

BLETCHINGTON VILLAGE NEWS

YOUR COMMUNITY MAGAZINE – SERVING THE VILLAGE SINCE 1979

ISSUE 275

April – May 2025



The Path to St. Giles' Church

Reports from village organisations

Introducing Calum Miller, our MP

Bletchington Celebrates St. Patrick's Day

B4027 Traffic Calming 1900s style

History Corner: Oxford May Morning



**APR
26**

THE SOMETIME BAND



**JOIN US FOR AN UNFORGETTABLE
NIGHT OF LIVE ROCK, SINGALONG
ANTHEMS AND GREAT VIBES!**

BLETCHINGDON VILLAGE HALL

DOORS OPEN AT 7PM

- DELICIOUS FOOD FROM LOADED PLATES
- STANDARD BAR OFFERINGS
- £15 PER TICKET (FOOD & DRINK NOT INCLUDED)

ALEXANDRAHOUSEOFJOY.ORG

**TICKETS AVAILABLE ONLINE & IN-STORE AT PAVERS SHOES, BICESTER
LIMITED TICKETS, PLEASE BOOK IN ADVANCE**

EDITORIAL

Do you buy a daily newspaper? If you bought one on 25th February, you will no doubt have noticed the distinctive blue cover with the headlines MAKE IT FAIR. This appeared on all the mainstream daily newspapers of all political persuasions that day and was aimed at dissuading the government from implementing a policy which would effectively enable big tech platforms to use British creative content to power their AI models without permission or payment. Whilst we have not gone as far as changing the distinctive cover of our Village News, I echo the sentiment. Writers, musicians, artists and so on must be able to retain the rights to their own work and monetise it accordingly, otherwise creativity may cease to exist. Computer technology has advanced so much in recent years and there will be many positive benefits arising from AI, but it concerns me that it may be used for all the wrong reasons as well.

Alexandra House of Joy, a local charity, is hosting an evening of live music at the Village Hall on Saturday 26th April (see opposite). This promises to be an unforgettable evening, so please book your tickets in advance on their website. Alexandra House of Joy is a heartfelt initiative dedicated to building a “home-away-from-home” for adults with profound and severe learning disabilities in Bicester. This purpose-built day centre and respite facility will offer a warm, nurturing environment where people can enjoy enriching activities such as music, art, and sensory experiences, alongside essential medical and therapeutic support. Designed to provide both comfort and independence, it will also offer families and caregivers much-needed respite, knowing their loved ones are receiving dedicated, person-centred care. With the continued generosity of supporters, it is steadily working towards making this much-needed facility a reality. For more information about Alexandra House of Joy or to book tickets, please visit www.alexandrahouseofjoy.org.

This is **your** Village News and we are reliant upon material from organisations in the village and, of course, from you, the readers. Please keep your articles and photographs coming and do keep us updated with news of anything going on in our community, including any fundraising activities. We love to hear from new contributors and would particularly like to feature some articles on nature or gardening, subjects which don't currently get much coverage in the Village News. If writing isn't your thing but you would like to contribute to the magazine, that's no problem – just get in touch and we can capture your views via an interview and produce an amazing article on your behalf. Please get in touch with us via e-mail at bletchnews@gmail.com. The deadline for receiving material is always the **18th of the month** prior to publication – so articles for inclusion in the June/July magazine must reach us by **18th May** please.

bletchnews@gmail.com

Pete Baker

Speedwatch – Bletchingdon

The village Speedwatch group have recently monitored traffic on the Islip Road and found 30 of 196 vehicles to be exceeding 25mph, travelling at speeds of 26 to 33mph. Vehicle and speeding details are reported to the Police who contact the drivers alerting them to the speeding offence. The group also monitored traffic recently from the Village Green and, in 20 minutes, found 14 vehicles exceeding 25 mph, travelling at speeds of 26 to 36mph.

The group aim to meet on a regular basis for a one hour monitoring session each time, reporting vehicle speeds at various locations in the village. Please be in touch if you would like to join us. We are a friendly group, all training is provided and we are helping to reduce the speed of traffic through the village. Help us to make the village a safer place.

If anyone would like to join the Speedwatch Group, please contact Rebecca Watkinson on **07976 977227**.

Cherwell District Council is moving

On 31st March, Cherwell District Council will be moving its offices from their present location in Bodicote to new premises at 39 Castle Quay, Banbury, OX15 5FD. Telephone number remains **01295 227001**. Council offices are open to the public on an appointments-only basis 8:45am-5:15pm, Monday to Friday.

New operator for our 24 bus service

Some of you will have been aware that funding for our current Grayline bus service 24 ends at the end of March. The good news is that further money has been obtained by the County Council from the Government's Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) last autumn, part of which has been allocated to the continuation of rural bus services that are not commercially viable and have to be partially funded by OCC. This includes our vital 24 service. Tenders were recently issued by OCC inviting bus companies to submit bids, and the service has been awarded to Red Rose Travel Company, www.redrosetravel.com. So, from Monday 31st March 2025, the service will be operated by Red Rose Travel instead of Grayline Coaches, using the **same timetable** as now. Red Rose will charge the standard fares of up to £3 single, £6 return for adults without concessions.

As at present, the buses will stop at most bus stops on the route, with the exception of Banbury Road from Oxford Parkway south. Only the following stops will be served going into and out of Oxford along Banbury Road in North Oxford:

- Harefields
- Squitchey Lane
- Summertown Shops
- Lathbury Road
- St. Margaret's Road
- Keble Road

The new contract also means that the MyBus countywide ticket will be available and accepted on the route - over 150 bus services, just one ticket. Find out more at www.mybusoxfordshire.org.uk. This was not available on Grayline buses. There may be a need to increase the price of the ticket slightly in April to take account of the changes to the national fare cap. The new Red Rose Travel contract will last for two years (one year plus an extension of one year).

Those of us who travel regularly on the bus will no doubt have seen notices of the changes already and will have the opportunity to thank our friendly, helpful and reliable drivers. We hope that Red Rose Travel will also provide us with a good service despite its frequency limitations. As for the future, we are looking at uncertainty with the restructuring of local councils and possibly a strategic transport authority, as well as possible franchising. A difficult time for transport planners.

Anne Maclachlan, your Parish Transport Representative

Exercising dogs in the Sports Ground

It would be appreciated if dog owners who exercise their dogs in the Sports Ground could please keep them on a lead. There have been recent incidents of dog mess being left on the playing fields, which is not acceptable. If your dog leaves a deposit in the Sports Ground (or indeed anywhere in the village), please ensure that you clear up after your animal.

Defibrillators

We have three defibrillators available in the village, located at the Village Hall, on the side nearest to the Co-op, at the Black's Head pub and at the Sports & Social Club. To access these devices, you will need to call 999 to obtain a code whilst also requesting an ambulance. Instructions on how to use the defibrillators and how to keep the patient safe are posted close by. Your prompt action before the ambulance arrives may save a life.

ST. GILES' CHURCH NEWS

We are part of the AKEMAN BENEFICE (Bletchington, Kirtlington, Weston-on-the-Green, Chesterton, Middleton Stoney, Wendlebury and Hampton Gay). The benefice is named after Akeman Street, the Roman road which runs through it.



