

WESTON-ON-THE-GREEN

TheVillageNews

FEBRUARY/MARCH 2026



Photo: Patsy Parsons



BLenheim PALACE

WHAT'S ON

JANUARY

Restoration and Conservation Tours7th January - 13th February

FEBRUARY

February Half Term Fun14th - 22nd February

Blueprints of Power14th February - 10th April

MARCH - APRIL

Easter Eggstravaganza3rd - 6th April

MAY - JUNE - JULY

Jousting Tournament2nd - 4th May

Giffords Circus 8th - 18th May

Blenheim Palace Food Festival23rd - 25th May

Blenheim Palace Triathlon6th - 7th June

Blenheim Palace Flower Show 19th - 21st June

Blenheim Palace Festival June - July

EXPERIENCES FOR 2026 OR BEYOND

Family Treasuresmid February - end of August

Roof Top View re-opening January

Life Below Stairspermanent exhibition



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Village Directory

THE VILLAGE NEWS

EDITOR

Alex Reid: editor@wotgnews.uk

ADMINISTRATION:

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Tracy Rowan: accounts@wotgnews.uk

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RECTOR: The Rev'd Gareth Miller
01869 350224

WESTON COMMUNITY SHOP

01869 350230

Chair (Shamsher Pangu)

chair@weston-sos.org

Manager (Sam Bosher)

manager@westoncommunityshop.com

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Village Hall Secretary

Jordie: 350992

Village Hall Bookings

Jordie and Andrew Wilson:

01869 350992

COMMUNITY VAN BOOKING

Graham Barnett: 01869 350707

SOCIETIES

WESTON SOCIETY

WESTON WALKERS

FOOTPATH WARDEN

Graham Barnett: 01869 350707

GARDEN CLUB

Toddy Hamilton-Gould: 07748 088335

GOLDEN LEAVES

Eric Bohm: 07531 703409

NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

NEIGHBOURS' NATTER

Patsy Parsons: 01869 350331

THAMES VALLEY POLICE

Non-Emergency Line: 101

OCC

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Laura Gordon

laura.gordon@oxfordshire.gov.uk

CHERWELL DISTRICT

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WESTON ON THE GREEN PARISH COUNCIL

Diane Bohm, Chair; Neighbourhood Plan; Finance: 07770 895107

Michael Aldridge, Traffic: 01865 600075

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John Miller, Works: 350511

Tracy Rowan, Finance: 07833 473357

Parish Council Clerk; Playing Field:

Jane Mullane, 350282

e: clerk@westononthegreen-pc.gov.uk

From the editor

A very warm welcome to the first issue of 2026.

The new year was ushered in by the most incredible Wolf Moon, alleviating the bleakness left by the removal of the Christmas lights and setting the night sky ablaze with moonlight.

Another new year that was ushered in over 25 years ago was Y2K and we take a look at how Weston celebrated the new millennium. So many events were held throughout 2000 with every part of the village contributing in some way – an amazing example of the village pulling together for a common good.

On a sadder note, I was extremely sorry to hear of the death of three villagers. North Lane has lost two residents, John Lloyd, who moved into Pecker's Corner after his marriage to Sylvia in 1981, and Anne Brown, who, before moving to a nursing home a few years ago, was a huge supporter of the village and stalwart of the Garden Club. We also lost Graham Forbes who, with his wife Patti, moved to be nearer to their family a couple of years ago but before that he had served on the PC and was very much involved in the daily life of Weston. Weston also lost another massive supporter of the village, Tony Norris, who although not living in the village, was Site Manager at Axicon and was on the PC for many years. My sympathies to all their families and friends.

And on a personal note, I'm very sorry to have to report that I will be giving up the editorship of the *Village News*. Unfortunately time constraints are getting worse due to family concerns and so sadly the next issue will be my last issue. If anyone would like to edit the magazine, please get in contact.

Alisa



Annie Cooper



Roger Evans



Yasemin Olcay

Deadline for April/May edition:
5TH MARCH 2026



From the Rector

Gareth Miller

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

Dear friends,

As we approach the season of Lent (which begins on 18 February) we are invited once again to slow our pace, to reflect, and to think about spiritual discipline. Lent has traditionally been a time of prayer, fasting and generosity, but it is also a time that reminds us that faith is lived out in very practical ways.

This year, across our villages, we will be marking the season with a shared project called **Lent Labour**. We will be offering a series of simple, practical sessions in each village - litter picking, perhaps tidying churchyards and gardens, cleaning signs, and other small tasks that help care for the places we love. Each session will last around two hours and will be open

to all, with no special skills required – just a willingness to lend a hand. Obviously what we can achieve will depend on how many turn up!

After each session we will gather in church for a simple lunch of bread, soup and cheese. This shared meal will be an important part of the day: a moment to pause, to give thanks, and to enjoy fellowship together.

For those who are unable to take part in the practical work, there will also be a three-quarter hour **Faith Focus** in church before lunch. This will explore biblical teaching about the value of work – not only paid work, but all the everyday tasks through which we serve one another and honour God.

From the opening chapters of Genesis, where humanity is placed in the garden 'to till it and keep it' (Genesis 2.15), scripture affirms work as a gift rather than a burden. St Paul encourages us, 'Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the

Lord' (Colossians 3.23). Even the smallest tasks can be acts of love and obedience, shaping both our communities and our hearts.

Lent Labour is about more than getting jobs done. It is about working side by side, caring for our communities, and discovering again that even the simplest acts can be part of our worship. I warmly encourage you to join in, in whatever way you are able.

With every blessing for a reflective and productive Lent!
Gareth

PS At the time of going to press the full details are not ready but the sessions will be on Saturday mornings, from 10.30 am – 12.30 pm, with a cup of coffee beforehand in church. We will move around the six villages (all except Hampton Gay) – one village per week. All you need to do is turn up with suitable clothing and some gloves and perhaps implements. Further details will be posted on the benefice website, in the weekly email, and on Facebook. Watch this space!

