

The Four Parishes News Magazine

BECKLEY
FOREST HILL
HORTON-cum-STUDLEY
STANTON St JOHN



Peacock Butterfly on Buddleia

July/August 2023

The editor writes



Summer is here at last, with beautiful hot sunny days and balmy nights. I know that it has been a bit too hot recently for some, but it is a welcome relief not to be constantly watching the 'smart meter' to work out how much we have overspent on heating, and a delight to be able to wear summer clothes, for at least a few weeks of the year!

If you are planning on being at home during July and August, do check out the list of community events and activities which you will find on the back cover.

I am looking forward to my summer break, but I know that the time will race by and it won't be long before the deadline for the September magazine is looming. I would like to take this opportunity to particularly thank my Assistant Editors, Jonathan Barker and Anthea Beresford, who help to lighten the load in so many ways. I am also very grateful to the people who collate the information for the Village pages (note: there is still a vacancy for Beckley), and to our other regular contributors, especially Lyn Ebbs for her endlessly fascinating articles on birds.

I hope you all have a restful and pleasant summer.

Best wishes,

Julia

All contributions to this magazine are the sole responsibility of the author and do not imply or represent any official editorial view or endorsement.

Our cover photo

was taken by David Brown in Stanton St John in July 2022.

David regularly sends photographs to us and we are always delighted to receive them.

If you have taken a photo which you think might be suitable for the cover of the next magazine, please email it to 4parishesnewsletter@gmail.com

Benefice of Beckley, Forest Hill with Shotover, Horton-cum-Studley and Stanton St John

Vicar: Reverend Anthea Beresford

anthea@fourparishes.org.uk

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We welcome contributions for future issues, but please get in touch with the editorial team beforehand at 4parishesnewsletter@gmail.com to discuss any piece you'd like to write. Contributors typically live in the Four Parishes, or have a strong personal connection to the area. The editors reserve the right to reject any submitted content at any stage of the editorial process.

Recent issues of the magazine are available to view online at www.fourparishes.org.uk/magazine.

The closing date for the September 2023 issue is 15 August 2023

**To advertise in the magazine please email JULIA
adverts.4parishesnewsletter@gmail.com**

News or notices for the individual 'Village pages' should be sent to:

Beckley	Vacant at present. Send direct to the editor.
Forest Hill	Linda Goffey 01865 873078 linda@goffey.co.uk
Horton-cum-Studley	Carol Welch 01865 358122 carol_welch20@hotmail.com
Stanton St John	Sue Baker 01865 351449 susanjbaker24@gmail.com

Benefice of Beckley, Forest Hill with Shotover, Horton-cum-Studley and Stanton St John

The Reverend Anthea Beresford is Vicar of the Church of The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Beckley, St Nicolas Church in Forest Hill, St Barnabas Church in Horton-cum-Studley, and St John the Baptist Church in Stanton St John. Anthea is supported by a team of voluntary clergy, lay ministers and churchwardens, whose details are listed below.

Ministry Team

Rev'd Anthea Beresford
Vicar

anthea@fourparishes.org.uk
Tel: 01865 351839

Rev'd Hugh Lee
Associate Priest

hugh.lee@btinternet.com
Tel: 01865 316245

Rev'd Stephanie Bullock

stephaniebullock9@gmail.com

Betty Dye LLM

betty.dye10@gmail.com

Canon Prof. Nicholas Orme LLM

n.i.orme@exeter.ac.uk

Churchwardens

Beckley

Georgina Robson

Tel: 01865 351637

ginarobson5@gmail.com

Forest Hill

Jane Walker

Tel: 01865 872399

lyttleton@btinternet.com

Pat Fraser

Tel: 01865 875679

triciaann49@gmail.com

Horton-cum-Studley

Andrew Payne Tel: 01865 351018 stbarnabas.churchwardenpayne@gmail.com

Julia Slingo Tel: 07766 659524 stbarnabas.churchwardenslingo@gmail.com

Stanton St John

Vacant at present

The Four Parishes News Magazine has 10 issues per year and is distributed free of charge to approximately 850 addresses in Forest Hill, Horton-cum-Studley, Stanton St John and Beckley. It is funded by advertising revenue, which is used to cover the printing costs. We are dependent on volunteers to assemble the content, book and invoice the advertisers, compile and edit the magazine, collect it from the printers and distribute it throughout the four parishes.

Editor: Julia Stutfield

Assistant Editors: Jonathan Barker, Anthea Beresford

Church Services in the Four Parishes, July 2023

	St Nicolas, Forest Hill with Shotover	St John the Baptist, Stanton St John	Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Beckley	St Barnabas, Horton-cum- Studley
2 July <i>Fourth Sunday after Trinity</i>	11am Holy Communion	9.30am Holy Communion	9.30am Holy Communion	11am Morning Prayer
	4pm Children's Service at St Nicolas, Forest Hill			
	6pm Taizé Service on Zoom			
9 July <i>Fifth Sunday after Trinity</i>		9.30am Holy Communion	9.30am Morning Prayer	11am Holy Communion
	4pm Messy Church at Beckley Village Hall			
	6pm BCP Choral Evensong at St Nicolas, Forest Hill			
16 July <i>Sixth Sunday after Trinity</i>	11am BCP Morning Prayer	9.30am Morning Prayer	9.30am BCP Holy Communion	11am Holy Communion
	4pm Family Church summer picnic on The Green, Horton-cum-Studley			
	6pm Iona Service summer celebration at Beckley			
23 July <i>Seventh Sunday after Trinity</i>	10am Benefice Service of Holy Communion at Beckley			
30 July <i>Eighth Sunday after Trinity</i>	11am Morning Prayer	9.30am Holy Communion	9.30am Morning Prayer	11am Morning Prayer
	6pm Church Without Walls at Stanton St John Village Hall			

Please check the website www.fourparishes.org.uk for any updates.