Ministry Team

Rector: The Rev'd Gareth Miller

01869 350224 akemanbenefice@gmail.com

Associate Priest: The Rev'd Nick Ktorides

01869 324191 nickktorides.akeman@gmail.com

Assistant Priest: The Very Rev'd Robert Wilkes

01869 350159 bobwilkes.akeman@gmail.com

Licensed Lay Minister: Paul Clifford

01869 351652 paulclifford.akeman@gmail.com

Safeguarding Officer: Nicky Donne

01869 351748 safeguarding.akeman@gmail.com

Benefice Website:

www.akemanbenefice.org.uk

Churchwarden: Judith Ledger

Treasurer: Kate Ehrman

Assistant Churchwarden: Fiona Teddy

Members of the PCC: Natasha Pitts

Secretary: Pam Hayes

Sally Cross

If you or anyone you know would like to talk to a member of the ministry team please do not hesitate to phone or email.

A small prayer group meets remotely each Wednesday morning. If you would like to join or if you have a request for prayer, please phone 351542. The church remains open each day for private prayer.

Details of services and an introduction to the ministry team together with information about the benefice churches can be found on our website at: www.akemanbenefice.org.uk.

From the registers:

24th February Patricia Underwood

Interment of ashes

We offer our sincere condolences to Patricia's family.

13th March Daphne Joan Smith

Funeral

We offer our sincere condolences to John and to all Daphne's family.



*Happy
Easter*

APCM

The Annual Parochial Church Meeting will take place in church on Monday 28th April at 7:00pm. This meeting is open to all parishioners.

Easter services

Happy Easter everyone! There will be a special Family Service at St. Giles' Church at 10:00am on Good Friday then on Easter Sunday we will be holding a Holy Communion service at 9:30am then in the afternoon, at 3:00pm there will be a Family Service. We do hope you will be able to come along to one or all of these services.

Further afield, there will be "An Hour at the Cross" at noon on Good Friday in Middleton Stoney. For full details of Easter services across the benefice, and over the two months, please see the schedule opposite.

FROM THE RECTOR

Dear friends,

I have just spent the most delightful morning visiting three of our churches. I am excited to report that the three churches in our benefice which previously had no WC or kitchen facilities are now well on their way to remedying these deficits. At Middleton Stoney, already beautifully equipped with a very smart servery and loo, the original organ is now being rebuilt at the rear of the church. I spent half an hour chatting to the organ builders, and marvelling at their skill and knowledge. At Wendlebury, the refurbishment project is well under way, and again I had a most interesting talk with the carpenter and the archaeologist. The latter has dug a trench in the transept and has come across evidence of earlier churches and all sorts of interesting artefacts. Perhaps we will be able to arrange a display and a talk later in the year. We hope the refurbished church will be in use again for the Community Choir concerts in May. Progress at Chesterton is slower, but this morning we took the first tentative steps, as we look to replacing the pipe organ with a more flexible (and smaller!) instrument, thereby freeing up space for new facilities and more room for socialising. So – three cheers to all three churches! I should not omit Hampton Gay (which I did not visit this morning), but there too we are making strides and moving towards a restoration of the building that has not been touched since 1972! We are blessed with beautiful buildings, which are loved and cherished by the wider community, and we have a duty to pass them on in good shape – but we also need to maintain, beautify, and enhance their usefulness.

Pope Francis chose his name very carefully. It was chosen, of course, to recall St Francis of Assisi. One day Francis, a rich young man, heard the voice of Jesus Christ saying to him, "Francis, rebuild my church." At first Francis took it literally, and with a small band of brothers began rebuilding the ruined Church of San Damiano. But of course it had a wider and deeper meaning, and the influence of Francis and his example was huge in the Middle Ages and beyond as the church sought to renew its sense of purpose and mission.

The challenge for the church of today is not so very different from the challenge of Francis's day. The dangers of corruption, introspection, worldliness, preoccupation with the establishment – all these continue to afflict us. That is why it was so good that Jorge Maria Bergoglio sent a very clear signal to the church and to the world in choosing his papal name, and his teachings and writings have encouraged the contemporary church to move in a more Franciscan direction.

Such tensions, of course, are also found in our own internal and external lives – the battle between the person we want to be (noble, kind, selfless, humble) and the person we know ourselves to be (immodest, selfish, arrogant, greedy, etc!). We need the Francises of this world constantly to draw us back to the things that really matter – integrity, authenticity, care for the environment, care for the underprivileged. In a world that seems to be putting a worrying emphasis on power, deals, and megaphone diplomacy, we need to hear again the prophetic voice: rebuild my church; rebuild my world.

Gareth

PS: I have just come back from Diocesan Synod, where I heard this amusing Franciscan anecdote: St Francis was out in the fields when a bird, flying above him, made a small deposit on his head. Immediately Francis fell to the ground and prayed 'I thank you, Lord, that cows do not fly!'

Church services for April & May

APRIL 2025	Sunday 6th <i>Lent 5</i>	Sunday 13th <i>Palm Sunday</i>	Friday 18th <i>Good Friday</i>	Sunday 20th <i>Easter Day</i>	Sunday 27th <i>Easter 2</i>
Bletchington	09:30 Breakfast Church		10:00 Family Service	09:30 Holy Communion 15:00 Family Service	
Chesterton	08:00 Holy Comm. 11:00 Family Service			11:00 Holy Communion	10:00 Benefice Communion
Hampton Gay					
Kirtlington	11:00 Holy Comm.		20:00 Sung Compline	11:00 Holy Comm.	
Middleton Stoney	09:30 Morning Worship		12:00 An Hour at the Cross	09:30 Holy Communion	
Wendlebury					
Weston-on- the-Green	11:00 Morning Worship	10:30 Procession of Palms & Benefice Communion		11:00 Holy Communion	

MAY 2025	Sunday 4th <i>Easter 3</i>	Sunday 11th <i>Easter 4</i>	Sunday 18th <i>Easter 5</i>	Sunday 25th <i>Easter 6</i>	Thursday 29th <i>Ascension</i>
Bletchington	09:30 Morning Worship	18:00 Benefice Evensong	09:30 Holy Communion 15:00 Family Service		
Chesterton	08:00 Holy Communion 11:00 Family Service	11:00 Holy Communion	11:00 Café Church at Community Centre		
Hampton Gay	16:00 Evensong				
Kirtlington	11:00 Holy Communion	09:30 Morning Worship	18:00 Evensong		
Middleton Stoney	09:30 Morning Worship		09:30 Holy Communion	11:00 Festal Communion & Rededication of Church	
Wendlebury	09:30 Holy Communion		09:30 Morning Worship		
Weston-on- the-Green	11:00 Café Church		11:00 Holy Communion		19:00 Holy Communion

OBITUARIES

Sandra Ryan

Sandra was born in Oxford Road, Bletchington, on 19th March 1947 and, apart from a short time, she lived all her life in the village. She was named Sandra Mary Wing.

Sandra went to the village primary school and was an excellent pupil, so much so that she took her 11-plus at the age of 10 and went to Bicester Grammar School a year early.

After leaving school, she went to work in the office of Nielson's of Oxford and later moved to London to work for a short time.

She later came home, married and had two daughters, Nikki and Natalie. Sandra didn't really work after her children were born, preferring to spend time with them, bringing them up. She did work part-time in Oxford for a while, once both girls were at school, and later did a part-time job in Woodstock.

She loved being at home, spending time with her family and helping her mother who also lived in the village. Sandra was also very good at knitting and sewing, making several garments for herself and the girls when they were small.

Holidays were a big thing in Sandra's life, loving to go abroad as often as she could and always wanting the whole family to go as well. Sandra and Alan later got a caravan and spent many happy holidays in it with their friends.