St Mary's Church, Weston on the Green warmly invites you to join in our services in December and January

1st February	11:00	Café Church
8th February	18:00	Benefice Choral Evensong, Bletchington
15th February	11:00	Holy Communion
18th February:	10:00	Holy Communion, Chesterton
Ash Wednesday	19:00	Holy Communion, Kirtlington
22nd February	10:00	Benefice Communion, Chesterton
1st March	11:00	Morning Worship
8th March	18:00	Benefice Choral Evensong, Kirtlington
15th March	11:00	Holy Communion
22nd March	10:00	Benefice Communion, Wendlebury
29th March:	10:00	Benefice Communion, Middleton Stoney
Palm Sunday		

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:

Funeral: 17 December 2025 John Patrick Lloyd
Funeral: 6 February 2026 Mary Anne Brown

BENEFICE NEWS

Benefice Choral Evening Service with the Akeman Church Community Choir:
8th February at Bletchington and 8th March at Kirtlington; both at 18:00

Ash Wednesday 18th February
10:00 Holy Communion at Chesterton (said)
19:00 Holy Communion at Kirtlington (sung)
*both with optional imposition of ashes

Mothering Sunday 15th March
15:00 Benefice Family Service at Bletchington

Palm Sunday 29th March
10:00 Palm Sunday Procession and Service at Middleton Stoney

This has been a very different festive season as we are still very much feeling the loss of dear Peter Driver. However, our village has been amazing at pulling together and it really has been a huge team effort to get to the end of the year with all of our usual events.

On Saturday 6th December we held our 'Big Breakfast'. Huge thanks goes to Toddy for finding our fantastic chef Dan and to all our kind team of servers, clearers and helpers on the day. Thank you also to those in the village who came out to support the event.

Our Carol Service was really well attended.

We had a beautifully decorated church by Mandy Jones and Emma Bernard, with Sally Brown, Louise Talbot and Ruth Pangu doing the flowers and ribbons. Many thanks to Esme Elvidge for her beautiful solo and our fantastic readers.

Thanks to James Bernard for stepping in for the Christmas Eve service and to our visiting preacher Judith Ryder and organist, Melissa Dryden. Finally, many thanks to Roz Bullen for helping on Christmas Day.

May we take this opportunity to thank everyone who has helped the PCC over the year. The Church Mice cleaning team, the bell ringers, the flower arrangers, the churchyard mowers, the organists and the clergy team. Special thanks also goes to Eric Bohm who, despite retiring from being Warden, continues to be our Treasurer, advice-giver and biggest cheerleader.

Nicky Donne



Chair's comments

While writing my report for the magazine, I am aware that I write in one time and the reader reads it at another. It is only a matter of weeks, but a considerable amount of parish business is done at the beginning of the calendar year in preparation for the end of our financial year which is March 31st. The central task at the January meeting is the formal agreement of the budget. The Parish Council does this after several months of analysis, prioritisation of projects and identification of where additional funding via grants is necessary for projects to go ahead or even continue. Once that is completed, the council discusses the precept to be requested from Cherwell District Council. That is the amount of money we need to manage the ongoing expenses which includes the Clerk's salary, village maintenance, playground and playing field upkeep, subscription costs to organisations that support our work, website management and email costs and as many of our ongoing projects that we can continue i.e. the community van. While Cherwell District Council has yet to finalise its data, the 2026/27 budget includes a 4.3% increase for Band D properties (£4.46 per year, or £0.37 per month for Band D taxpayers).

In recent years, external funding has been successfully secured for a number of important projects, including the community bus, a new defibrillator at the playing field and speed indicator devices for the B430. This year we have large and costly projects that will need additional funding which include traffic mitigation measures, bus shelters, replacing the community van and safe pedestrian access to the playground.

We are trying to accomplish the above for the benefit of our village. If you are new, you will have different experiences of village and/or town/city councils. The larger the place one lives, the more remote your council will possibly have felt. The history of Weston

on the Green is that with a population of several hundred, there has been a fairly close tie to the Parish Council. A phone call to the Clerk or Chair can often clarify a situation or share important information – a dangerous fallen tree, pothole or an explanation of a council decision. All councillors welcome conversations with villagers, those who have lived here for years or newcomers – I often include those who moved in during Covid as it was difficult to get to know neighbours and participate in parish council discussions at that time.

You will have noted in previous reports that there is a sense of pressure to understand what is important for all to know in order to navigate the new planning law. Hence, I felt a sense of support and reassurance having received the open letter to parish and town councils from the Chair of the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) which, in his words, is a 'pivotal moment for our sector'. Following is part of the letter which is included as it helps us put into words what our role is currently and in the near future:

... Parish and town councils are the bedrock of community life across England. They are an invaluable asset to our country, essential to strong local government and paramount to the success of devolution. At a time of significant change, it is more important than ever that our collective voice is heard. As your Chair, I am determined to ensure that voice is stronger, louder and more influential at every level of government.

... Across the country, parish and town councils are stepping up to meet growing expectations and increasing responsibilities. Many are taking on new assets and services, responding to financial pressures, and navigating the impacts of local government reorganisation. They are doing so with



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resilience, innovation and a deep commitment to their communities. NALC must continue to step up alongside them, shaping the national conversation about the vital role of grassroots local government and championing high standards across our sector.

... We must continue to drive forward good governance in parish and town councils, from financial accountability and transparency to professionalism and the highest standards of ethical leadership. It is the cornerstone of our credibility. It means supporting parish and town councils and councillors with clear advice and guidance, training and access to best practices, while also ensuring that NALC itself remains transparent, accountable and responsive to its members.

... Looking ahead, NALC and county associations have a critical role to play in helping parish and town councils prepare for the future. From digital transformation and climate adaptation to community resilience and new service models, the challenges and opportunities facing our sector are evolving rapidly. We must anticipate change, share learning widely and ensure that councils of every size are equipped to thrive and remain at the heart of local decision-making.

(Quoted from letter to parish and town councils from Cllr Iain Hamilton, NALC Chair, 6th January 2026)

The Parish Council understands that we face a challenging future. Not only will we continue to deliver projects that serve the village, but we need to understand and be involved in the discussions about the re-organisation of government structures and how to use our Neighbourhood Plan's policies to protect us from developments that we don't find acceptable. We must set aside time to discuss and respond to the consultations and debates when we are asked to contribute (and even when we aren't!). If we take the attitude that we have no options, no voice and do not contribute, then we lose the opportunity to help shape how change will look in our small village.

In order to manage this – for the benefit of the individual reader and the collective – your Parish Council is asking for more involvement in our work. Our current team is collegiate, works with a variety of views but still reaches consensus, keeps the values of our development plan alive and present in debate and decisions. We need at least three more councillors to manage all of the above. Without that support, the village will find a decrease in service and understanding of how we can be part of wider decisions that affect us. You don't need to be experienced in this work. There is an induction programme and the opportunity for training. We would like a range of ages on the team so you might align your day job with what you offer to do on the council. If you are retired, you might also align your professional work with council work. So, please take this seriously. Call either me or the Clerk or speak with any of the councillors. Names and numbers are at the front of the magazine.