Church Services in the Four Parishes, August 2023

	St Nicolas, Forest Hill with Shotover	St John the Baptist, Stanton St John	Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Beckley	St Barnabas, Horton-cum- Studley
6 August <i>The Transfiguration</i>	11am Holy Communion	9.30am Holy Communion	9.30am Holy Communion	11am Morning Prayer
	4pm Children's Service at St Nicolas, Forest Hill			
	6pm Taizé Service on Zoom			
13 August <i>Tenth Sunday after Trinity</i>		9.30am Holy Communion	9.30am Morning Prayer	11am Holy Communion
	4pm Messy Church at Stanton St John Village Hall			
	6pm BCP Choral Evensong at St Nicolas, Forest Hill			
20 August <i>Eleventh Sunday after Trinity</i>	11am BCP Morning Prayer	9.30am Morning Prayer	9.30am BCP Holy Communion	11am Holy Communion
27 August <i>Seventh Sunday after Trinity</i>	10am Benefice Service of Holy Communion at Horton-cum-Studley			

Please check the website www.fourparishes.org.uk for any updates.

If you are not on the church mailing list and would like an invitation to a Zoom service or a regular reminder of weekly services, please email Anthea : anthea@fourparishes.org.uk.

A letter from Anthea

Hi everyone,



Anniversaries can often be a prompt to stop and to take stock. As you all know, it's the third anniversary of me being here in the benefice on 1 July. But during the week I wrote this, it was also the anniversary of my Ordination, and someone from my cohort of Diocese of Gloucester ordinands posted a comment in our private Facebook Group, checking in on us all and reflecting on the journey we have each been on since that special day. It was interesting as we each commented on our journeys, both together as a cohort, and individually.

I have been fortunate to have just been away on a retreat – also a time to take stock, to relax, to rest, to pray, to reflect, and to seek God's guidance for the next leg of the journey. As I slowed down, I realised just how tired I was – and I was reminded of the importance of rest, of a change of scenery, of a time away from the everyday.

This seemed timely as we enter the traditional time for summer holidays. Some of us have no choice but to take our holiday at this time of the year because of school or college holidays. Some avoid this time and take leave at a less busy time of year. Some of us will be fortunate enough to go away. Some prefer to stay in their own surroundings. Some would love to go away but for a variety of reasons cannot. Whether or not we go away, whether it is over the summer or at a different time, it is important for us each to have a break from the everyday chores of life, whatever that means for each of us individually. Otherwise, we can become overwrought, not necessarily recognising it as we keep plodding on; not necessarily recognising how tired we have got. Taking a break can seem impossible, with no space in our diaries, but battling on is not good for us. We can end up not really knowing if we are coming or going. We could end up like the train in the photo – not really knowing whether we are coming or going! Facing in one direction, but actually travelling in completely the opposite direction, at great speed.



Rest and a change in patterns are good for us – even when we cannot really see how it is going to happen. I hope you can all have a good break of some sort over the summer, or at least plan for one at a time that suits you.

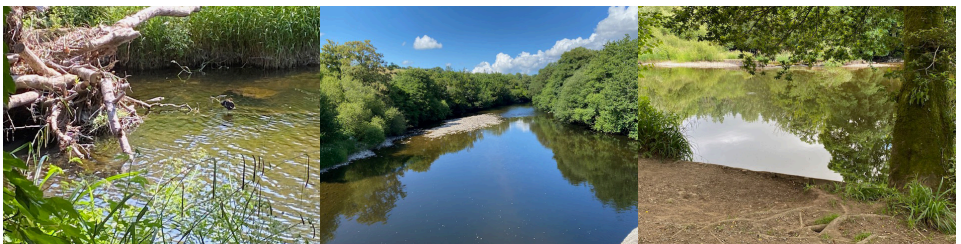
I know that the summer can also be a stressful time for some – waiting for exam results, wondering if we will get the results we need to take the next step we are hoping to take; or we can be busy finishing assignments and dissertations – oh I remember it well! Whether you are waiting for results, or finishing assignments, be gentle with yourself. Take rest along with the work; remember that if one door closes, another will open, and in all of it, you are not alone. One door may seem closed; the way through may not seem terribly clear and there may be blockages in the way – but there will be a path, and you will find still waters.

Over the summer, may we all remember the words from Psalm 23:

The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.
He makes me lie down in green pastures;
he leads me beside still waters;
he restores my soul.
He leads me in right paths
for his name's sake.

I hope and pray you all have a wonderful refreshing summer, but please do get in touch if life is hard and you need someone to talk to. Take great care and God bless you and your loved ones.

Anthea



The Reverend Anthea Beresford is Vicar of the Church of The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Beckley, St Nicolas Church in Forest Hill, St Barnabas Church in Horton-cum-Studley, and St John the Baptist Church in Stanton St John.

CHURCH MATTERS

All the churches in the benefice are open daily. Beckley: 10am-6pm; Forest Hill, Horton-cum-Studley and Stanton St John: 10am-4pm.

In addition to the church services listed on pages 5 and 6, there are other activities during the week, details of which appear below. **All are welcome to join these activities. Please email me (Anthea) anthea@fourparishes.org.uk if you would like to know more about any of the items in this section of the magazine.**

Advent challenge and beyond

I hope you enjoyed reading Nehemiah, Esther, and Ecclesiastes last month. Last month I said we only had five books to go to complete our read through the Bible since we started this challenge. However, somehow, I had missed one of the smallest books that we have not read yet, so there are in fact three still to go, despite us tackling three last month! But the good news is that the one I had missed has a mere 4 chapters!

So, in July let's read through Job. This book came alive to me when at college our lecturer suggested we read it together as a play one evening. I would love for us to do that together one day, but for now let's just tackle it on our own. There are 42 chapters so a chapter a day and each weekend day, and one more to finish it off.

In August we will read the final two books: Ruth with 4 chapters, and Proverbs with 31. This should be quite easy, especially as we have the knowledge that we have read the whole Bible together since the start of the challenge. Happy reading! And huge congratulations to those who have stayed the course.

Book Group

We are continuing to read *Lydia: A Story*, by Paula Gooder, and will move on to a new book once that is finished over the summer. If anyone would like to join us, please do get in touch.

Ongoing midweek activities on Zoom

We are continuing Morning and Evening Prayer and the Benefice Book Group on Zoom as detailed on the next page. Please email anthea@fourparishes.org.uk for invitations if you wish to be included. The usual

attendees will be advised of any ad hoc times when these are not happening.

	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri
Morning Prayer at 9am		√		√
Evening Prayer at 6pm	√		√	
Benefice Book Group at 7.30pm			√	

Home Group Study on the Gospel of John

The Bible Study of the Gospel of John continues. It is held on Mondays in Horton-cum-Studley, beginning at 2.30pm. This will continue to the end of July, and then take a break until the autumn, when it will start up again. If you are interested in being involved, and have not already done so, please contact Annie Payne on 01865 351018, leaving a message if there is no reply, or by email at anniefpayne@gmail.com. New people are welcome at any time.