In later life, her health wasn't very good and she had two serious health issues, but never wanted to talk about them and always remained happy, loving to be with family and friends.

Sandra died on 2nd January 2025 in Blackpool, surrounded by all her loving family and that, we can be sure, is what she wanted. She will always be loved and missed by all her family and friends.

Sue Bedwell

Sue Bedwell died peacefully in her sleep in the early hours of Saturday 30th November 2024 in Sobell House Hospice, where she had been for about a week.

Having trained at Waterperry Horticultural School for women in the 1970s, she was a great plantswoman and worked in horticulture all her life. Her interest in plants was wide, from alpine to woodland plants, wild and native plants and she travelled to see them in their habitat. She was also a keen bird watcher and loved nature in all its forms. Her involvement with the Alpine Garden Society, Oxford Group, began about 1993 where she served on the committee for many years. She encouraged members to grow and show, bringing plants for the raffle, showing members what was looking good and selling treasures and special plants to members.

Sue was an excellent grower of alpine and small bulbs and showed many of her plants at the AGS shows and events, winning many awards, even giving a talk on members' evening about showing plants to encourage more of us to follow her example. She was active in many other plant related societies, The Nerine & Amaryllid Society and the South African Bulb Group to name just two.

Sue's garden was packed with unusual and rare plants, and was open under the National Garden Scheme for several days of the year. She was still gardening until recently, but her energy levels were depleted, oesophageal cancer having spread through her bones. Members of the AGS Oxford Group will miss her advice, generosity and help given so freely, acknowledging they are the poorer for her passing; a great plantswoman and a friend to so many.

Sue's ashes are now beneath a silver birch at Waterperry, there's a plaque and it's hoped that there will eventually also be a bench. A group of friends will plant a mixture of snowdrops at its base so there should be a good display next spring.

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 to 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 or Joanna Clifford joannaclifford.akeman@gmail.com.

History Corner

Oxford May Morning

Celebrating May Day is an ancient custom, going back to pre-Christian times. In a simplistic calendar recognising only two seasons, summer and winter, May Day was seen to herald the start of summer. Celebrations took various forms, often involving people gathering flowers and greenery to decorate their homes. A central figure in such celebrations was the Green Man, after whom many a pub has been named, representing fertility and growth and usually portrayed decorated with hawthorn leaves and acorns. Like some other pagan rituals, May Day and its associated festivities found its way into the Christian Church, although it was not welcomed by all in religious circles, some being uncomfortable with the joyous frivolity that it brought whilst others simply did not like the amalgamation of pagan activities into the Christian ethos.

It is likely that some sort of May Day celebration was taking place in Oxford for many years before Magdalen Tower was completed, in 1509. Some historians believe the tradition of choral singing from the tower began to mark the building of the tower itself. The earliest record of singing from the top of Magdalen Tower dates back to 1674 when Anthony Wood documented 'vocal music of several parts'. In 1688, the singing was suspended as the college was in dispute with the then monarch, King James II, and consequently there was a lack of choristers available. It is not known when May Day singing from the tower resumed but there are records of it taking place in 1749, beginning at 4 o'clock in the morning with a requiem being sung for the soul of King Henry VII, monarch during the construction of the tower.

By Victorian times, the event had taken on a somewhat unruly aspect as some of the choristers developed a liking for throwing eggs on the crowd assembled below. In 1844, rules and protocols were implemented which included the principal porter checking the pockets of choristers before they climbed the stairs for any objects that could be thrown, and the choristers now being required to wear special surplices for the occasion.

The present celebration involves the Magdalen College Choir singing *Hymnus Eucharisticus* at 6:00am from the top of the tower to a massed crowd assembled in the streets below. In recent years, a PA system has been implemented so the assembled crowd can all hear the singing perfectly at street level and road closures and a strict stewarding system have been put in place to ensure everyone's safety. In 2020, a virtual celebration was held, due to Covid-19 restrictions. After the singing has finished, celebrations spread out through the rest of the city centre where morris dancing and other general merriment can be enjoyed until 9:00am when everything finishes and it's back to business as usual on the streets of Oxford.

INTRODUCING CALUM MILLER, OUR MP



Calum Miller, MP

After more than nine months as your MP for Bicester & Woodstock, I am glad to share what I have been working to achieve for our area and to let you know how you can get in touch with my team and me, if we can help you in any way.

While I hit the ground running in Parliament and have been out meeting residents and groups across the constituency every week, it has taken a little longer than I hoped to recruit a small team to help me and to establish a fully operational office. Now that they are in place, we are better placed to provide the high standard of support to those who contact us.

Thank you to everyone who has shown patience and support during this set-up period. We are continuing to hold regular surgeries across the constituency, so if there are any issues you'd like to raise, please don't hesitate to get in touch.

I have used my time in Parliament to press ministers across government on key local issues. I secured a meeting with the Health Secretary to push for capital funding for GP surgeries, challenged the Prime Minister on reducing long CAMHS waiting times, and questioned the Energy and Net Zero Department on frequent power outages affecting our towns and villages. I have also continued to push for stronger action on water pollution, holding water companies accountable for sewage discharges in our rivers and streams.

I have been working to ensure that vital local issues are addressed. With economic challenges, overstretched public services, and rising costs, I believe in working across parties to find solutions. I have pushed for urgent action on the social care crisis rather than delaying for years and challenged policies that could harm our communities, including cuts to Winter Fuel Payments, tax increases on small businesses and charities, and changes that threaten family-run farms.

Wherever possible, I have supported proposals to strengthen legislation and bring tangible benefits to our communities. I have pushed for stricter limits on water company bonuses to ensure customers are not left covering corporate debts. I have also backed initiatives to improve opportunities for young people, including a Youth Mobility Scheme that would help them gain work experience and travel abroad.

It has been a pleasure to visit so many events across the constituency and meet residents who are passionate about making a difference. From supporting local campaigners cleaning up our waterways to visiting businesses and charities, I have thoroughly enjoyed hearing more about our exciting and vibrant constituency and I look forward to continuing to engage with constituents across Bicester & Woodstock.

I remain committed to ensuring Bicester, Kidlington, Woodstock, Bletchingdon and our other villages get the attention and investment they deserve. If you would like to raise an issue or would kindly like to let me know of any event you would like to see me at in Bletchingdon, please email me at:

calum.miller.mp@parliament.uk.

It is an honour to serve you, and I look forward to continuing to work together to improve our great constituency.

B4027 TRAFFIC CALMING 1900s STYLE

Suggested methods of traffic calming from 100+ years ago.....

Maybe these methods would be rejected on 'Health & Safety' grounds today!



Child barrier for
the Islip Road stretch



Bicycle blockade for
the sharp bend



Herd of cows for
the section by the
Village Green



The Bletchingdon Community Foundation

Save the date!

Did you know our Village Hall is ten years old this year? To mark the occasion, we will be hosting a special celebration on Saturday, 30th August and we hope you will come and join us. So please make a note in your diary for what we hope will be another memorable occasion in the village.

Can you help out?

Events like this can only happen with the support of wonderful volunteers from the community. The BCF are currently looking for some villagers to come together to form a committee to plan the event and help out on the day. We would like a good mix of ages to ensure the event offers something to appeal to everyone. Join the team to have your say on what happens on the day. If you would like to join the organising team, please e-mail: bcf.trustee5@thebcf.net.