Over the past months, the Clerk has kept a close eye on our regulations and policies. She has presented updated and new drafts which the council needs to be compliant with regulations. We are audited annually and governance is one of the categories that is commented on. In December and January, we agreed and updated the following:

Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy

- All public servants need to know and understand this policy
- Policy includes a thorough explanation of Harassment & Bullying including definitions, examples and a full explanation of how and when to report a concern, both formal and informal

Note: It has not always been the case that volunteer groups have had this protection. It is important that everyone feels safe when volunteering for the village.

Equality and Diversity Policy

- The law on this topic is thoroughly explained
- There is clarity about the council's duty to take measures to overcome barriers to using services. We need to think ahead on these matters: i.e. Accessibility Statement that includes the website
- An important note on this policy is that the offending behaviour can be deliberate or unintentional
- The Grievances procedure is thoroughly explained

Biodiversity Policy

- Policy has practical applications which should be woven into decision-making i.e. responding to planning applications, managing the land and property that we oversee, encourage low impact/nature positive practices, encourage all businesses and other organisations to keep biodiversity strategically in mind
- The policy includes an action plan and audit – important for the ponds, spinney and all our green spaces

IT Policy

- Note: currently PC members use personal emails for PC communication. We are planning to migrate to .gov.uk emails for specific roles, i.e. chair/planning
- This policy outlines the guidance and responsibilities for the appropriate use of IT resources and covers a wide range of topics from data management and security, appropriate use of email

Internal Financial Controls Policy

- This policy follows the approved Financial Regulations and states the control and oversight of financial matters
- There are measures to detect fraud and corruption, compliance to laws and controls/practices for the management of funds

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

25/02908/DISC & 25/02909/DISC
– Cruck Cottage

25/02637/F – Bramley Cottage, Mill Lane

25/02287/F – Weston Community Shop

25/02321/DISC – Ruperts Cottage, Northampton Road

Appeals

25/00041/REF – Reynards Lodge, North Lane - pending

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.

25/00418/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.

25/01418/F - Family Farm House Part Of A34

Driver rest stop facility including the formation of a new entry and exit slip road adjoining the A34, parking area for cars and HGVs, erection of an amenity building (including toilets and catering area), EV charging station, solar PV array, battery storage facility, other ancillary structures/buildings and landscaped amenity area. 2037 earliest connection to National Grid for solar.

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From page 7

- Electors have the right to see the accounts, and the annual audit of accounts is available on the website

These and other policies and regulations are on the council website: www.westononthegreen-pc.gov.uk

Keep your eye open for a village meeting to discuss the updated Neighbourhood Plan. We've been on hold for a while as we await the final details of the new planning laws.

Diane Bohm

New defibrillator installed at Jubilee Playing Field

We are pleased to advise residents that a new life saving community defibrillator has been installed at the Jubilee Playing Field, helping to improve emergency response and community safety should anyone suffer a cardiac arrest.

Working with the Community Heartbeat Trust the defibrillator has been funded through a combination of Parish Council reserves, a grant from Midcounties Co-op and the Oxfordshire County Councillor Priority Fund, and we are very grateful for this generous support.

Upon receiving a call the

ambulance service will direct the caller to the machine and will issue the access code as the cabinet is locked. Guidance via clear instructions is then provided on the units use.

A training awareness session will be organised shortly by the Parish Council and the Village Hall and delivered by Community Heartbeat, enabling residents to use this life-saving equipment with confidence. The session will cover what to do if someone is unconscious, CPR and using a defibrillator and the difference between sudden cardiac arrest and a heart attack.



Oxfordshire County Council: Salt Advice and Gritting Information

The Parish Council purchased salt bins for the village, which are filled (for free) annually by Oxfordshire County Council. They are located at Knowle Lane, Westlands Avenue, Church Road (opposite the shop), Church Close/Lane junction and Milestone Lane.

The rock salt in the bins is provided so members of the public can treat public roads and pavements when icy – especially where the council's gritting vehicles don't go. It's for use only on public highways (not private drives, patios, gardens etc.).

How to Spread Salt Effectively:

Oxfordshire's guidance stresses efficient use of salt because a little goes a long way:

- Only use when icy or before ice forms: salt works best before frost/ice sets. If you wait until after a thick layer of snow/ice has formed, first clear as much

snow as possible (with a shovel or broom) and then apply salt.

- Thin, even layer: use about 20 grams of salt per square metre (≈ a heaped tablespoon) to treat a path or road. A trowel or scoop is a useful tool or mechanical spreaders (like garden seed spreaders) can cover larger areas more evenly.
- Over-salting is wasteful and harmful to the environment (verges, hedges, watercourses).

Road Gritting by Oxfordshire County Council

OCC runs a Winter Maintenance Service to keep key roads as safe as possible in ice and snow and treat around 42% of the county's road network – this is above average for UK local authorities. However, they do not routinely grit pavements. Priority is given to major roads with high traffic, bus routes, access to hospitals/fire stations/schools, and



known problem areas. Minor, local, and unclassified roads often aren't pre-salted or are treated only later, depending on weather conditions.

The council publishes a gritting route map online via Causewayonenetwork: <https://one.network/uk/oxfordshire> (toggle "Winter Gritting Routes" under Driver Information, in the drop down list adjacent to the Search function).

There's also a gritter tracker during active weather: <https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/transport-and-travel/roadworks/how-we-maintain-our-roads> so you can see where salters are operating, so you can see where salters are operating.



Firstly, I want to say a massive thank you to our wonderful customers, staff and volunteers for their unwavering support during 2025.

We ended the year on a real high with a cracking December! Our locally made Christmas wreaths and our wide selection of gifts and jewellery were hugely popular; our traditional Weston Shop damson gin was enjoyed by many, and our village Christmas cards sold out within a week!

In the Post Office, we sold thousands of stamps and handled more than 2,100 parcels during the month, while we processed nearly 2,650 transactions and sold over 6,500 items in the shop.