Dates for diary for children and family church activities

Children's Service at St Nicolas, Forest Hill 4 - 4.30pm	Messy Church Stanton St John Village Hall 4 - 5pm	Family Church Bernwood Forest Horton-cum- Studley 3-4pm winter 4-5pm summer	Craft Workshop Beckley Church 3.30-4.30pm ***
2 July	9 July	16 July**	
6 August	13 August		
3 September	10 September	24 September	
1 October	8 October	29 October	
5 November	12 November	26 November	
3 December (St Nicolas Day Celebration with Christingle)			
10 December (Christmas Party SVH 4-5pm)			

****Please note the change in date due to school holidays.** Please also note that this will be held on the **Village Green in Horton-cum-Studley** – park at the Church and carefully cross the road onto The Village Green which is on the sharp bend on the main road.

*** more dates for Craft Workshops in the autumn will be advertised as soon as possible. Please do look out for updates on these.

Family Church: 16 July 4-5pm, Horton-cum-Studley Village Green



Our summer celebration for Family Church will take place on 16 July 4-5pm on Horton-cum-Studley Village Green. All are welcome. Family Church warmly invites everyone to bring a summer picnic and enjoy a story, games and songs on the village green. All ages

welcome! With love from Anthea and Laura x PS No need to book, just come along!

Iona Service: Summer celebration: 16 July at 6pm, Beckley Churchyard

Before taking a break for the summer we are having a summer celebration on 16 July at 6pm. Do come and join us. Weather permitting, we will be in the churchyard, and will have refreshments afterwards. There is no meeting in August, but we will be back again on 17 September as usual.

Messy Church in August: 13 August from 4-5pm, Beckley Village Hall

In August we are helping Beckley Church celebrate St Mary as it's dedicated 'The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary' and the Church calendar celebrates The Blessed Virgin Mary on 15 August – so our meeting on 13 August from 4-5pm in Beckley Village Hall fits perfectly. There will be the usual 'Open the Book' style drama the children can be involved in, a Bible story read from a children's Bible related to the drama, prayers, craft activity/games, some songs, and food and drinks. Do come and join us and join in the fun.

Prayers for Peace

As the war continues in Ukraine, and as God's peace is not present throughout the world, we continue to pray for peace. We meet for 15 minutes at 12pm on Wednesdays and Saturdays in July and August across the benefice as follows:

	July	August
Beckley	1, 19, 29	16, 26
Forest Hill	12, 22	9, 19
Horton-cum-Studley	8, 26	5, 23
Stanton St John	5, 15	2, 12, 30

Confirmation

It is very exciting that at the time of us preparing this magazine, I am in discussion with Bishop Gavin, Bishop of Dorchester, about him coming and leading a confirmation service here in the benefice. We already have candidates interested in this, but I wanted to see if anyone else within the benefice might be interested too.

Some of you might be wondering what confirmation is. So here is a brief introduction, but please do get in touch with me if you want to learn more.

Those who have been baptised as children may at some point want to make their own declaration of faith, and in the Church of England, this is formally done at a confirmation service. Adults who have not been baptised but are wanting to make a public statement about their belief, may be interested in a combined service of baptism and confirmation. Those who have been members of other denominations may be interested in confirmation as a means of declaring their membership of the Church of England. Confirmation is not a requirement to worship within the Church of England, all are welcome, but some may wish to take this step. It is only expected for those wishing to hold various positions within the Church. It is also usual for people to be confirmed before receiving Holy Communion.

Confirmation is an important occasion. Confirmation candidates confirm the promises made for them at their baptism service if baptised as a child, and the Bishop leading the service prays for God's Holy Spirit to rest upon them. This is a very special moment within the service and for the individual candidates. Before confirmation, candidates generally attend a series of classes or meetings where they discuss what it means to be a Christian, so they can decide whether to make their own Christian commitment and think about how they might express that in their own lives.

If you are interested in being confirmed or would like to know more about confirmation, please do get in touch with me. *Anthea*

The Reverend Dr Elizabeth Hoare

We are very sorry to be saying goodbye to The Reverend Dr Elizabeth Hoare, known to us as Liz, who has been part of the benefice ministry from long before I arrived here (around 15 years I believe since moving away from her beloved Yorkshire). Her full-time role has been as Tutor

in Spiritual Formation at Wycliffe Hall, an evangelical theological college here in Oxford. Her link with the benefice enabled her to 'keep grounded in parish life' as she describes it, while also doing her important and valuable teaching role in helping students with their spiritual formation during their studies for ministry.

She has led monthly communion services here in Beckley, and is much loved by the congregation there, who will sorely miss her, and her husband, The Reverend Toddy Hoare, who they have also got to know well over the years.

It is through Liz's links between the benefice and Wycliffe Hall that we have had the pleasure of hosting students on preaching placements. I hope this link continues after Liz leaves.

Liz is moving back to Yorkshire to a part-time role, gently easing her towards eventual retirement as she puts it. We give thanks for Liz and Toddy, and pray for them as they move and look for a new home over the summer, and as Liz settles into her new role, and they put down new roots.

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Mondays & Thursdays

Forest Hill and Stanton St John

Picks up at 10.30am in Forest Hill

Bus stop in Powell Close and Stanton Road

Picks up at 10.40am in Stanton St John

Bus stop outside the village shop

Tuesdays & Fridays

Horton-cum-Studley and Beckley

Picks up at 10.30am in Horton-cum-Studley

Bus stop is the bus shelter on the Brill Road

Picks up at 10.40am in Beckley

Bus stop next to red post box on the High Street

Bus stops on the London Road in Headington and at the Town Hall in St Aldates

Return Journey from Oxford and Headington:

Picks up from Broad Street outside Balliol College at 1.15pm

Picks up in Headington at the main gate into Bury Knowle Park at 1.30pm

TRAVEL CARDS COST £15 FOR 10 SINGLE JOURNEYS, obtainable from:

The Village Shop, Stanton St John – Tel: 01865 351532

Malcolm Leeding, Forest Hill – Tel: 01865 872034

The Abingdon Arms, Beckley – Tel: 01865 655667

Jill Meyjes, Horton-cum-Studley – Tel: 01865 351496



GENERAL

The end of Landline Telephone Services in Britain

{Editor's Note: The information below is based on a much longer article sent to us by Peter Wingfield-Stratford from Stanton St John. We are grateful to Peter for bringing this important issue to our attention.}

Yes, it's really due to happen in 2025! The Telecomms bodies and telephone network companies, like BT and their competitors, have agreed with the government that our Public Telephone network, called PTSN, has come to the end of its practical economic development.