SATURDAY

30th

AUGUST

Make an impact in the community

It's your Village Hall so why not grab the opportunity to join the team which runs it and have your say on how it is run and what type of events you would like to see taking place there? The BCF trustees would love to welcome one or two residents to come and join us as trustees. You would really be able to make a difference in the local community. Anyone over the age of 18 is eligible to become a BCF trustee and it would be amazing if we could welcome a young adult to join our ranks, thus ensuring we encompass a diverse range of views.

If you are interested in joining the BCF trustees or would like further information, please drop an e-mail to: bcf.chair@thebcf.net.

Gardener needed

The BCF is looking for someone to maintain the Village Hall grounds throughout the growing season. Duties would include lawn mowing, hedge trimming, weeding, maintaining the planters and generally keeping the grounds around the Village Hall tidy. This is a paid position for which you will be paid an hourly rate for all work carried out.

If this is something that would be of interest to you or would like further information, please drop an e-mail to: bcf.trustee4@thebcf.net.



Planters

You may have noticed that five new planters have recently appeared on the Village Hall Plaza, enhancing the appearance of the area whilst discouraging inappropriate parking. These were supplied by Bunkers Hill Nursery.

The BCF would like to say a big thank you to Midcounties Co-op for providing funding for the planters and to Mark Webber and Sue Green for organising their installation.

Village Hall directory

The Village Hall offers a wide range of activities for all age groups. Our directory below details the regular groups currently operating. If you are interested in joining any of these groups, please contact the organiser.

Event	Days & times	Contact	Telephone / E-mail
Physio-led Pilates/Yoga classes	Monday – 10:00am Thursday – 7:15pm	Gemma Queralt (MCSP Chartered Physiotherapist)	07974 692287 gemma.c.queralt@gmail.com
Zumba Gold (low impact)	Thursday – 10:30-11:30am (Term time only)	Mariana Bujons Palmer	zumbawithmarianaoford@gmail.com
Tumble Tots (walking up to 4 years, play sessions)	Wednesday (Term time only) 10:15am to 2 yrs. 11:15am 2-3 yrs. 12:15pm 3yrs+	Catherine Codd	07305 097209 northcotswolds@tumbletots.com <u>Website:</u> www.tumbletots.com.northcotswolds
1 st Bletchington Brownies (girls, 7-10yrs.)	Monday – 6-7:30pm (Term time only)	Lorraine Wing	girlguidingwoodstock@hotmail.co.uk
Total Body Conditioning	Monday – 7:30pm Wednesday – 6:30pm	Geraldine Jennings	07875 364130 geraldine_jennings@yahoo.co.uk
Stretch & core (non-sweat)	Wednesday – 7:30pm	Geraldine Jennings	07875 364130 geraldine_jennings@yahoo.co.uk
Thursday Club (over 50s)	First Thursday of the month – 2:00pm	Rozz Wing	wingrozzw@aol.com
Bletchington Silver Band (Senior band)	Tuesday - 7:30pm Friday – 7:30pm	Laura	secretary@bletchingtonsilverband.co.uk
Bletchington Silver Band (B band)	Friday – 6:30pm	Laura	secretary@bletchingtonsilverband.co.uk
Children's Martial Arts Class (Jiu Jitsu)	Wednesday – 5:15pm	David Plested	07515 560201 inspirebjuk@gmail.com



The Charity is here to help anyone who needs it

The purpose of the charity is to:

- **Relieve financial hardship**
- **Reduce social isolation**
- **Support education**

It is available to anyone living in the parish of Bletchington.

The Bletchington Charity has been helping residents of the village for over 400 years. In its earlier years, it was administered by a group of trustees who, in the main, never lived in the village and, perhaps, never even visited it. These days, the Charity forms part of the Bletchington Community Foundation, but is run by an independent committee, comprised entirely of individuals with direct links to the village, mainly residents. They meet quarterly to determine how best to distribute the funds available. In March, the meeting was chaired by Andrea Lambert, her first since taking over the reigns as chair of the Charity.

The committee assesses all grant applications, aiming to help as many people in Bletchington as possible, as well as providing support for village organisations. Unfortunately, there is only so much cash to go around, so the committee must prioritise applications and has to say no sometimes. That said, the committee does not want to see anyone in the village facing hardship so will always give fair and careful consideration to any reasonable requests for help. Examples of some of the things the Charity can help with are listed below.

If you would like to apply for financial support for yourself, a friend, family member or neighbour then you can do this using a form downloaded from the Charity's page on the village website, www.bletchingdon-pc.org.uk. If you do not have access to the website, then a member of the committee will happily drop a form off to you and can assist applicants in filling it out. Preferred contact is via e-mail: charity.secretary@thebcf.net or ring and leave a message on **01869 350180**. All applications are treated in complete confidence.

Examples of regular grants given include:

- Utility bills
- Travel to school
- School uniform
- Sixth form grants
- University grants
- Help towards funeral costs
- Payment of over-75s television licence

Applications will be considered at our meetings which are generally held quarterly. However, if an application is urgent, please let us know and the committee will be able to consider it sooner.

The next meeting is scheduled for 11th June – Applications to be in by 9th June please.

THE 7-YEAR RULE: Why You Can't Just Give It All Away

Ah, the 7-year rule. Sounds like something out of a relationship advice column, doesn't it? "*Give your cash away, survive seven years, and you're golden!*" But no, this one's far less romantic. It's about money, taxes, and the government's relentless quest to snatch a chunk of your hard-earned cash.

You probably thought you'd just gift everything to your kids, nieces, or your favourite cat rescue centre and avoid paying inheritance tax altogether. Genius, right? Just give it all away and avoid the taxman completely. Well, slow down, Robin Hood. There's a little thing called the 7-year rule that's going to make sure that doesn't work quite as smoothly as you'd hoped.

Here's the basic idea: you can give away as much as you like in your lifetime, and if you survive for another 7 years after handing over that cash, congrats! No inheritance tax. Your kids get to keep it all, and the taxman gets nothing. Sounds perfect, doesn't it? But—and this is a massive but—if you pop off before the 7 years are up, HMRC is coming for their share. And they're coming fast.

Now, don't think for a second that the government would make this simple. Of course not. It's Britain. We love a good bit of paperwork and a confusing set of rules. So, here's how it works: if you die within 3 years of making that gift, it's treated just like any other part of your estate—bang, full inheritance tax at 40%. Yes, 40%—nearly half of what you thought you'd generously passed on is now lining the Chancellor's pockets.

If you manage to last a bit longer, say between 3 and 7 years, you get what's called "*taper relief*," which sounds nice, but is really just a way of making you feel better about still having to pay tax. The rate reduces a bit, year by year, until you finally hit 7 years and your gift becomes tax-free. The closer you get to that magic 7-year mark, the less your heirs will have to fork over, but until then, it's a game of financial Russian roulette. But here's the kicker: this taper only applies to a gift that becomes taxable. It's a taper on the tax itself, not on the gift. So unless you're planning to hand over vast sums of money—enough to actually breach the inheritance tax threshold—you're not going to see a penny of benefit. In other words, for most people, taper relief is about as useful as a chocolate teapot.

Now, before you start thinking about gifting everything to everyone you know and hoping for the best, let's be clear: you can't just give away your house, your savings, or your priceless collection of antique toasters and still live comfortably, expecting to skate through inheritance tax duty. Oh no. The taxman has thought of that, too. In addition to the 7-year rule, there's something called a "*gift with reservation of benefit*," which, in plain English, means if you're still using or benefiting from what you've given away—like gifting your house to your kids but continuing to live in it rent-free—it still counts as part of your estate. So much for outsmarting the system.