As we pass through the cold winter and look ahead to spring, we're turning our attention to further adapt our stocked product lines with the changes in season, so

AN UPDATE FROM YOUR COMMUNITY SHOP

do keep checking our shelves for new ranges. If there's anything you feel might prove popular that we ought to stock, please email us at shop@westoncommunityshop.com – as ever, we'd love to hear your thoughts.

We're also looking to get plans in motion for the building alterations and lovely new terrace. There will inevitably be disruption to our opening hours while the works are being carried out but you can rest assured that our committee, the team and I will do everything we

can to keep that to a minimum. We don't have any timescales yet, but we will keep you posted every step of the way.

In readiness to create the terrace, we've moved the newspapers to a new, more portable stand. With help from Tony and his tractor, we've also removed the rickety old bench and table, and the terrace already looks bigger! There is a new bench outside, kindly donated by Tony, which we'll be sprucing up in due course.

We're always looking for volunteers to help out in the shop, so if you'd be able to donate some of your time here and there, do let us know.

We're all very excited about what 2026 is going to bring for the shop and Post Office. Follow us on Facebook @Weston Community Shop for updates. It's going to be a great year!



Above: Our village Christmas cards, designed by local, Mike (www.dsrartco.com)

Left: Our new bespoke range, which includes vintage sweets, biscuits and condiments



POST
OFFICE

WESTON WOMBLE VILLAGE LITTER PICK

Saturday 21st March 2026
9.30am



Meet at Weston on the Green Village Hall
All Equipment Provided



Thank you



Weston on the Green
Parish Council

The early winter months seem an age away, but we start our write-up recalling a very informative and jolly night back in mid-November when Richard Household from Brompton Wine led villagers in a wine tasting evening. On arrival villagers were treated to a glass of Louis Pommery Brut sparkling wine before sampling four white wines and four red wines. Notes were taken and views compared as the sampling got underway. A selection of cheeses to accompany the wine were also on offer as favourites were discussed amongst the tables.

Our thanks go to Toddy for organising and to Richard for hosting a fun and merry evening where we left a little more knowledgeable about a range of wines and with some definite front runners amongst the attendees.

Our final event of the year was the Christmas Tree lights switch-on at the end of November and thank you to those villagers who came along and made it a very special evening. The evening is one of our favourites of the year and it is so lovely to see villagers of all ages in the Hall as we get into the Christmas spirit.

Our thanks also go to all the local businesses who supported our Christmas raffle: BeccaLou Designs, Blenheim Palace, The Ben Jonson, The Chequers, The Flight House, The Milk shed, Peck & Feather, and Weston Community Shop. The proceeds of the raffle go towards the purchase of the Christmas tree



at the Village Hall, which provides much cheer during the long and gloomy winter days.

This year's tree stood at just over thirteen feet and had 4,500 lights on it. A massive thank you goes to Andrew who spent six hours installing the lights on a very cold November day, as well as to Clive who secured the tree ready for display upon delivery.

We must thank Father Christmas who took time out of his busy schedule to hand-deliver gifts of

games, activity packs, books and toys to children from the village. The sound of his sleigh bells as he approached the Hall caused much excitement for the children (and some of the grown-ups!). Thank you also to Paul and Keyna for the mulled wine and to Toddy for providing some delicious snacks for the event.

In the February 2025 *Village News*, we wrote about our successful application for the National Trust's 'Trees of Hope' initiative regarding the saplings from the Sycamore

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Gap tree. We were notified in November 2024, that out of five hundred applications we were to be one of the forty-nine recipients of a sapling (the odd number of forty-nine represents each foot in height of the Sycamore Gap tree at the time of its illegal felling in September 2023). We were amazed to be chosen but also very humbled to be one of the only two 'place' locations (the other place being Strabane).

Exactly a year on, and during National Tree Week 2025, the sapling arrived in the village cocooned in cardboard and fleece to protect it on its journey to Weston-on-the-Green from the National Trust's Plant Conservation Centre in East Devon. Before planting we took the advice of Diane and the Parish Council regarding the location of the tree, and we are very grateful to Diane who joined us on a wet Saturday morning to view possible locations. The following day was a perfect autumn morning – crisp and bright - and perfect for tree planting.

Huge thanks go to David Williams who prepared the ground, staked and planted the tree for us, making sure it has had the best start to its new life here in Weston. We hope villagers will enjoy the 'offspring' of the famous Sycamore Gap tree, as it starts to take shape over the following years.



Raffle Thanks

A huge thank you to all the businesses who very kindly donated a raffle prize to our Christmas raffle.

Our thanks go to:

BeccaLou Designs
The Ben Jonson
Blenheim Palace
The Chequers
Edinburgh Gin
The Flight House
The Milk Shed
Peck & Feather
Tesco
Weston Community Shop
Weston Manor Hotel

250 Club Results

DECEMBER 'BIG DRAW'

1st prize: £90 No 150 Graham Barnett
2nd prize: £45 No 23 Clive Hamilton-Gould
3rd prize: £15 No 24 Frankie & Geoff White

JANUARY

1st prize: £18 No 13 Diane Bohm
2nd prize: £12 No 204 Yasemin Olcay
3rd prize: £6 No 88 Mr & Mrs F Butt

Villagers may see the Committee out and about over the next few weeks for the 250 Club renewal subscription, due on 1st March.

The 250 Club funds help to support the up-keep and refurbishment of the Village Hall. Each year 250 numbers are sold to residents of Weston on the Green at £6.00 each. Every month there is a draw of three winning numbers. Usually, the three winners receive payouts of £18.00, £12.00, and £6.00, but every 6 months (December and June) there are bumper prizes of £90.00, £45.00 and £15.00.

The results are announced in the *Village News* magazine and the prizes delivered to the lucky winners. We have some spare numbers. If you would like to sign up, please email us at westonvillagehall@live.co.uk

Thank you to those villagers who have renewed their 250 Club numbers and for helping maintain the Hall. It is greatly appreciated.

PHONE BOX LIBRARY

Opening Times

The phone box is now open all the time!

Please feel free to browse the shelves and borrow some books. We try to rotate stock on a regular basis and are always open to donations.

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Many thanks and happy reading!