The UK's telephone network is being upgraded, which means that landline services are changing. We will still be able to have a landline in our home, but the technology that powers it will be different. For most, switching over will be straightforward, but some people may need new equipment or support to make the changes.

The problem is that there are huge implications, but the actual way in which it will happen has not yet been finalised. This means that everyone needs to plan ahead, and be very careful from now when making any purchases and contracts for telephones and internet access.

For example, older phones will probably need to be replaced; it's likely that providers will offer a new model, but it might come at a cost. All end-users need good advice to cope with Broadband delivered now by Landline and an old-style Router. The earlier any Landline phone-user can modernise their telephones to ones having Digital input and modern Routers to connect by Wifi, the better. Users who have many Handsets, with long private wire telephone networks, will need to plan ahead to avoid a last minute rush and the high cost that brings.

Peter Wingfield-Stratford has asked us to stress that he is not an expert, but his article contains a lot of interesting information. If you would like a copy, please email him at peterws@tobeistodo.co.uk.

Some advice is also available on the Which website, <https://www.which.co.uk/reviews/broadband/article/digital-voice-and-the-landline-phone-switch-off-what-it-means-for-you-aPSOH8k1i6Vv>.

A day in the life of a local beekeeper

by Maria Keenan

June/July is the time for the first harvest of honey - if you are lucky. Bees love the rapeseed that is sown this time of year and a popular choice for farmers all over the country. Rapeseed honey is a lovely pale yellow colour with a light floral flavour (in my experience). Some people say their rapeseed honey tastes/smells like cabbage but all the honey that I've extracted in the Spring has been lovely. One drawback to rapeseed is that it will set very quickly in the frames if not extracted quickly. So timing is crucial. I like to get my honey straight out of the frames using my manual centrifugal extractor. It is then coarse filtered so that it retains all the health benefits including pollen, and then goes straight into clean jars. Many beekeepers will leave their honey in buckets and jar up when required. However, if the honey starts to crystallise in the buckets then they have a problem and will need to warm up the honey to get it out. I prefer to extract straight into the jars so that none of the health benefits are lost and the consumer can choose if they wish to liquify the honey in a jug of warm water or spread it straight from the jar to melt on hot buttered toast! Mmmmm.



You should only extract from honey frames which have been capped by the bees with wax. This means that it will have a maximum water content of 18-20%. If you extract honey which hasn't been capped you run the risk of the honey fermenting which will only be good for making mead - which may have its benefits!! You can also check the water content in the honey frames by using a refractometer - a very useful piece of kit for all beekeepers.

During July, the bees will be re-filling their hives and taking advantage of the summer bounty which is normally widely available all over the country.

Maria Keenan has lived in Forest Hill most of her life since 1967, loves travel, new experiences and is a keen crafter!

Birds' feet and toes

by Lyn Ebbs

Many of my previous articles have featured birds' plumage but in this one I'm mainly looking at birds from the knees down. If you call to mind a bird's foot you will probably think of a typical small perching bird such as a robin or a domesticated species like a chicken – three toes pointing forwards and one pointing backwards.

If you picture it in terms of your own right hand, on a bird's foot digit 1 is equivalent to your thumb and points back, and going round clockwise, digits 2, 3 and 4 point forwards and digit 5 doesn't exist. Obviously, your left hand is the mirror image. As demonstrated by this Grasshopper Warbler, this arrangement of the digits helps the bird with perching. The general term 'passerine' actually means birds with feet that are adapted for perching, and Passeriformes is the name given to a large order of birds, including all songbirds. This digit arrangement also helps in climbing and, for birds of prey, with hunting. To give the correct anatomical term, 'dactyly' is the arrangement of digits and this particular arrangement is 'anisodactyly'.



While this applies across a wide range of species, there are some birds that follow a different rule; they are mostly woodland species that climb tree trunks. In these species, digits 1 and 4 point backwards, while 2 and 3 point forwards. For a demonstration, look out for the species we see with increasing frequency in our own gardens, the Great Spotted Woodpecker. Their cousins, Green Woodpeckers and Lesser Spotted Woodpeckers, have the same arrangement: zygodactyly (meaning even numbered). Two species that you might think would also have evolved with this pattern, nuthatches and treecreepers, actually just have very long, strong back claws to help with their climbing activities.



Yet another rule applies to the Kingfisher, which has come up with a third design where two toes, digits 3 and 4, have actually fused together for

most of their length - syndactyly. This arrangement makes it easier for the bird to stand on flat surfaces. As kingfishers nest in tunnels and dive head first to seize fish with their beaks, they don't need the level of flexibility in their feet that perching birds require.



Kingfisher - Ben Andrew (rspb-images.com)

To digress slightly, perching birds also have an adaptation in their tendons that makes this habit a secure option. Two thin tendons, called flexor tendons, extend from the leg muscles down the back of the tarsus bone of the foot and attach to the toes. When a bird lands on a perch and squats, these tendons tighten and so the toes lock around the perch. Until the leg is straightened, the toes will not release. When roosting, this involuntary reflex keeps a sleeping bird on its perch and means it doesn't fall off during the night.

My final group of birds, the swifts, have all four toes pointing forwards: pamprodactyly. The Common Swift, the species that breeds here, has very small feet. In fact, it was at one time thought to have no feet at all. Its scientific name *Apus apus* literally means 'without feet'. Their foot structure is designed for clinging, better suited to nest sites in crevices, in caves, on crags and, in more recent times, under roofs and in nest boxes. As for roosting, swifts are renowned for being able to sleep on the wing. Like other birds they can modulate how intensely they sleep; they can keep one hemisphere of their brain awake, while the other sleeps. Young Swifts are usually four years old before they breed, so from first leaving the nest they will be on the wing for four years. If you see birds congregating on wires in the autumn, they won't be Swifts!