But wait, there's more! You've probably heard that you can give small gifts each year without them being hit by inheritance tax. That's true. You can give away £3,000 a year tax-free, and that's on top of the 7-year rule. You can also give away £250 to as many different people as you like each year, which might cover a couple of nice dinners, but it's hardly going to fund anyone's mortgage.

And if you're really feeling generous, you can even give away up to £5,000 to your child and £2,500 to your grandchild as a wedding gift without worrying about inheritance tax. Because nothing says "congratulations on your marriage" like a tax loophole.

The 7-year rule is a clever way to reduce your inheritance tax bill, but it's not the silver bullet people think it is. You've got to plan it out properly, make sure you actually live those 7 years, and most importantly, not fall into the trap of thinking you can dodge the taxman just by handing over your assets.

So, the moral of the story? Start early. Plan properly. Speak to a solicitor. And for the love of all things sensible, don't saunter into the world of inheritance tax with a last-minute plan that involves gifting your way out like you're the David Blaine of finances. Because HMRC has seen it all – and they won't fall for it.

Anna Boucher, The Burnside Partnership

Please see the Burnside Partnership advert on Page 31.



THE OTMOOR CARER

I am a happy self-employed private carer with over 20 years of experience and reputation across care and companionship roles. I have undertaken challenging nursing care for clients of all ages. I am protective of my clients and aim to extend life as much as possible through exceptional professional care underpinned by kindness. Care for me is a career and reflects the trust families place in me.

I am fully qualified, insured and DBS checked. I am also a qualified massage therapist. I can provide excellent references including one from our village lay preacher. I live in Otmoor.

If you have a care need, contact me at:

theotmoorcarer@gmail.com.

I'm open to day work or live-in roles.

GROW YOUR OWN VEGETABLES



ALLOTMENTS AVAILABLE TO RENT

Each plot is approximately 28m. x 8m. = minimum 220 square metres

Rental is £12 per annum per plot

Available in double-plots, single plots and half-plots

If you are interested in renting an allotment, contact the Allotment Association

E-mail: bletchingdon.allotments@gmail.com

Bletch Diary

5 th April – 8:00pm	Sports & Social Club – Easter bingo (<i>see Page 23</i>)
6 th April – 9:30am	St. Giles' Church – Breakfast Church (<i>see Page 7</i>)
18 th April – 10:00am	St. Giles' Church – Good Friday Family Service (<i>see Page 7</i>)
26 th April – 7:00pm	Village Hall – Live music (<i>see Page 2</i>) With the Sometime Band – Fundraising for Alexandra House of Joy Please book your tickets in advance
26 th April – 9:00pm	Sports & Social Club – Live music (<i>see Page 23</i>) With Muz n' Jenks
27 th April – 4:00pm	Village Hall – Spring concert (<i>see Page 21</i>) With Bletchington Silver Band
28 th April – 7:00pm	St. Giles' Church – Annual Parochial Church Meeting (<i>see Page 6</i>)
7 th May – 8:30am	Coach trip – To Weymouth (<i>see Page 20</i>) Organised by the Thursday Club
10 th May – 8:00pm	Sports & Social Club – Quiz night (<i>see Page 23</i>)
14 th May – 7:30pm	Village Hall – Parish Council Annual Public Meeting (<i>see Page 25</i>) Meet your parish councillors, find out what's going on and ask questions
17 th May – 9:00pm	Sports & Social Club – Live music (<i>see Page 23</i>) With Jennah
24 th May – 8:00pm	Sports & Social Club – Cash bingo (<i>see Page 23</i>)

1st BLETCHINGTON BROWNIES

The spotlights shone brightly on the amazing stars on the stage of the Oxfordshire Gang Show. Huge well done to Abi, our Brownie and Hannah a leader. They've worked so hard rehearsing since October and performing 6 shows over half-term.

We celebrated World Thinking Day with Girlguiding Woodstock creating puppets from around the world.

We've worked on our Duke of Cornwall Home Safety Award, learning more about what to do in an emergency situation along with our First Aid Skills builder badge.

It's Awards season, well done Isabel for completing your Gold Award, Sophia the Silver award and Ashley the Bronze award.

It's great that a lot of our older Brownies have moved up to 2nd Woodstock Guides which means we have spaces for girls aged 7-10 to join us at Brownies on a Monday during term time.

Our Trefoil group for anyone aged 18+ meets monthly – we're celebrating our 5th birthday and would love more of you to come and join us. We have adventures, laughter, challenges, crafts, fun, food and the most exciting bit we get badges too!

Email us at girlguidingwoodstock@hotmail.co.uk to find out more about any of our units.



Blethingdon
Parochial C of E School

In February, we celebrated the children's unique talents with Bletch's Got Talent 2025! We had a brilliant day watching singing, dancing, gymnastics, musical performances and poetry recitals. We were so proud of all of the children that took part. It took a lot of courage to perform in front of the school, and the children had put a lot of effort into learning their routines. They all shone like stars and blew us all away!



Choosing the winners was very difficult as the children all showed a lot of talent. Our winners were, Elodie with a brilliant gymnastics' routine, and Luca and Louie with a beautiful duet accompanied by the piano. Well done to all of the children who entered the competition.



Kirtlington Morris

The Spring is sprung, the grass is riz, I wonder how Kirtlington Morris is? (with apologies to the original poem from way back when).

Well, we're back to regular practice, learning or relearning dances which we haven't been able to do due to recent staff shortages, and polishing up the ones we thought we knew.

We've already danced out at Mason's Apron Morris Ale (party!) and we're booked for Oxford Folk Weekend on 12th April in Oxford, and Adderbury Morris' 50th Anniversary celebration on 26th April. Yes, the Great Morris Revival is now over half a century old. Doesn't time fly? Kirtlington Morris, part of the same revival, will reach the same anniversary in 2029...

When Kirtlington Morris was revived in 1979 it was largely comprised of the local Scout group – not surprisingly, 46 years later, our personnel has changed somewhat, not least in 'going mixed' in order to keep the side going. We now have five regular female members, without whom it would be a different story...

There are several further gigs in the pipeline, yet to be confirmed, but most important of all is of course the Kirtlington Lamb Ale Morris Festival, 13th to 15th June. Yes, it is late this year, about as late as it can be!

Lamb Ale will be the usual well-tried formula of a get-together on the Friday night; morris tour of Kirtlington and Woodstock, and Barn Dance, open to all, on the Saturday; and the main public day in Kirtlington on the Sunday, with processions through the village and dancing at various venues, all centred on the School as the main venue. Put it in your diary and we'll see you there.

Nigel Holt, Squire, Kirtlington Morris

Combe Mill in steam - Blenheim Palace Sawmills, Combe, OX29 8ET

We will be hosting 'IN STEAM' events on Sundays 20th April and 18th May, 2025.

20th April: Theme will be '**Military Vehicles**'. Supporting and visiting Combe Mill will be the North Oxfordshire & Cotswold Military Vehicle Trust, with others represented. If you have an interest in the Military, this is the event for you. Bring the children. See our advert on Page 38.

18th May: Theme will be '**Classic Wheels**'. If you have an interest in cars, this is the event for you. Bring the children.

Combe Mill will be open 'In Steam' with all machinery working and being demonstrated by our lovely volunteers. It is a late 19th Century Grade II listed water mill on the Blenheim Palace Estate, by the River Evenlode; in its day it was the workshop for the Blenheim Palace Estate. Not to be missed!