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WESTON-ON-THE-GREEN

TheVillageNews

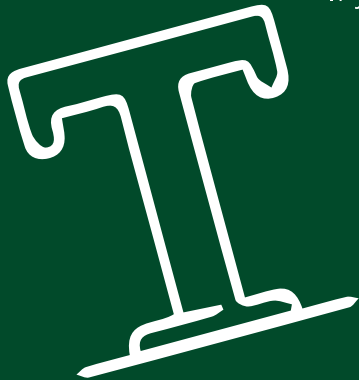
The Village News is looking for a new Editor

to take over from the June/July 2026 issue onwards.
If you're interested in helping to keep the Village News going

Please contact either
Alex: editor@wotgnews.uk

or

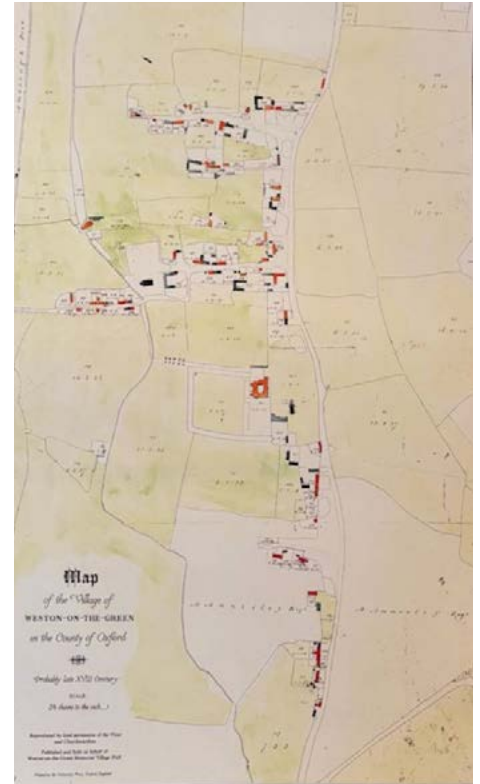
Diane: dianebohm@gmail.com



• Weston's Millenn

A quarter of a century ago we in Weston, along with everyone else in the world, were exercised with how to mark the moving from 1999 to 2000.

As always, in Weston we planned ahead and called a meeting ...



It was quickly established that grants were available to help fund projects marking the Millennium but any form of party would have to be funded by the parish so various ideas to raise money were put forward.

These included a Family Fun Day, a Valentine's Evening with a candlelit supper and an Easter Bonnet parade with an Easter Egg Hunt as well as a Bring and Buy and cake stall to coincide with a coffee morning. If it was a way of raising funds then Weston had a go!

The Village Hall became the venue of Big Breakfasts, Sausage and Mash Lunches, Soup and Roll Lunches, a Quiz Night, an Afternoon Tea and, for the children, a Family Games Night with Ploughman's Supper, a Family Fun Evening and a Halloween Party. I'm glad to say that some of these have continued into the first quarter of the Millennium.

Other ways of raising money included the sale of facsimile

copies of the 1918 sale catalogue, the 1800 parish map and notelets produced from illustrations in Weston Matters.

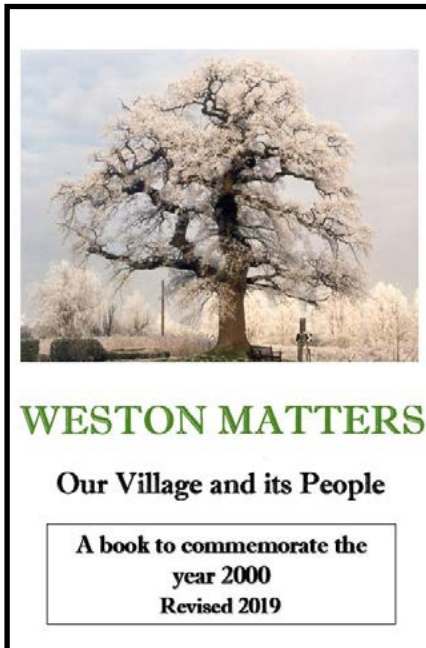
The Fun Day, held at Mill House, included a picnic, duck racing, sports races, a children's fancy dress parade, a magician, a jazz band and an accordionist. There was also a treasure hunt – looking for the Millennium Bug. The pottery bugs, made by a local potter, were given to every child in the village – all 92 of them. People could bring their own picnic but there was also a BBQ and free ice cream on offer. A photographer took a commemorative group photo of all present and, despite the weather being truly British and dull and overcast all day, it was a great event.

Following on from the success of this day we had a lovely afternoon in early September – the sun shone! The then-owners of Weston Manor provided the venue as well as the food for a cream tea and those who were interested were offered

a guided walk around the village with an emphasis on the history of the buildings and people following a figure of eight route round the village, stopping at points of interest. The numbers supporting this event were out of all proportion to what was expected and with just two guides, it was a struggle to take about 30-40 people each. The Manor managed to keep finding scones, cream and jam as the figures rose to over double the expected 50-60 people and, with the sunshine and the magnificent setting of the Manor gardens, it was a wonderful day.

Another idea was for a 'booklet' which would both consider the history of the parish and also describe it as of the year 2000. As the research progressed, the Millennium Book Project gathered momentum and numerous Weston residents' memories were collected, their photographs copied and chapters describing the people of Weston past and present began to take shape. Many hours were spent in the County

ium Celebrations •



Record Office consulting different documents, church and census records, newspapers and court papers. All this information became the book *Weston Matters*.

The amount of information gathered and the enthusiasm of those sharing their memories and photographs suggested that an exhibition might be appropriate. This was staged over two days with a school reunion for those who had attended Weston school taking place in the evening. Over 80 came to the reunion and, with the exception of four individuals, everyone present had either attended the school, worked there or served as a governor. The school had closed in 1984 but the feelings for the little thatched building and the education and care given there were palpable.

There was a buffet and celebration cake, decorated as the school and maypole, which was cut by Alice Glazier (née Tompkins) who started school in 1922, along with two of the last to join, Kate Hessian and Louise Kerry. The school bell, rescued on the closure of the school and now hanging in the Village Hall, was rung to signal the start of proceedings.

As part of our research we found that evacuees from Globe Road School, Bethnal Green had come to Weston and we made contact with one evacuee who, with others from the East End, attended the reunion and shared their memories with the village archive.

Other organisations in the village put forward their own projects.

St Mary's commissioned a stained-glass window depicting a cockleshell which is mirrored in the door surround and also in history as the church was once dedicated to St James of Compostella, long associated with travellers and so appropriate for a village on the route of the Oxfordshire Way. (A medieval pilgrim's badge, depicting a cockleshell, was found in the parish in the 19th century and is now in the Ashmolean). A service was held on January 1st to mark the beginning of the 2nd Millennium.



