

The Four Parishes News Magazine

BECKLEY
FOREST HILL with SHOTOVER
HORTON-cum-STUDLEY
STANTON St JOHN



Vintage Ploughing Match at Stanton St John, January 2024

February 2024

The editor writes



I guess I can still wish everyone a Happy New Year, even though 1 January 2024 feels like quite a long time ago already!

I hope you have your diaries to hand, ready to pencil in all the fun things that are already planned in our four villages this year.

One again, we have lots of interesting content for you, with a wealth of information about local services and events. If you are new to our villages, you will find plenty of ways to meet neighbours and make new friends.

Don't forget to also check out the Classified pages at the back of the magazine, where you will find details of local businesses. The revenue from their advertising enables us to have this magazine printed, and we are also grateful to the volunteers who write and edit the content, and to all those who distribute the printed copies to every household in our Four Parishes.

Happy reading!

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 Caroline Clark on 7 January 2024

See page 33 for more photographs taken on the same occasion.

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 March 2024 issue is 15 February 2024

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

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

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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.

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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 Beckley, Forest Hill, Horton-cum-Studley and Stanton St John. 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, February 2024

	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
4 February <i>2nd Sunday before Lent</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 Church Without Walls at Stanton St John Village Hall			
11 February <i>Sunday next before Lent</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			
14 February <i>Ash Wednesday</i>	7.30pm Ash Wednesday Service at St Nicolas, Forest Hill			
18 February <i>1st Sunday of Lent</i>	11am BCP Morning Prayer	9.30am Morning Prayer	9.30am BCP Holy Communion	11am Holy Communion
	6pm Iona Service at Beckley			
25 February <i>2nd Sunday of Lent</i>	10am Benefice Service of Holy Communion at St Nicolas, Forest Hill			
	3pm Family Church does Forest Church at Bernwood Forest, Horton-cum-Studley			
	6pm Taizé Service via Zoom			

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,



I have written previously about my dislike of the long dark days over wintertime. But I am already pleased to report that my heart has been gladdened with the observation that the daylight hours are lengthening, albeit perhaps only by a small amount. Already I can walk Bertie slightly later in the day. We are over the worst of the dark days, and we are on the up!

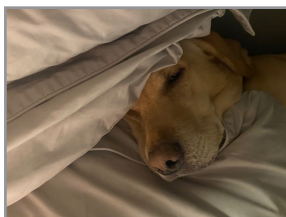
I have also been cheered as I have spotted nature waking from its winters rest – the first primrose flowers, and others with buds reaching up towards the light; violet flowers just beginning to open; bulbs bursting up from the solid, frozen ground; my first daffodil flower bravely unfurling from its bud, facing the ever-changing weather from deep frost to gusty winds and more heavy rain. Today I saw my first snowdrop. Spring is springing!



I loved the few days of heavy frost, accompanied by bright sunshine and clear blue skies, when the fields could be walked across once more without your feet completely sinking in the mud as the ground was frozen. They soon returned to something resembling a paddy field as the next storm arrived along with the next deluge. And just as that one passed, the next is due to land imminently.

There have already been some fantastic sunsets to admire, with the sky looking as if it is on fire.

As ever, Bertie runs around, seemingly oblivious as to whether it is wet and windy, or cold and frosty – ever happy to be out in the fresh air – hoping to meet a friend or two to run around with. Sometimes delighting in the deep water laying in the fields, joyously splashing his way around, sometimes deep in mud, but never perturbed – until that is, we get home to the hose pipe! And then happy to be snuggled up after a busy day! Not too keen to get up in the morning unless he thinks we are off out somewhere if he is



nicely settled in the warm. It is a dog's life!

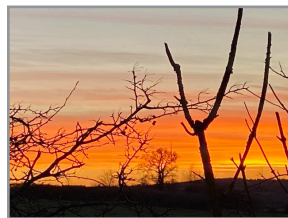
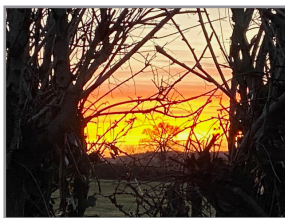
And as the seasons of the year change, and we notice differences around, so the Church seasons change. We have had the 'looking forward and waiting time' of Advent, followed by the celebrations of Christmas. It was wonderful seeing so many in our churches and across our communities as we celebrated the birth of Jesus once more. As I write this, we are in the season of Epiphany, that time when Jesus is revealed to us through the retelling of the stories of the wise men finding him in the manger, of his baptism, his first miracle of turning water into wine at the wedding at Cana in Galilee, and then his presentation in the temple. That final story leads us towards the change of season into Lent, which we enter on Valentine's Day.