Tea Room will be open for refreshments to enjoy in the Picnic area by the River Evenlode. Browse our Mini Market too. Tombola, Raffle (21st April only) and BBQ.

Dog on leads welcome – Parking free. Open 10.30am to 5.00pm.

Adults £9.00 – Seniors £7.50 – Children FREE. Website: www.combemill.org.

Also open every Wednesday from 22nd March to end of October for self-guided tours and Tea Room open. Adults £5.00 – Seniors £4.00 – Children FREE.



BLETCHINGTON SILVER BAND

It's Spring, and the Band have dusted off their dancing shoes for our next concert! The programme features a huge range of music for dancing, that will get your toes tapping whether you're a fan of waltz, clog dancing, Irish jigs, ballet, funk, disco, or the Time Warp! Some of our players have been expanding their skills for the occasion with a wacky selection of percussion instruments for one of the pieces. Come and join us on 27th April at 4pm, at the Village Hall (see poster opposite). We have lots more events running this year so check our Facebook page and X for more details!

We were delighted to welcome some friendly faces to our Open Rehearsal, AGM and Annual Award presentation on 31st January. Della Dawe was awarded the Olive Kenny Award for Best Attendance in the Senior Band by a player under 21, Gavin Bennett the Chairman's Award, George Bennett and Louie Whitehead jointly won the Dorothy Pearman Shield for the Most Improved Training Band Player, the Sid Pearman Shield was awarded to Tony Saunders, and the Players Player award to Tony and Liz Saunders.

If you'd like to come and play, why not join us? For newcomers to brass instruments, our Training Programme runs on Friday evenings from 6:30-7:15pm, and our Senior band rehearsal follows. Pop along, message us on Facebook or X, or email secretary@bletchingtonsilverband.co.uk.

THURSDAY CLUB

For our February meeting, Tommy came and played a selection of his tunes. Some of our members enjoyed dancing along to the music.

In March we played dominoes.

Our April meeting will be a small Easter bingo.

We would like to say thank you to the Café who gave us the proceeds of a raffle they held. This will help to pay for a coach trip we are planning for 7th May to Weymouth. This trip is open to non-members at a cost of £20. If you are interested, please contact Neil on **01869 350437** for further details.

Our AGM is on 8th May 2025.

Wishing you all a happy Easter.

*Tommy's Tunes:
Dancing and singing along to the
music of the 1950s and 1960s*



Bletchington Silver Band SPRING CONCERT

Sunday the 27th April, 4pm,
Bletchington Village Hall.



From the Waltz to the Time Warp - get your toes
tapping with every kind of dance music you can
imagine !

Refreshments, raffle and a retiring collection

BLETCHINGTON SPORTS AND SOCIAL CLUB



Bletchington Sports & Social Club is situated at the end of the drive in the Sports Ground on Oxford Road. The club is self-funded and run entirely by volunteers from the village. We offer memberships throughout the year that are renewed on 1st September. Memberships cost just £15 for a family, £10 for an individual and £5 for senior citizens and U18's. You are more than welcome to come in for a drink.

We currently have 4 youth Football Teams (U21, U15, U12 & U11), 2 adult men's Football Teams, 3 Cricket Teams plus youth cricket, 2 Bar Billiard Teams, 3 Darts Teams, a Quiz Team, Aunt Sally, 2 Pool Teams and a Cribbage Team who all base themselves at the Club. We also have a very active social committee who regularly host Bingo, Live Music and other events that are generally free admission and open to everyone.

We have Sky Sports, Darts, Pool and a Bar Billiards Table. We generally open for any major televised sporting events. Our opening hours vary during the week, but we are always open from 5:00pm on Friday and 7:30pm on Saturday evenings. More details can be found on our Facebook page.

We are able to offer use of the clubhouse outside of normal hours for private events such as Christenings and Funeral Wakes. If you would like to make use of the facilities, drop into the club or contact a member of the committee to check availability. We can also accommodate parties during normal opening times, but members will still be permitted to use the bar.

Polite Notice

There is a public footpath that runs from Oxford Road through the sports field. If you use this, we would be grateful if you could keep dogs on leads and clean up behind them. This helps us keep the area safe for the children and sports teams that use the facilities.

We have also experienced some damage to the clubhouse where ball games have been played against the building. These are costly repairs, and we respectfully ask that this is avoided.

TEAM NEWS

Football: The men's first team are doing well and are currently in 3rd place of Division 2 of the Oxford Senior League. The Development team are in the lower half of their division but are in the semi-final of the Ivor Gubbins Cup.

Cricket: The season starts on Saturday 10th May. At the recent AGM it was decided to again only run two teams. Captains will be Nabeel Khan and Awais Abid.

Please visit the cricket club website at www.obncc.play-cricket.com for details and fixtures.

Pool: The two teams who play in the Oxford Landlords' Invitation Pool League are currently 4th in Section 2 and top of Section 3

Bar billiards: The winter leagues are still in progress.

Darts: No trophies for the ladies' teams this year.

Cribbage: The league is in the later stages.

Bletchington Nomads – Quiz Team: With just two matches to go in the winter season, the Nomads remain in second place in the Championship (second tier) of the Oxfordshire Quiz League. An excellent 76-75 win over Premiership side, the Ploughman's Bunch, raised hopes of a possible trophy but defeat at the Royal Blenheim, the team leading the Championship, means the Nomads will finish the season in the runner-up position.

What's On at the Club?

SATURDAY 5th April – EASTER BINGO (eyes down 8:00pm)

SATURDAY 26th April – LIVE MUSIC: Muz n' Jenks (9:00pm)

SATURDAY 10th May – QUIZ NIGHT (8:00pm)

SATURDAY 17th May – LIVE MUSIC: Jennah (9:00pm)

SATURDAY 24th May – CASH BINGO (eyes down 8:00pm)

BLETCHINGTON CELEBRATES ST. PATRICK'S DAY



“Everybody drink!” was the call between songs as Bletchington celebrated St. Patrick’s Day. The Guinness (and other drinks) flowed as a packed Sports & Social Club immersed itself in the Irish music performed by the amazing Philbert & Friends who did not disappoint, singing all the Irish favourites such as “Black Velvet Band”, “Whiskey in the Jar” and “The Irish Rover”. An appreciative audience enthusiastically sang along with all the choruses. For one of several encores, the group sang the classic “Fields of Athenry”, to which audience participation was called for – and the audience duly obliged by performing the actions.

A massive thank you to Philbert & Friends, several of whom live in Bletchington, for a fantastic and memorable afternoon’s entertainment. We do hope they come back again next year.

KIRTLINGTON & BLECHINGTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

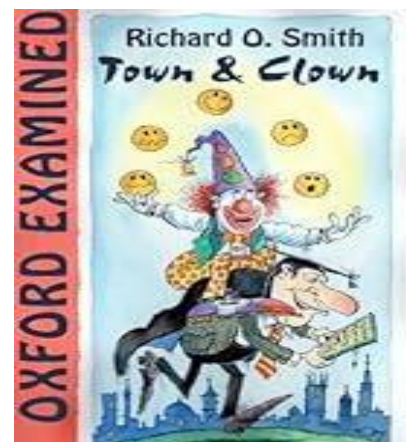
In response to some members' requests, we moved our January and February meetings from the evening to the afternoon. We were rewarded with a larger audience in both months than in previous years.