The Horticultural Society, now the Garden Club, planted up, and has continued to care for, the roundabout at the junction of Mill Lane and Church Road. Initially a plan of red, white and blue was chosen.

The WI became involved in a project to produce nine circular walks of which the first three were produced and printed for 2000. Other local WIs joined us to walk together and then enjoy a lunch in the Village Hall. Although the Foot and Mouth restrictions in 2001 meant not all

these walks were printed, the group Weston Walkers grew from this initiative and they still walk together today. The WI also had a photograph of the whole Institute taken to mark the year 2000.

Other plans included a tree to be planted as well as one planted within the Manor grounds at the stroke of midnight as the New Millennium started. A cycle path from the junction of Church Road and the B430 to the mini roundabout by the Chequers was created courtesy of Sustrans, who used a £43 million grant to produce a network of cycle paths across the country. Sadly, money can't buy everything and the Parish Council reported their dissatisfaction with the standard of workmanship on our short section.

Ann Dawson, a local TV presenter, was living just outside the parish boundary and became part of Carlton TV's 'Year of Promises' when she promised to help provide equipment for a children's play area in Weston.

And what of the actual change from December 31st 1999 to January 1st 2000, when it was possible all forms of equipment would falter when faced with turning over the clock and the Millennium Bug was feared? Weston celebrated with a social evening in the Village Hall with a bar, buffet and dancing. The evening was rounded off by everyone going outside the hall to watch the firework display put on by the Manor.

Weston celebrated the new Millennium in style and it's wonderful that out of the many fund-raising activities during that year plenty have continued throughout the following 25 years, helping to keep the fabric of the village together.

Paula Hessian



Weston Society

Weston Society met on Monday 10th November when Maurice East gave a talk on Slade Camp on Shotover Country Park, originally a military training facility which was then turned over to civilian use as temporary accommodation after WW2, finally being closed in 1971 and almost disappearing from memory and view.

Volunteers from Oxford Preservation Society are now clearing the

overgrowth and making the site accessible again as part of Oxford's history.

We will then have met again on Monday 12th January for a talk by Stephen Barker entitled 'Women in the First World War'.

We meet again on Monday 9th March to welcome Simon Wenham speaking on 'Poverty, Pestilence and Public Health in Victorian Britain'.

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 the Hall and pay our speakers, with a small donation towards sharing wine and nibbles after the meeting.



Weston Walkers

Unfortunately our final planned walk of the year in November was cancelled due to bad weather.

We then took a break over December and January, re-commencing on February 9th, meeting at Weston Village Hall at 1.30 pm and then on the second Monday of subsequent months.

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 come along and join in or speak to me.

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

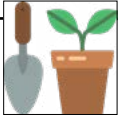
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Weston-on-the-Green Garden Club



I thought I wouldn't have that much to say about the Garden Club at this time of year, but following on from a Committee Meeting we had recently, it turns out that I was wrong. 2026 is going to be a busy year and we have some exciting events planned so read on!

At the beginning of November David Johnson mustered up some Garden Club members to tidy up the churchyard before the Winter. They did a fantastic job and just in time for the Remembrance Sunday Service. I think everyone appreciated what had been achieved. Thank you, David and everyone involved.

On November 26th fifteen of us travelled to Waddesdon Manor in two minibuses. The day was bright and sunny and we had a wonderful wander around the house which

had been beautifully decorated. The Light Trail and Christmas Market kept us all occupied, culminating in a fantastic laser light show depicted on the front of the Manor.

this year! There will be a Garden Party on July 18th. Please keep this date free. Further details will be circulated in the next *Village News*.



We were fortified throughout the day by stopping and buying cups of mulled wine and hot chocolate before our return back to Weston in the evening.

Everyone seemed to have a good time and judging by the amount of carrier bags joining us on the return journey a fair amount of Christmas shopping was achieved!

We are making plans for 2026. Weston on the Green Garden Club is 60 years old. Well, actually it's 62, but because of a hiatus during the Covid years we are intending to celebrate

Our AGM will be on Tuesday 17th March at 7pm in the Village Hall. Please do come along. There will be wine and nibbles on offer. The next date for your diary is Saturday March 28th which is our Spring Show. This is the week before Easter, so we will definitely have an Easter theme, including Easter baskets, painted eggs and Easter cakes. Lots of classes for children and adults and schedules will be in the Community Shop and sent out to all members in the first week of March. You really don't have to be an expert gardener to enter our shows, so do please give it a go.

We will be giving children under 16 who live in the village, or have village connections, 5 sunflower seeds to plant in their garden, or a large pot. We will come and measure the flowers sometime in August and you will be advised of the date. Please let us know if you would like a pack of seeds, which will come with growing instructions. We would like as many children as possible to be involved in this and prizes will be awarded in different age categories. Please do get your children and grandchildren involved. Seed packs will be available at our Spring Show on March 28th, but if you want them before then email me on toddyhg@gmail.com or Whatsapp/ message 07748088335.

On Thursday April 16th we have been invited to Bunkers Hill Nursery at 6.00 pm, when it is closed to the general public. There will be tea and cake and a brief talk on the history of Bunkers Hill Nursery and gardening advice. We will then have the Nursery to ourselves and will have an opportunity to buy plants

with everything 15% off the marked price. This will be a great evening and an opportunity to purchase your Spring planting at bargain prices.

On May 23rd between 10:00 am and 2:00 pm we will be having a Bring and Buy Plant Sale in the Church. Please think about this when sowing your flower and veg seeds as all donations will be gratefully received. Tea and cake will also be available. The proceeds from this day will be split between the Church and the Garden Club. Do come along with some plants and maybe find a treasure for your garden at the same time.

We are planning Garden Open Evenings in May, June and August and further confirmed dates and venues will appear in the next Village News. In the meantime, as I write this the snowdrops and winter aconites are appearing in the churchyard, so Spring cannot be very far away.

