hedgerows at this time, consider surveying your hedges to receive management advice to ensure your hedges stay healthy! <https://www.wildoxfordshire.org.uk/guidance/hedgerow-surveying>

### Great Big Green Week 7th to 15th June

The Great Big Green Week is the UK's biggest celebration of community action to tackle climate change and protect nature. See how you can join in the action and follow local communities... Find your local Big Green Week events to get involved with here: <https://greatbiggreenweek.com/>

You can also follow events and updates on social media or add your Great Big Green Week actions using the #GreatBigGreenWeek

### Let it Bloom June!

Enjoyed 'No Mow May'? Bring even more wildlife to your wildflowers and take part in 'Let it Bloom June'! Mowing at the end of May removes the free buffet you've created for your bees and butterflies. Let it Bloom June allows the nectar source to stay that little bit longer. Why not leave an area that's got the most flowers? If you're able to, a way to provide nectar all through the summer is to leave this section uncut until September and then trim it. All these options give your garden even more of a chance to diversify and provide for wildlife.

### Open Garden Days

Look out for Open Garden events in your local area, and see if you can spot how many are gardening



with nature in mind, creating havens for wildlife and beautiful spaces for us. Many Open Gardens are registered on this website [https://www.opengardens.co.uk/open\\_gardens\\_in\\_oxfordshire.php](https://www.opengardens.co.uk/open_gardens_in_oxfordshire.php)

### Wildlife friendly gardening jobs for June:

June is another bustling period for garden wildlife. Birds diligently seek caterpillars to nourish their chicks, while bees, moths, butterflies, and other pollinators thrive amidst blooming plants and sunny days. At night, hedgehogs forage for beetles, millipedes, and other invertebrates along our borders to provide for their young. As if this wasn't enough, this season's amphibians will venture from garden ponds in search of cool, moist refuge for the first time.

#### 1) Put out and top up water

Water is crucial for wildlife beyond drinking. Keeping the bird bath topped up means birds can drink and bathe in dry weather. With clean feathers, birds are better able to regulate their body temperatures, fly from predators and are less likely to get disease. Amphibians like newts, frogs, and

toads use water for shelter and breeding, while butterflies obtain essential minerals from muddy water. Any water source, from puddles to ponds, attracts and helps wildlife – particularly now we're in the warmer months! Make sure you've got water sources in your garden.

- Try placing water dishes and bird baths near trees or shrubs so that wildlife can get to safety easily.
- Also try putting water at ground level in dishes or a dug-in pond so that hedgehogs can drink (make sure your pond has an easy escape route).
- You could also put in butterfly puddling stations which are





shallow dishes of gravel and water to help butterflies get the minerals and hydration they need.

### 2) Create a cool, damp spot for amphibians to take shelter

Make a log pile or 'hibernaculum' in a shady corner. If doing a log pile, bury the bottom layer of logs and fill nooks and crannies with fallen leaves and moss to make it good for amphibians. Or use the Wildlife Trust's 'how to' to make a hibernaculum. This is a dug-down structure that can be used by reptiles and amphibians for shelter in the summer and hibernation in the winter.

### 3) Avoid deadheading roses so that they create rosehips for the birds later this year

Thank you so much for all you have done for nature's recovery in the last year. Together we have brought people together, created more space for nature, and inspired more people to act

## Build a hibernaculum

Great for amphibians and reptiles!

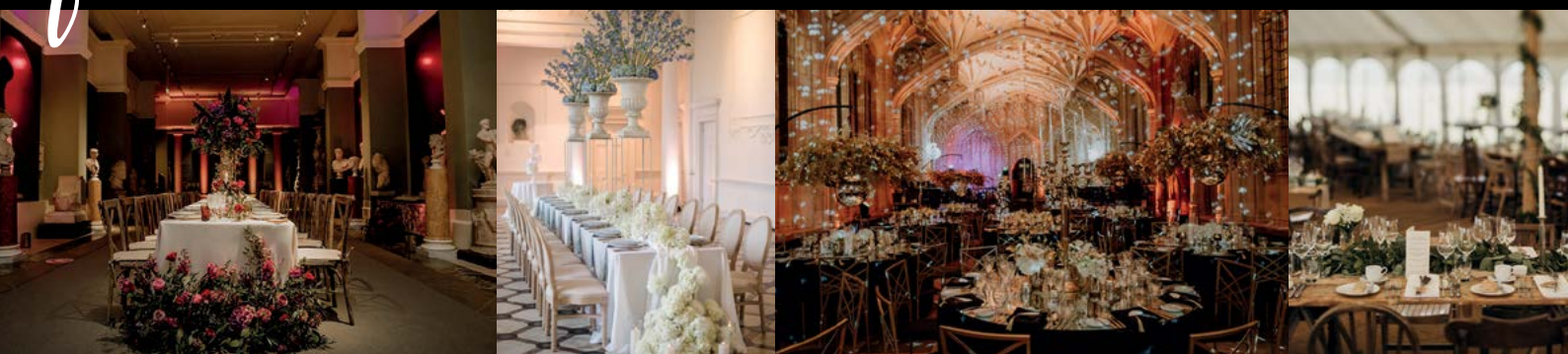


for nature. Check out our website to find out more about the many ways you can support us and our recent achievements: <https://www.wildoxfordshire.org.uk/>

Rhiannon Young  
Wild Oxfordshire Nature Recovery  
Engagement Officer



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- online mandatory training (apx. 8 hrs).

We do not recommend this work for those who have experienced a significant bereavement in the last two years.

Training will take place from September to December 2025 and it is essential that all training is attended.

**Closing date  
for applications:  
30 June 2025**

**If you are interested in finding out more  
or applying, please contact us on:**

W: [sobellhouse.org/bereavement-volunteer](https://sobellhouse.org/bereavement-volunteer)

E: [pallcarevolunteerservices@ouh.nhs.uk](mailto:pallcarevolunteerservices@ouh.nhs.uk)

T: 01865 225944/01865 225868







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### STEP 3

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Alternatively, you can call the **Pension Credit claim line** on **0800 99 1234**.

### STEP 4

#### Wait to hear from us

**You will be notified by post** when your claim has been assessed.



## Dates for the Diary

3rd June	12.30 pm	Golden Leaves Lunch
4th June	7.30 pm	Parish Council meeting
7th June	9.00 am – 12.00 pm	Food Bank Collection, Weston Community Shop
9th June	1.30 pm	Weston Walkers; meet at the Village Hall
12th June	10.00 am – 12.00 pm	Neighbours' Natter
23rd June	2.00 – 4.00 pm	Craft Group
27th June	7.00 – 9.00 pm	Pimm's & Prosecco Evening at the Village Hall
2nd July	7.30 pm	Parish Council meeting
5th July	9.00 am – 12.00 pm	Food Bank Collection, Weston Community Shop
8th July	12.30 pm	Golden Leaves Lunch
10th July	10.00 am – 12.00 pm	Neighbours' Natter
14th July	1.30 pm	Weston Walkers; meet at the Village Hall
14th July	7.30 pm	Weston Society AGM, Village Hall
28th July	2.00 – 4.00 pm	Craft Group
6th August	7.30 pm	Parish Council meeting



### FRIENDS' PRODUCE

As ever a huge thank you to the members of the community who keep this initiative going in aid of St Mary's Church and the Village Hall. As Weston Community Shop has only been trading for a short while we haven't got everything ironed out ready for this issue so Watch This Space for more updates. Rest assured, we do plan to keep supporting this great initiative for the Church and Village Hall and as a Community Benefit Society we will be looking at other ways we can support our local community.



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