Young Swift - Ben Andrew (rspb-images.com)

Most birds you will see have four digits in one of these arrangements, even ducks and other wildfowl with their webbed feet have a small claw pointing backwards. I have ignored emus (three toes) and ostriches (two toes) as we don't usually see these in Oxfordshire.

Lyn Ebbs has lived in Stanton St John for 35 years and has been volunteering at the RSPB Otmoor Reserve at Otmoor Lane, Beckley, since 2009.

Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Beckley

The Pipe Organ

[Editor's Note: "The organ in Beckley Church has recently been undergoing a major refurbishment. The Managing Director of Clevedon Organs, who carried out the work, has kindly provided us with this informative article, and we are also pleased to announce that Dr. Edward Higginbottom, Organist and Director of Music at New College Oxford from 1976 to 2014, will be giving a recital on the organ on Saturday 30 September."]

A Brief History of the Organ

The organ of The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary Church, Beckley, is thought to have been built by Charles Martin of Oxford circa 1870. Rumour has it that it was originally built for one of the Oxford Colleges, although documentary evidence supporting this is not in existence. Originally built as a one manual instrument, a second manual was added by J. W. Walker of London, possibly in the 1880s. A paper label was found affixed to the upper keyboard with the Walker name and job number and the construction of the Swell windchest, pipes and mechanism supports this. The organ was moved to its current home in 1934.



The organ was overhauled and radically modified in 2009, including moving the Swell windchest and expression box (containing the pipes of the second manual) backwards and upwards, presumably to allow more space inside the organ for tuning. The Walker key and stop mechanism was crudely lengthened to achieve this and misalignment resulted, causing periodic sticking notes. This aspect of the work was unsympathetically undertaken, given the historic pedigree of the organ, and mechanically unsound. At the same time, the pedal mechanism was converted from pneumatic to electro-pneumatic operation and modification was made to the front pipe pneumatic mechanisms and wind supply. The magnificent decoration on the front pipes was beautifully restored by an independent expert. In recent times, the organ suffered water damage from a leak in the roof, rendering the Great keyboard unplayable. We were saddened to see the state of the organ when we inspected it in late 2022.

Recent Work Undertaken

The work undertaken this year by Clevedon Organs UK Ltd constitutes a restorative overhaul and repairing the serious water damage to the organ. The alterations unsympathetically undertaken in 2009 have been reconstructed in a more historically sympathetic manner and the key and stop mechanisms of the Swell division re-made using historically appropriate components and re-aligned to ensure reliable operation. The Pedalboard has been re-bushed and overhauled and the leather on the bellows



has been overlaid to inhibit the many leaks. The Tremulant stop and mechanism, which adds gentle vibrato when required, has been restored and the original hand pumping mechanism, found in pieces underneath the bellows, has been re-assembled as a unique historic feature, although no longer required due to the presence of a modern electric blower. The blower itself has been fitted with a new cabinet, as the original one had been completely eaten by woodworm. Similarly, the wind control unit has been replaced

because of the infestation. The mechanism and wind supply to the front pipes has been repaired and modified to bring it nearer to its original design and the whole organ has been cleaned and tonally regulated, improving the sound of the organ. Seven additional pipes have been added to the bass of the Great Principal stop, prior to which these notes were inappropriately borrowed from the Open Diapason rank, so everything now sounds as it should and the organ can continue to give many more years of reliable service to the Parish and is truly now a historical and musical gem in Oxfordshire.



Anthony Hall (Managing Director of Clevedon Organs UK Ltd)

* * * * *

BECKLEY

Beckley Church

Details of all church services and general church news can be found on pages 5 - 13. Any changes to the published schedule of services will be on our website www.fourparishes.org.uk.

The Organ

We are immensely grateful to Clevedon Organs for all the care they took in the restoration of our organ. Anthony Hall, the Director has written an informative article, which you will find on page 18.

A Date for your Diary!

Saturday 30 September, 6pm

Organ Recital on Beckley Church's restored and renovated organ by

Dr Edward Higginbottom

Emeritus Professor of Choral Music, University of Oxford

Emeritus Organist and Fellow, New College Oxford.

Not to be missed!

Beckley Art Group

The Beckley Art Group continues to meet every Friday morning in Beckley village hall. There are about 20 members, not all from Beckley itself, but from surrounding villages, and even as far away as Oxford! The whole environment of the hall lends itself to relaxed artistic creativity, aided and abetted by a very social coffee break at 11am. The group has had a successful showing in the Stanton shop window over this March and April, and continues to show paintings in the pub, as well as organising exhibits in 'Tate Beckley' (AKA the old telephone box on Beckley High Street). The highlight this year will again be the annual exhibition in the village hall, the weekend of 7/8 October, where there will be 100 or more paintings of very different styles, artistic diversity being one of the hallmarks of our group!

John Stradling for Beckley Art Group.

Beckley and Area Community Benefit Society Ltd

More than a Pub program <https://bacbs.org/events>

The Beckley & Area Community Benefit Society (BACBS) has a great line up of events at The Abingdon Arms, Beckley to which all are welcome.

Coffee mornings

1st Wednesday of the month, 11am. Meet for coffee, cake and a chat in the pub.

Pub quiz

1st Wednesday of the month, 7.30pm. Thanks to The Abingdon Arms, there's a free round of drinks for the winning team.

Community walks

3rd Sunday of the month, 2pm start. Dogs on leads are welcome on these gentle, approximately two-hour, walks. Email info@bacbs.org for details.

More than a Pub talks

Talks are usually from local experts and cover a wide range of topics.

Sunday 30 July, 6.30pm: *A history of Palestine in 12 photographs*

For more than 20 years, local author Roger Hardy was a Middle East analyst with the BBC World Service. He has written three books on the Middle East and the wider Muslim world. This talk will be on his most recent publication, *The Bride*, which focuses on the history of Palestine using 12 photographs.

If you missed any of the talks and want to listen to the recordings or would like more information, go to bacbs.org/events.

Please note, there are no BACBS events in August.

BACBS Good Neighbour Scheme

The Good Neighbour Scheme offers lifts to those with no other transport to e.g. the doctors or Stanton Village Shop, or to the Barton/Green Road roundabout, where there are regular buses into Headington and central Oxford. The scheme serves Beckley, Elsfield, Stanton, Forest Hill, Woodeaton. To request a lift, ring 07514 791910 or email BACBSgoodneighbour@gmail.com.