Toddy Hamilton-Gould

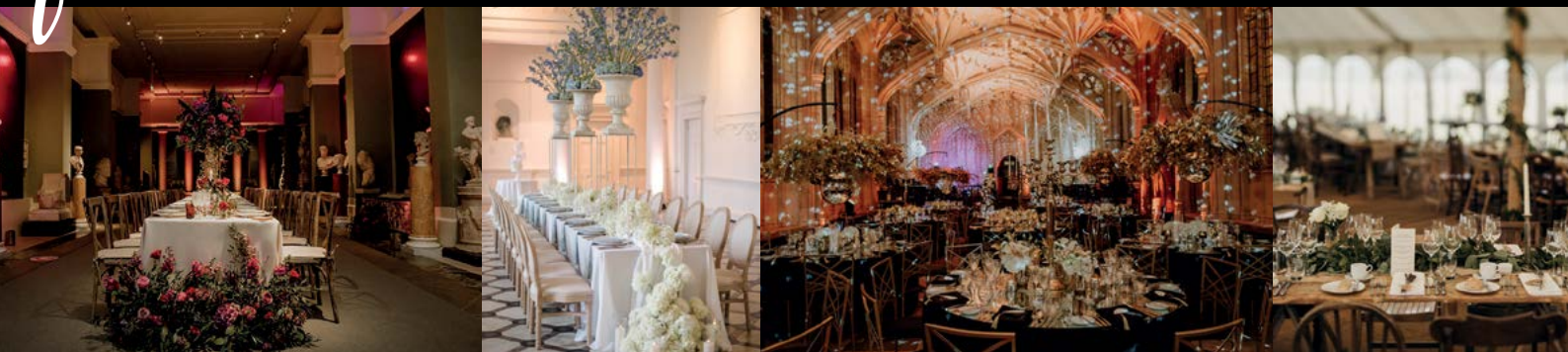


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FINE PLANNING

FROM THE GROTTO OF THE WOOD FAIRY

It has been a busy time of year for the fairy. Kindling began in September when 20 bags were supplied from the 11th September. October saw 44 bags go to the shop whilst November was 50 bags and December 71 bags, giving a total for 2025 of 185 bags which added up to 555kilos of firewood.

There have also been a number of requested items. On 13th November 12 King Charles III heads were supplied to the shop as a special order. This was followed on 16th December by a request for two Angels.

The fairy is in the process of producing a new range of items. These are animal-themed mobile phone holders, so if you stream content there is no need to hold the phone to watch a film etc. These will be approximately one third of the cost of online ones with no delivery charge, as they can be collected at the Community Shop.

Fridge magnets are already on sale.

The Fairy once again won employee of the year; the most valuable member of the grotto was Cherrie who provided the welcome coffee at regular intervals.

All in all a good 2025. Welcome to 2026 ...



Everyone is welcome to ...

Neighbours' Natter

Join us for conversation, coffee or tea and a biscuit. (£2)

Bring your MAGAZINES and PUZZLES to exchange.

Weston-on-the-Green
Village Hall, 10 am to 12 noon
February 12th and March 12th

Weston on the Green Community Bus

Our generously donated Community Transport vehicle is an excellent service helping villagers get to their doctor and hospital appointments. Equipped with a wheelchair hoist, residents can book this for trips in the local area.

To book please contact Graham Barnett on **01869 350707** giving as much notice as possible

OBITUARY

John Lloyd

1950 - 2025

John was born in 1950 in Chalgrove, the eldest of five, brother to Lilian, Eddie, Eileen and the late Harry, brother-in-law, uncle and great uncle.

As the family grew they moved firstly to Littlemore and then Wood Farm, Headington where he attended Margaret Road school, excelling in Maths and English. After leaving school John went to work at Morris Motors in the wages department where he worked until his retirement.

John had a huge love of 1960's music and he had a large record collection, which he was very proud of - he wouldn't let his younger siblings anywhere near it - and which he delighted in playing it very loudly.

He met his late wife Sylvia through mutual friends in the late 1970s and they married at St Mary's in Weston in January 1981. They had many happy holidays in Devon and John really missed Sylvia when she died in 2019, but his late friend Peter Driver and Peter's wife



Alison, along with John's brother Eddie and Eddie's wife, Rachel were there to support him through this difficult time.

John enjoyed attending the Golden Leaves lunches at the Village Hall where he could catch up on the village news. He enjoyed a glass or two of whisky and red wine whilst listening to his CDs and relaxing in his favourite reclining armchair.

Walking in Oxfordshire

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

If you're feeling in need of walking off those winter blues, why not enjoy the beautiful English countryside.

'Walking in Oxfordshire' has lots 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



Photo by Sally Cole

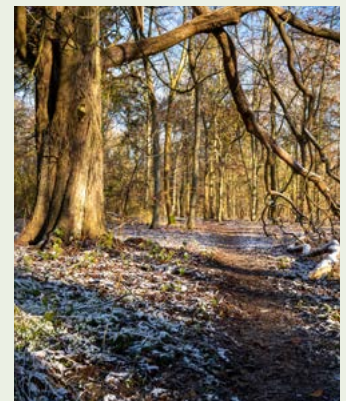


Photo by Roger Evans

Weston on the Green Garden Club

AGM 17th March 7pm in the
Village Hall

Wine & Nibbles

Visit to Bunkers Hill Nursery
Tuesday 16th April 6pm
Tea/Cake/Talk plus 15%
off all stock.

Email toddyhg@gmail.com to book



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 inspected it.

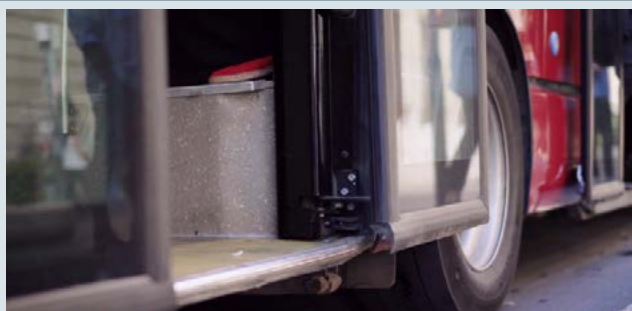
Their solution was to erect a bypass boardwalk over the worst areas but the Delivery Team see it as a seasonal issue which the path endures, so have postponed the work.

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

Thank you.

Graham Barnett



Bus Tracker

for Weston-on-the-Green Bus Service 24

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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 non-perishable food received with thanks.

Supported by St Mary's Church, the Village Hall, and the Parish Council.

 Seeded by The Trussell Trust

 Bicester foodbank



**Weston on the Green Garden
Club**

SPRING SHOW

MARCH 28TH 2026

2.30-4.00PM

**FLOWERS, COOKERY AND
CRAFTS.**

**SCHEDULES IN COMMUNITY
SHOP.**

TEA, CAKES AND RAFFLE

**SPECIAL PRIZES FOR JUNIOR
GARDENERS**

A selection of Garden jobs to help Wildlife this February

Nest Boxes

It's soon to be National Nest Box Week (14th - 21st Feb). This is to help remind us of the importance of nest boxes in our gardens. With Spring around the corner, now is the time to clean out your nest boxes or put-up new ones ready for this year's inhabitants.