Those who came in **January** enjoyed a very lively talk entitled **Tricks of the Trade** by **Melanie King** about the techniques used by spies of the various combatants in the First World War. Her researches had been based on memoirs published in the 1920s and 1930s by past agents. In fact there seems to have been something of a mania for this sort of reading in the interwar period as hundreds of people rushed into print. There the problem begins: how much of what is contained in these books is actually genuine? As Melanie said at the outset: spies will never tell you the truth, and she admitted to finding it virtually impossible to separate fact from fiction. Certainly, the list of the techniques discussed ranged from the generally credible to the frankly absurd. Among the former were the notorious German agents posing as Dutch cigar salesmen who used the different sizes of their products as printed in their catalogues to indicate the types of shipping they found in British harbours; the apparently stray dogs and pigeons in and around the trenches who were actually trained to carry messages; the use of invisible ink or microdots indicating Morse code messages hidden in newspaper cuttings. In the incredible category might be cited

the way washing was hung out on domestic lines (all trousers together or interspersed with shirts might mean completely different things!). (Although perhaps the song "Hang out your washing on the Siegfried line" actually derives from the fact that washing was used to send messages – who knew?). Certainly, fear of spies reached paranoid levels among the opposing forces. The famous medieval tower of the Cloth Hall at Ypres was blown up because both sides suspected it of being used to send coded messages because of its visibility. By the end we were all baffled, but the sheer ingenuity of spies kept us all entertained.

February's talk was by humourist and comedy script-writer, **Richard O. Smith**, who entertained us with a romp through the **Z to A of Oxford**, taking in a gallery of characters and events from more than a thousand years. These included the short-lived zoo in Kidlington, opened in the early 1930s, and at once enormously popular, but which had to close after three of its wolves escaped and struck terror into the hearts of the residents of Summertown. A famous character was Dr Routh, President of Magdalen for over 60 years in the nineteenth century, who responded to the suggestion that the college might install bathrooms for its students with the view that this was unnecessary as terms only lasted eight weeks. Among the laughter there were some serious points. Warden Spooner of New College, whose unconscious habit of transposing the initial letters of words led to the term "spoonerism", nevertheless did a lot to shake off the college's reputation for indolence among its students and poor teaching by its Fellows. Women, first admitted to Oxford University in the 1870s, were nevertheless prevented from actually taking degrees until 1920. Richard entertained us so well that we gave him an encore of another ten minutes beyond his allotted span.



Bletchington | Enslow | Heathfield

YOUR COUNCIL MATTERS

"DEVELOPING A THRIVING, INCLUSIVE, SUSTAINABLE, RURAL COMMUNITY"

Latest News



Annual Meeting of the Parish

Wednesday 14th May 2025

7:30pm

Village Hall

Bletchington Parish Council invite you to come to the Annual Meeting of the Parish.

Not to be confused with the monthly Parish Council meetings, this is your opportunity to come and hear what your councillors have been working on during the last 12 months and to ask any questions you may have.

www.fixmystreet.com

Bletchington Parish Council continue to report all of the pot holes and road damage in and around our village. We encourage you to do the same. If you would like to do more, contact us and ask about becoming a Super User!

Next Meetings

30th April & 28th May 2025

Visit our website for information on public attendance and participation at Council Meetings

IN OTHER NEWS



Are you aware of the Islip to Oxford Train Service?

There are normally 16 trains a day and the journey time is an average of 11 minutes.

There is limited parking available in Islip but perhaps this is a good alternative to our bus service, for some.

SUSTAINABILITY

for micro and small businesses

Join us at BIPC Oxford for a dynamic workshop on sustainability, tailored for micro and small businesses.

Learn how sustainable practices can give you a competitive edge and meet modern business requirements.

Walk away with:

- A carbon footprint calculation
- A basic carbon reduction plan

Equip your business to help meet the UK Government's Net Zero target!



Location: The BIPC Westgate Library
Date: 30 April 2025
Time: 5.30pm–8.00pm
www.eventbrite.com/sustainability



Fiona Mason - Parish Clerk. | Tel: 351967 | eMail: bletchpc@gmail.com

Primary Contact

The clerk is based in the Village Hall on a flexible part-time basis, but will respond to all messages at her earliest convenience.

www.bletchington-pc.org.uk/parish-council/

THE CHERWELL LOCAL PLAN

The latest version of the local plan was published for consultation in the middle of December. That consultation is now closed, and the plan heads off for the next stages including acceptance by the government. If accepted, it is likely to come into force in 2026. There are several implications for Bletchington.

HOUSING. As it stands the plan provides for 911 dwellings per year for the whole of Cherwell District. This is 81.5% for the figure of 1118 suggested by the government in their latest National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which was updated in December 2024. The timing is such however that the plan will be reviewed under the old guidelines and so this figure may not be changed.

The bulk of the housing will be designated for Banbury, Bicester, Heyford Park and Kidlington areas. For the rural areas the plan says that "Housing and employment growth will have been managed to protect the character, appearance, heritage and identity of our villages". 565 dwellings will be allocated in the rural areas to the larger and best served villages with sustainable travel choices. This includes Bletchington which has an allocation of 50 new dwellings, 44 of which are planned for a site to the north of Duchy Field. Another site had been put forward but it sits within the Oxford green belt and so does not conform to the CDC policy of not allowing building there. However, the recent changes to the NPPF are enabling local planning authorities to now actively consider housing in the green belt if the site meets the 'grey belt' definition and criteria of the NPPF.

OTHER IMPACTS. General development around Bicester, including industrial estates, Heyford Park and Kidlington are likely to have an impact on the village in terms of traffic. There are also likely to be more positive impacts on the prospects of developing footpaths and cycle ways.

There is also an emphasis on green energy policy and particularly where this has an impact on housing could be seen in terms of solar panels and heat pumps.

However, whatever the well laid plans of CDC might be, the future is not certain. The plan is for the period to 2042 and a lot can change in 17 years. In the case of local government reorganisation, it is likely that the local plan could be subsumed into a much wider plan for the County or the region where a much wider strategy may dictate alternative approaches.

THE BLETCHINGTON AND HAMPTON POYLE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN.

Work is still ongoing on the Neighbourhood Plan. We hope to have the documentation completed by the end of March. This will include a policy document, baseline evidence and a design code for new buildings. Once this have been completed and accepted by the Parish Council, they will be available on the village website.

The next stage is to submit the plan to Cherwell District Council, when there will be a consultation period and submission to an independent examiner to ensure that it conforms to the policies of both the CDC and the Government.

The final stage of the journey is to submit the plan to a referendum in the villages. If this is successful the plan becomes part of policy for CDC.

More information about housing and the Neighbourhood Plan can be found by visiting <https://www.bletchington-pc.org.uk/neighbourhood-planning/>



New Applications Put Forward

24/03381/F – Robin Investments Ltd - Caravan and Camping Park, Diamond Farm, Islip Road, Bletchingdon OX5 3DR. - The use of land for the siting of 8 holiday lodges (technically static caravans), infrastructure and landscape planting, in place of 13 touring caravan pitches.

MW.0002/25 – Shipton Ltd – To continue the development permitted by planning permission number 11/01372/CM (MW.0119/11).

MW.0003/25 – Shipton Ltd – To continue the development permitted by planning permission number 19/00022/CM (MW.0119/11).

25/00202/TCA – Mrs Jones, London House, Islip Road, Bletchingdon OX5 3DP - Apple tree with rope swing: Rear garden on the raised bed: Reduce the crown back to previous reduction points approx 1-2 meters off. Rowan: Rear garden: Leaning tree: Reduce the crown back by 1 meter and remove major deadwood. Plum: Rear garden corner, adjacent to the wall: This tree is unstable: Fell to near ground level.