Beckley & Stowood Parish Council

The next meeting of the Parish Council will be held on **Monday 10 July at 7pm in Beckley Village Hall**. No meeting in August. Any changes to the published meeting dates will be on the website www.beckley-and-stowood-pc.gov.uk.

The Clerk's email address is clerk@beckley-and-stowood-pc.gov.uk and Parish Council information can be found on the website www.beckley-and-stowood-pc.gov.uk.

Beckley School Bus

Beckley School is in great danger of losing its bus as thoughtless parking is causing traffic chaos in the High Street and Church Street.

The bus needs to turn around in the junction of Church Street and the High Street when the children are dropped off and picked up. This manoeuvre is often not possible as people park at the junction which stops the bus manoeuvring and causes traffic gridlock. Please do think of local residents and the bus driver when dropping your children off or picking them up from school. **Please do not stop or park at or near the Church Street and High Street junction at school going in and coming out times – 8.30-9.15am and 2.45-3.30pm.**

For information on Beckley Village Hall please see www.beckleyvillagehall.org and to enquire about a booking please contact the Booking Secretary, Mel Green, at booking@beckleyvillagehall.org.



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stantonvillageshop@gmail.com



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To our valued customers, THANK YOU! We LOVE that you shop local!

FOREST HILL

News from St Nicolas

Details of all church services and general church news can be found on pages 5 - 13. Any changes to the published schedule of services will be on our website www.fourparishes.org.uk.

Cream Teas and Music at St Nicolas

Sunday 23 July, Sunday 27 August, Saturday 23 September



3pm-5pm Cream Teas with live music in the church garden

5.15pm Informal concert in church followed by drinks in the garden

Anyone is welcome to take part in the concert or contribute to music in the garden - just let Julia Stutfield know (ideally beforehand, but you could do it on the day!). We offer the chance to perform in a supportive and informal atmosphere and all styles of music are welcome.

Julia Stutfield
07766 103427 or julia.stutfield@gmail.com

St Nicolas Organ - Open Mornings – Saturdays 15 July, 19 August

The pipe organ at St Nicolas is 140 years old this year and has remained largely unchanged since it was built by Charles Martin of St Clements in 1883. Anybody interested in hearing, playing or learning about the organ is welcome to drop in any time between 10am and 12 noon, when St Nicolas organist, Peter Stutfield, will be happy to demonstrate. All ages are welcome, but children must be accompanied by a responsible adult.

Tea and coffee will be available. Ring Peter on 01865 876848 for more details or to book a time slot.

Ride and Stride, Saturday 9 September

It's that time of year again! I will be at Cream Teas on Sunday 27 August and will have a sponsorship form with me, so if you would like to sponsor me for Ride and Stride, please come and find me. Many thanks for all your support over the years. *Pat Fraser, email: triciaann49@gmail.com*

Forest Hill with Shotover Parish Council

The next meeting of the Parish Council will be held on **Thursday 3 August at 7pm in Forest Hill Village Hall**. Dates of future meetings can be found on the Forest Hill website www.parish-council.com/foresthillwithshotover and on the Village Hall notice board. Current agendas and minutes are posted on the notice board outside the Village Hall. Archived agendas and minutes can be found on the website.

20-mph wheelie bin stickers are available from the Clerk and can be picked up from the village hall before the PC meetings. Two stickers per household to be used on green and grey bins.

You can contact the Clerk by email at theclerk@foresthillwithshotover-pc.org.uk or telephone 0844 884 3328, between 9am and 5pm.

Jazz Nights in Forest Hill Village Hall

Jazz jam sessions with Julie, Will and Friends, **Tuesday 11 July and Tuesday 12 September, 7.30-9.30pm**.

Join Julie, Will and their musician friends, to celebrate jazz, with plenty



of opportunity for instrumentalists and vocalists to make music with a house band and to take the seat in the rhythm section as well if wished. Or just come to listen and soak up the atmosphere! All welcome. No need to book, just turn up on the night. Soft drinks available, bring your own alcohol if desired. Suggested donation by card or cash £5.

Forest Hill Village Email List

To receive reminders about community events in Forest Hill, sign up for our mailing list at www.stnicolasforesthill.org/community-events.

Forest Hill Cafe

Village Hall 11-3pm

Light Lunches
Tea/Coffee/Cake
Last Friday of the month
28 July & 25 August



The Maple Tree at Forest Hill, Thursdays 11am-12pm

The Maple Tree Baby & Toddler Group sessions in Forest Hill Village Hall continue to run throughout July and August. Older siblings are welcome during the school holidays and we love to have news of children who have moved on to nursery or even school. If you are expecting a baby soon, why not call in to introduce yourself to us? If you have any questions, contact Julia Stutfield 07766 103427 or julia.stutfield@gmail.com

A colorful poster for a village fête. At the top left is a yellow sun with rays and a string of colorful triangular bunting. The background is light blue with white clouds. The text 'FOREST HILL VILLAGE FÊTE' is written in large, bold, dark blue letters inside a white cloud. Below it, in smaller white text, is 'ON THE GREEN (STANTON ROAD) AND AT THE VILLAGE HALL'. To the right, another white cloud contains the text 'SATURDAY 8TH JULY 1.00PM TO 4.00PM'. A third white cloud on the right lists activities: 'RAFFLE • TOMBOLA • GAMES BRIC-A-BRAC • PLANT SALE FACE PAINTING • ICE CREAM LIVE MUSIC • FOOD & DRINK (INC. BAVARIAN SAUSAGES & BEER) AND MORE!'. At the bottom left is an illustration of a wooden stall with a teddy bear, a cake, and a bottle. At the bottom right is a black dachshund dog holding a bunch of colorful balloons. The bottom of the poster shows a green grassy hill.

HORTON-cum-STUDLEY

News from St Barnabas

Details of all church services and general church news can be found on pages 5 - 13. Any changes to the published schedule of services will be on our website www.fourparishes.org.uk.

Coffee and Chat, July and August

Coffee and chat will be in St Barnabas churchyard on **Saturday 8 July and Saturday 12 August 10am – 12pm**. Everyone is welcome to share 10 minutes or an hour or so with neighbours and enjoy a cup of tea or coffee. Dogs are always welcome so please drop in if you are walking past.