As we enter the season of Lent, it would be wonderful to journey together if you are able. You may wish to join us as we 'Come and See' The Way of Love (see pages 12 and 13). There are several ways you might get involved which might suit different lifestyles. Or you may like to read a book – I have suggested some that may be of interest on page 9. As we approach Easter, on Holy Saturday, it would be wonderful if you took part in, or came to watch, the Passion Play in Beckley, open to all across the Four Parishes (see pages 10 and 22).

However you might mark the season of Lent, I look forward to conversations about what you have done – it is not just a season for 'giving things up' – taking something up is a good thing too!

Please do get in touch if 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.

Christmas in the Four Parishes

Christmas seems quite a time ago already, but I wanted to thank everyone who contributed in any way across the Four Parishes to help us celebrate Christmas in our churches and communities – from cleaning the churches and decorating them, to singing carols and encouraging people to get involved. I will not attempt to remember the many different contributions, as I will miss something critical, but I give my heartfelt thanks to everyone.

Give it Back, Mak!

In December it was wonderful to welcome the Riding Lights Theatre Company to the Four Parishes to perform their Christmas production 'Give it Back, Mak!'. The PCC in Horton-cum-Studley kindly drove the organisation of this, on behalf of the Four Parishes. Enormous thanks must go to Andrew Payne, Churchwarden, for spearheading this, and to all other members of the PCC and St Barnabas church family who helped with this. The refreshments provided by them also helped to make the occasion a sociable one. The production was hugely enjoyed by the audience, and we would be keen to invite Riding Lights back again in the future. Huge thanks to the committee of the Horton-cum-Studley Millennium Village Hall, who allowed us to have the hall for free, and to Hugh and Anne Lee, and an anonymous donor, who shared in sponsoring the event.

Advent challenge and beyond

How did you get on with my Advent challenge? Did you manage to make time for it amongst the festivities? There is always so much going on, that finding a quiet moment may not have been easy. I wonder whether you managed to read through the Gospel of Mark, and if you did, did you notice anything that had not struck you before? I would love to hear how you got on.

For our 'beyond' part, I suggested you might wish to join me in reading the Bible in a year in 2024. It takes consistent dedication, and we are in the very early days. I confess that I would usually already be playing catch up, but surprisingly I am a little ahead – very unusual for me! If you have not started yet, it is not too late. I encourage you to start. By the end of

January, we should have conquered Genesis, and be up to chapter 26 in Exodus, and chapter 20 in Matthew. If you are not, please do not give up.

For February, we need to finish Exodus, read the whole of Leviticus, and get up to Numbers chapter 19. For the New Testament we need to finish the Gospel of Matthew and get up to chapter 8 in Mark. If you read Mark in Advent, I wonder if you spot anything new this time around.

It would be a great achievement if we can manage to do this, so let's have a go and encourage one another. Please do let me know how you get on.

Ongoing midweek activities on Zoom

We are continuing Morning and Evening Prayer and the Benefice Book Group on Zoom as detailed. Please do get in touch with Anthea for invitations if you wish to be included.

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

Book Group

We are currently reading *Kingdom of Fools: The Unlikely Rise of the Early Church* by Nick Page. We will shortly be choosing a new book to read for Lent, so if you would like to join us for that, please do get in touch with me. All are welcome.

Private devotions during Lent

There is a vast array of books available to us to help us engage with the season of Lent. Here are some suggestions from me:

Journey to the Empty Tomb by Paula Gooder

An Easter of Days: Meeting the Characters of the Cross and Resurrection by Gregory K Cameron

Godforsaken: The Cross – The Greatest Hope of All by Stephen Cottrell

Tarry Awhile: Wisdom from Black Spirituality for People of Faith by Selina Stone.

If you decide to read any of these, I would love to hear how you get on. If you read something else that you think others might be interested to hear about for the future, please do let me know.

Ash Wednesday

There is a Service of Holy Communion with Imposition of Ashes at 7.30pm on Ash Wednesday, 14 February in Forest Hill. All are welcome. If you want to know more of what this is about, please do get in touch.

Passion Play in Beckley for the Four Parishes

It is very exciting that Beckley plans to host a Passion Play once more this year on Holy Saturday. Beckley Church is keen for this to be a Four Parishes event, so participants are being sought from across the Four Parishes. See page 22 for more information, and please do think about taking part, or coming along to watch. It should be a powerful experience.

Home Group Study on the Gospel of John

The study group is continuing its look at the Gospel of John on a Monday afternoon at 2.30pm at Studley Farm House, Horton-cum-Studley. If you are interested in being involved, please contact Annie Payne by email at anniefpayne@gmail.com. All are welcome.