25/00179/F – Bletchingdon Park House, Springwell Hill, Bletchingdon OX5 3DW – Proposal to construct a new architectural folly on Island Pool, including viewing tower, works to the island, stepping stones to access the island and tree works.

25/00180/F – Bletchingdon Park House, Springwell Hill, Bletchingdon OX5 3DW – Permission to incorporate a new boat landing stage into the dam outlet structure on the central pool.

25/00287/DISC – Bletchingdon Park House, Springwell Hill, Bletchingdon OX5 3DW – Discharge of Conditions 3 (archaeological watching brief), 5 (ramps and stairs) and 13 (structural engineers report) of 23/03047/LB.



Applications Approved

24/03131/TCA – Palmers Cottage, Weston Road, Bletchingdon OX5 3DH – T1 x Silver Birch – Reduce crown by up to 3 meters and crown lift to give c2.5 meters clearance from ground level.

24/00750/F – Ingleby Farm, Ingleby Paddocks, Enslow, OX5 3ET – Two new buildings, one lambing shed and one cattle barn, hard surface between buildings and track to link to farm entrance.

Councillors, Responsibilities & Contacts



Name	Role	Address	Contact Number:
Dan Robins	Chair	Four Views, Oxford Road	350007
Rachel Pirie	Vice Chair	12 Valencia Close	07790025110
Matt Whitehead	Councillor	Rogers Cottage, Station Rd.	350991
Mark Taylor	Councillor	Stoneacre, Oxford Rd.	350609
Duncan Ledger	Councillor	3 Islip Road	351542
Chris Lane	Councillor	Village Farm	350257
Nicola Morris	Councillor	The Stables, Islip Road	351025

District Councillors:

Gemma Coton - Gemma.Coton@cherwell-dc.gov.uk

Julian Nedelcu - Julian.Nedelcu@cherwell-dc.gov.uk

Alisa Russell - Alisa.Russell@cherwell-dc.gov.uk

County Councillor: Nigel Simpson - nigel.simpson@oxfordshire.gov.uk



BeccaLou Designs

Special occasion and every day cakes available to order from a local small business.

All cakes are bespoke and freshly made to specific requirements.

A variety of flavours and designs, cupcakes, sponge, fruit, gluten free and vegan can be discussed.

Please allow at least 2 weeks prior to date required.

Email: mandy@cobi.co.uk

Tel: 01869 351771 or 07941 949743  BeccaLou Designs  beccalou_designs

Or order through Weston-on-the-Green Village Pantry



BLENHEIM PALACE

Family Fun This Easter

Meet The Easter Bunny
Golden Giveaways
Egg Hunt

Magic Shows
Archery
Face Painting
Fun Fair

Saturday 5th - Monday 21st April 2025
blenheimpalace.com



THE TRAVEL DIRECTORS



Joanne Scurr & Kelly White are the Travel Directors, your local travel experts

We are based in Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire and have between us more than 60 years of Travel Industry experience. We have worked a leading luxury long haul tour operators and have been lucky enough to have experienced first-hand the most amazing destinations across the globe. This means our experience and training helps guide and advise you on your holiday plans.

Our ethos for setting up our own business as The Travel Directors was that we felt there is a genuine gap in the market for a local Travel Company that not only has a wealth of knowledge, a love of travel but also a genuine passion for great customer service.

We can offer you everything from Luxury Long Haul, Worldwide Escorted Tours, Sporting Events & Golfing Holidays, City Breaks, Cruise, Weddings, from the Americas, Europe right across to the Far East and Down Under to Australia

We are fully ABTA bonded and ATOL protected meaning your money is 100% safe

Why would you risk your money booking online, trawling through endless websites where you cannot speak to a person and are just a number or a seat on a plane. Even with a High Street agency, you will see directional selling, promoting their own products rather than what is best for you. We are truly independent but with the financial backing and buying power of the Mid-Counties Co-operative meaning that we have access to the best rates from only trusted suppliers.

HOW TO CONTACT US

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 <https://www.instagram.com/joandkellythetraveldirectors/>

 <https://www.facebook.com/joandkellythetraveldirectors/>

DISCOVER  EXPLORE  RELAX  UNWIND 



The Shop Bicester Candles

**Diffuser & Candle Making Workshops
Chunky Yarn Arm Knitting Workshops**



Jewellery & Gifts

Homeware

Custom Paw Collars - Leather & Biothane

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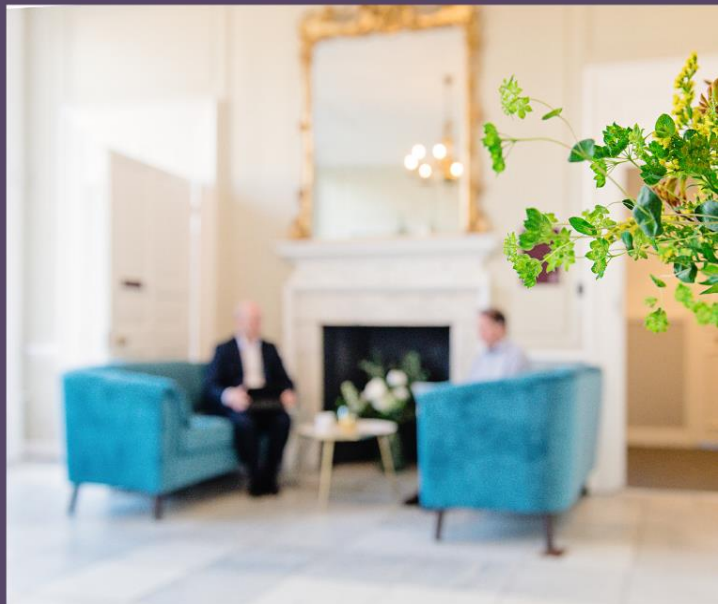
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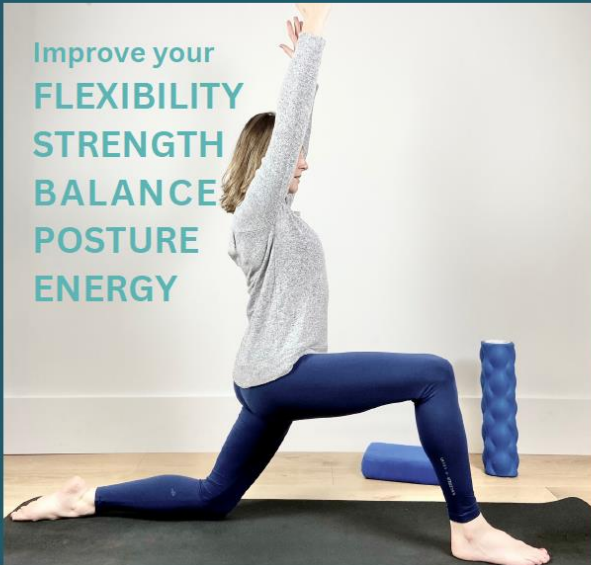


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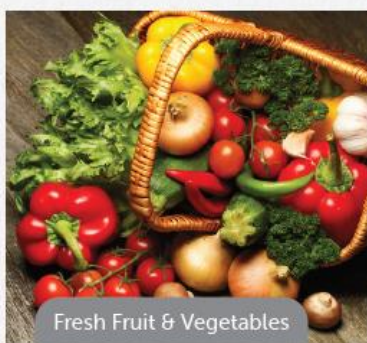
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