Cream Teas in the Churchyard, Summer 2023

Cream teas will be served in the churchyard on **Sunday 30 July and Sunday 3 September, 2 - 4pm**, to raise funds for the church. All welcome.

Calling all Photographers

At this month's PCC meeting it was decided to order some more postcards for the Church. These have sold well in the past and are useful as bookmarks, thank you notes and mementos of visits made to historic churches. Our village church, on the Oxfordshire Historic Churches bike ride is no exception!

This time we would print colour ones and we would like to invite any parishioners to submit photographs of St Barnabas Church and churchyard by the end of September when we hope to go to press. Your photo could become our printed postcard!

Please send your entries to carol_welch20@hotmail.com by the end of September.

Feast of St Barnabas – Teddy Bears picnic

We were so lucky to have really good weather for one hour and twenty-five minutes of the Messy Church Teddy Bears picnic. The torrential rain stayed away until five minutes to five: it took us an hour to set up and five minutes to put everything away! Thank you so much to everyone who came and to all involved with activities and refreshments. It was a really happy afternoon.

Millennium Village Hall

The Hall Committee's AGM was held on 1 June. All members were willing to contribute their time and effort for another year, and were duly re-elected with thanks. Thanks, were also recorded to Pete Whitaker, who continues to devote time to regular inspections and to highlight any maintenance issues.

The coming year will see some not insignificant expenditure items, including playground maintenance, and replacement of damaged chairs. A small unrestricted funds surplus for the year to 31 March 2023 will help to cover at least some of these.

Evening and morning weekly Zumba exercise classes remain popular and there are spaces available – contact Freddie on email fredrika@vignoles.com or on 07856 285273.

Tennis coaching for all age groups continues weekly - bookings via Horton-cum-Studley Tennis Club/Coaching (lta.org.uk)

Just a reminder of Hall contact details:

For bookings hcshallbookings@gmail.com

And for treasurer treasurerhcsmvh@gmail.com

And me at s.macfarlane799@btinternet.com

Horton-cum-Studley Parish Council News

At the well-attended Annual Parish Meeting held on 25 May we heard from David Wilding RSPB about plans to develop the former Otmoor Farm for use as a base for RSPB staff and volunteers.

The recent introduction of the 20mph speed limit has met with some success, although we would like to supplement this with the introduction of a Speedwatch group. Community Speedwatch is a national initiative where proactive members of local communities join with the support and supervision of their local police to record details of speeding vehicles using approved detection devices. If you would like to offer some time, to improve the safety and quality of life for everyone in the local community by joining our Speedwatch group, contact the Parish Clerk.

(continued on next page)

Information about the Parish Council, including dates of meetings, agendas, minutes and policies can be found on the village website: <http://www.horton-cum-studley.org.uk/>. Current agendas and minutes are also posted on noticeboards at both village bus-stops. If you use email and would like to join the village email circulation list, please contact Alexia Lewis, Parish Clerk at hortoncumstudleyparishcouncil@gmail.com.

Horton-cum-Studley Gardening Club

On 18 July at 2.30pm, we have arranged for a visit to Chivel Farm at Heythrop, a beautiful country garden with extensive views: £10.00 per person to include tea and cake!

Since the last update, we have been treated to two great talks: the first by Sally Humphreys who showed us slides illustrating how she has developed her beautiful garden with its huge variety of trees; and then a fascinating evening with Suzanne Perrin on the Zen Gardens of Japan. We were also welcomed in April to a tour of Rectory Farm by Richard Stanley, which provided lots of insight into the workings of a busy farm using environmentally friendly methods.

I can report that No-Mow May (aka, doing absolutely nothing in my garden since mid-April) has led to a profusion of delightful surprises, in the form of



Greek anemones, a sea of ox-eye daisies, bright yellow bird's-foot trefoil and lesser trefoil, cut-leaved Crane's-bill geranium, clover and buttercups, scattered between a wide variety of delicate grasses, which have been a treat to see rustling gently in the breeze. It's been so lovely with just a few narrow paths cut through in

swathes and makes the garden seem much bigger, somehow, as it creates movement and depth.

If you'd like to know more about joining the Club, please give me a call on 07766 708303 or email me at mjcbt2013@gmail.com. You are always welcome to come along as a guest for £5 to see if you'd like to join us.

May the weather be with you!

Melanie Jones, Chair: Horton-cum-Studley Gardening Club

Botley West Solar Farm

The proposed Botley West Solar Farm (BWSF), on three separate sites North-West and West of Oxford city (near Tackley; between Bladon and Eynsham; and West of Botley itself), would occupy a total of 1400 hectares of farmland, 1,000ha of which would be solar panels. 76% of BWSF would be on Oxford's green belt, occupying more of that precious resource within 2kms of urban areas than all the c. 20,000 green belt houses being built under current Local Plans.

BWSF would be the largest solar photovoltaic installation in Europe and the tenth largest in the world, with most of the other very large solar installations in desert areas. There are almost 11,000 houses within 1.5 kms of the proposed BWSF making it unique on the planet in this respect. Within the same distance of America's largest solar farms there are fewer than 10 houses on average (sample size 27) and even in The Netherlands, with a similar population density to England, that number is still only one thirtieth of BWSF's.

All of Oxfordshire's District Councils, and the County Council, have signed up for a zero-carbon county by 2050, or even earlier, and solar energy is being offered as the most suitable means of achieving this objective (an interactive map of the UK's renewable energy projects is available at: <https://data.barbour-abi.com/smart-map/repd/beis/>). While solar panels on the roofs of houses, warehouses, car parks etc are an excellent idea, should we also be sacrificing valuable agricultural land for this when there is a developing food crisis as well? We are already committed to a degree of global warming that will affect food supplies (climate change is predicted to reduce the amount of our most productive farmland from the present level of 38% to 11% by 2050). In mitigating climate change with solar panels, we must not make the food crisis worse.

BWSF is considered a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) and the final decision on whether or not it happens depends on the Planning Inspectorate's recommendation to the Secretary of State and not on our Local Authorities which are merely allowed to comment. A public consultation is due later this year and all are encouraged to take part. BWSF might be on the 'other side' of the city from us, but who knows where the next huge solar installation might be?

David Rogers

STANTON ST JOHN

Stanton Church

Details of all church services and general church news can be found on pages 5 - 13. Any changes to the published schedule of services will be on our website www.fourparishes.org.uk.