Clean out a nestbox with boiling water to kill off parasites and other nasties to make it nice and safe and clean for the next resident. You can use boiling water alone or add eco soap e.g. brands like Ecover. Make sure you leave it to dry out completely after washing to protect the box from mould and rot.

Consider putting up a swift box. Find out more via the Cherwell Swift Project: <http://www.cherwell-swifts.org/>

Feeding the birds

Put out bird food with high fat content to give extra energy when food is hard to come by. Suet treats like fat balls are ideal.

You can create your own fat blocks by melting suet into moulds such as coconut shells or logs with holes drilled in. Try out different recipes to entice a range of birds; Gardener's World suggest peanut cakes for starlings, insect cakes for tits and berry



Feeding time

cakes for finches. You can even put out finely chopped bacon rind and grated cheese for small birds such as wrens, but not if you are concerned about the presence of rats. And remember, whilst fat is important, do also provide a seed mix or nuts to give your birds a balanced diet.

It's still cold!

On freezing days, break the ice on bird baths and water bowls. Refresh the water supply weekly.

Leave piles of leaves and logs undisturbed. In mild weather, it can be tempting to get going in the garden but avoid the urge to tidy away leaf and log piles just yet. This is so hedgehogs and other creatures can enjoy their dormancy.

Leave healthy herbaceous and hollow-stemmed plants unpruned until early spring. These can provide homes for overwintering insects.

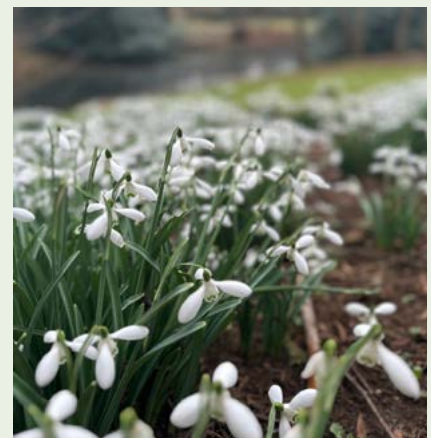
Avoid turning the compost heap until April, even if conditions are mild. Frogs, small mammals, and insects may be hibernating, and

any disturbance could harm them.

Check bonfires before they are lit for sheltering and hibernating animals, such as hedgehogs, toads, frogs, and newts.

Bring on the Springtime!

Have plants in your garden that offer winter/early spring nectar e.g. mahonia, ivy, willow, hellebores, crocuses and snowdrops to provide a boost for our pollinators after the dormant months.



Rhiannon Young

Wild Oxfordshire Nature Recovery Engagement Officer
www.wildoxfordshire.org.uk/



Household Waste Recycling Centres New Booking System

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

From the 14th January 2026 you need to book to visit an HWRC.

To book, you would need to select your site, the type of waste you are bringing, and the date and timeslot. Bookings can be made up to two weeks in advance or up to 30 minutes before you visit (subject to availability).

Once you have booked your visit:

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

On the day:

- You will need your booking number and proof of address to show you are an Oxfordshire resident and are eligible to access the HWRC's for free. This can be a driving licence, recent council tax or utility bill.
- Please sort the recyclable items in your waste before you arrive on site. This will help speed up

your visit and help Oxfordshire to recycle even more.

- If you are unable to sort everything before you set off, don't worry, there will be sorting areas available on site to make this easier.
- The onsite team will greet you when you arrive, direct you to a bay and will answer any question to help you recycle as much as possible.

Find out more about the new booking system www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/hwrcbooking

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**OXFORDSHIRE
COUNTY COUNCIL**

Dates for the Diary

4th February	7.30 pm	Parish Council meeting
7th February	9.00 am – 12.00 pm	Food Bank Collection, Weston Community Shop
9th February	1.30 pm	Weston Walkers; meet at the Village Hall
12th February	10.00 am – 12.00 pm	Neighbours' Natter
4th March	7.30 pm	Parish Council meeting
7th March	9.00 am – 12.00 pm	Food Bank Collection, Weston Community Shop
9th March	1.30 pm	Weston Walkers; meet at the Village Hall
9th March	7.30 pm	Weston Society
12th March	10.00 am – 12.00 pm	Neighbours' Natter
17th March	7.00 pm	Garden Club AGM, Village Hall
21st March	9.30 am	Village Litter Pick, meet at Village Hall
28th March	2.30 – 4.00 pm	Garden Club Spring Show



FRIENDS' PRODUCE

As ever, a huge thank you to the members of the community who donated towards the Friends Produce initiative in aid of St Mary's Church and the Village Hall.

An extra special thanks must go to Mick and Toddy. Did you know that a donation is made to the initiative for every bag of kindling, every wooden figure and every piece of Peck & Feather jewellery or giftware you buy in the shop?

During November and December this initiative raised £352.78, which has been split and paid to the Church and Village Hall.



Supporting
Weston-on-the-Green Village Hall

Play Cherwell Lottery and support our cause!

- Make a difference to the community and support the Village Hall
- Sign-up for only £1 a week!
- You get the chance to win cash prizes up to £25,000 every week!
- 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

Just visit CherwellLottery.co.uk and search for
Weston on the Green Memorial Village Hall

Supporters must be 16 years of age or older



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Weston on the Green Memorial Village Hall

By using **Give As You Live online**, or via the **Give As You Live App**, you can raise funds for the Village Hall for free! Choose Weston on the Green Village Hall as your chosen charity and then shop online at over 6,000 stores. It's as simple as:



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



Upcoming Events - Book Now

February

Valentines - "Treat the one you love"
Romantic Afternoon Tea or Evening Meal
Friday 13th & Saturday 14th February



March

"The Curse of Dr Usher"
Murder Mystery evening
Saturday 14th March

Mothers Day - "Because mum deserves the best"
Afternoon tea or Sunday Lunch
Sunday 15th March 12pm-4pm



April

Easter Fun
Afternoon Tea or Grand Sunday Lunch
Easter Egg Hunt & Colouring Competition
Sunday 5th April 12pm -4pm

Contact 01869 350621 or email events@thewestonmanor.com