Stanton St John WI

Over the past few months we have heard a range of fascinating talks on subjects ranging from Life in a Nutshell, which focused on the beauty of microscopic organisms and tiny creatures, to Six warrior Women from the English Civil War.

We often join Oxfordshire WI events, such as visits to Westonbirt Arboretum, Iford Manor Gardens and Bath, as well as participating in Craft workshops.

Our Summer Programme will include, providing refreshments at the revived Otmoor Challenge on 1st July, visiting some lovely gardens in Mill Lane, followed by our renowned feast in the Village Hall on 11th July, joining with Quarry WI for a Summer Soiree on 24th July and arranging for some small group outings.

August events are still to be confirmed as many of us will be busy with holiday plans. For further information please contact stantonstjohnwi@oxfordshirewi.co.uk.



Dr Pinks Charity

The Trustees welcome applications from young people who live in the village of Stanton St John

Small grants are available for those in further education and apprenticeships

Applications in writing to:

Elaine Warner, 1 Stanton Cottages, Stanton St John

or elaine.warner@icloud.com

Closing date for applications: 31st August 2023



Strawberries and Champagne, College House, Stanton St John Friday 7 July 4 - 7pm

Jazz, and Flowers in the Church



A FLORAL OPPORTUNITY for everyone, including children!

Please bring an arrangement of your own making, preferably using fresh summer flowers, to the church for Thursday pm, or by Friday 11am.

Church vases and water are available, but it might be easier to bring your own containers!

Nicola Mallows/ Carla Stanley
07817 122214 / 07967 018887

Monthly Coffee Mornings in Stanton Village Hall

Come for tea, coffee and cake on **12 July** and **9 August, 10.30am-12pm**. Everyone is welcome! For further details, please contact Sue Baker 351449 /Sarah Coyne 358876

Crafty Coffee and Chat Saturday 22 July, 10.30-12.30

We are holding another meeting on 22 July. If you'd like to share any works in progress, whether it's crochet, embroidering, sewing, or any other craft. Or if you would like to learn any of these skills, come along to Stanton St John Village Hall for a morning of chat, coffee and creativity. Bring along any work in progress, or just come for coffee.

There will again be a swaps table where you can pass on any unused fabrics, wools, ribbons etc.

Cost £3 to include refreshments

Further information from Judy Nisbet judy@robertnisbet.com, 01865 351448



*Katie
Grace
Harris*



Katie Grace Harris and Band

Stanton St John Church
16th September 2023

Music workshop: 1-2pm
Evening concert: 7.15-9.15

Katie Grace Harris is a multi-tasking, foot tapping, piano, dulcimer and accordion playing singer and story-weaver with a fast-growing reputation in the UK Folk world.

Katie will be coming to Stanton St John church in September along with Andy Nice (Cello), Jo Gill (Viola/Violin) and Emma Coulthard (Flute and Whistles).

TICKETS:

Online from: www.katiegraceharris.com (in TOUR area)

or from Stanton St John Shop

Workshop:

Adults: £5 or £2 with an evening concert ticket

Children: £2

All singers and musicians welcome to come and learn a song as a group.

If you don't have an instrument Katie can teach you to play spoons!

Those attending the evening concert will have the opportunity to join the band for one song.

Evening Concert:

£10 recommended price

(pay-a-little more or pay-a-little less options available. Under 16's free)

Reg Meuross: 'Integrity pours out of her performance and her as a person'.

Folk Weekend: Oxford - 'Pure joy...a treat'

Fatea Magazine - 'Beautifully written...songs and stories about real people and places'

Stanton St John Parish Council

Thank you to everyone who attended the recent Annual Parish Meeting. It was great to see so many involved in local matters. A reminder that all our council meetings are held in public and there is an opportunity to speak at the start of every meeting.

It was pleasing that four councillors stood for re-election and a new councillor made five councillors elected in an un-contested election with one councillor being co-opted, so completing Stanton St John's quota of six councillors.

The next meeting is on 17 July at 7.30pm in the Village Hall.

Anita James Clerk & RFO

Update on the Alternative Fuel Payment (AFP)

The April magazine included a note on the Government Grant for £200 available to households whose main fuel for heating is Oil, or Bottle Gas. This scheme is now closed, but some successful applicants have not yet received their payment. Applicants should check their bank and contact their local council if no funds have been received.

Peter Wingfield-Stratford, Stanton St John

* * * * *



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A Church of England Prayer for Ukraine

God of peace and justice, we pray for the people of Ukraine today.

We pray for peace and the laying down of weapons.

We pray for all those who fear for tomorrow,
that your Spirit of comfort would draw near to them.

We pray for those with power over war or peace,
for wisdom, discernment and compassion to guide their decisions.

Above all, we pray for all your precious children, at risk and in fear,
that you would hold and protect them.

We pray in the name of Jesus, the Prince of Peace.

Amen



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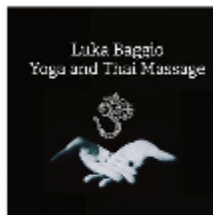
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Yoga with Luka!

Stanton St John Village Hall

Thursday 6.15pm-7.15pm

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Events in the Four Parishes, July and August 2023

Below is a selection of community events on offer during July and August. Further details can be found in the individual Village pages. See also page 21 for regular community events at the Abingdon Arms, Beckley. The Maple Tree Baby and Toddler Group in Forest Hill continues weekly on Thursday mornings throughout the summer.

7 July	Stanton St John	Strawberries and Champagne, College House
8 July	Horton-cum-Studley	Coffee and Chat
8 July	Forest Hill	Village Fete
11 July	Forest Hill	Jazz in the Village Hall
12 July	Stanton St John	Monthly Coffee Morning
22 July	Stanton St John	Crafty Coffee & Chat
23 July	Forest Hill	Cream Teas & Music at St Nicolas
28 July	Forest Hill	Cafe in the Village Hall
30 July	Horton-cum-Studley	Cream Teas in the Chuchyard
30 July	Beckley	Talk 'A history of Palestine in 12 photographs'
9 August	Stanton St John	Monthly Coffee Morning
12 August	Horton-cum-Studley	Coffee and Chat
25 August	Forest Hill	Cafe in the Village Hall
27 August	Forest Hill	Cream Teas & Music at St Nicolas