2024 dates for your diary for children and family church activities

Please always look out for email updates. If you want to be updated, contact Anthea and she will add you to the mailing list.

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	*Children's Craft Worshops, Beckley Church 3.30-4.30pm
4 February	11 February	25 February	7 February
3 March	10 March	24 March	20 March
7 April	14 April	28 April	
5 May	12 May	26 May	
2 June	9 June	23 June	
7 July	14 July	21 July	
1 September	8 September	22 September	
6 October	13 October	27 October	
3 November	10 November	24 November	
1 December			
8 December Children's Christmas Party, Stanton Village Hall, 4 - 5pm			

**Dates for later in the year will be confirmed in due course.*

The **Benefice Children's Service at St Nicolas** is led by Anthea along with Julia Stutfield from Forest Hill and aims to encourage children to become familiar with the essential elements of a service in church, by presenting them in a brief and relaxed format which includes dramatic story telling, with scripts specially written by Betty Dye and Julia Stutfield, and songs led by members of the St Nicolas Choir, together with some simple prayers.

Messy Church is led by Anthea together with Betty Dye, who leads the 'Acting the Bible' team in Beckley School. There is a short drama which the children are involved in, a story from a children's Bible, related to the drama, prayers, a craft activity, some songs, and food and drinks. We chat together as we do the craft activity and eat and drink.

Family Church is led by Laura Mermet-Burnet from Horton-cum-Studley, along with Anthea. We meet in Bernwood Forest as '**Forest Church**'. Worship is intermingled with outdoor play, woodcraft, a walk, and an opportunity for appreciation of the natural world. Our relaxed get togethers always end with refreshments of cake and fruit. Attendees can bring their dogs along. Worship and learning through play and walking is a family friendly activity and the children really engage with it. All ages and not just families are warmly welcome!

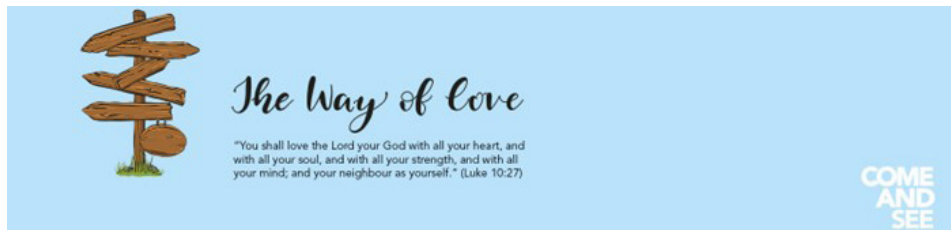
Children's craft workshops are led by Betty Dye along with helpers, including from the 'Acting the Bible' and 'Messy Church' teams – but you do not need to have attended either of those to come and join in the fun. The workshops are aimed at primary school children and the crafts relate to the church season e.g. Lent, Mothering Sunday, Easter, Harvest, Remembrance and Christmas.

Contact details for all these children's activities: anthea@fourparishes.org.uk; betty.dye10@gmail.com; mamancoton@gmail.com (Laura Mermet-Burnet); julia.stutfield@gmail.com.

Children's craft workshop

The first workshop for 2024 is being held in Beckley Church on Wednesday 7 February from 3.30-4.30pm. The workshop will be looking towards Lent, and helping children to understand what Lent is about in a fun and creative way. There will be light refreshments. **Please do book in beforehand by emailing betty.dye10@gmail.com if possible, to ensure we have sufficient resources to go round.**

Come and See: Lent 2024



What it is: this is the fourth year the Diocese of Oxford has been running 'Come and See' during Lent. It is their big, warm open invitation to an adventure in faith and trust, and is for everyone in the local church and the whole community – searchers, drifters, thinkers, everyone – whatever stage of life you are at, whether you are a regular churchgoer or have never been before – and I am hoping that many of us in the Four Parishes will join in this Lent.

The theme for 2024: in three of the four gospels, Jesus is asked which commandment is the most important. He answers not with one commandment but with two: you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and soul and mind and strength, and you shall love your neighbour as yourself. This Lent, 'Come and See' shows how these two commandments can give a rhythm and a shape to our lives.

How to be involved:

- **in person:** we will meet in Stanton Village Hall on Wednesday evenings from 7.30-9pm during Lent (with the exception of Holy Week), and one week afterwards, so **six sessions on 21 and 28 February, 6, 13 and 20 March, and 3 April**. We will watch a short film from Bishop Steven, Bishop of Oxford, on the topic for the week, and then have a chat about the film in a friendly informal space, with refreshments to keep us going. There is a small booklet, Pilgrim Journeys: The Way of Love with 40 days of reflections on the commandments by Bishop Steven, that we can use to accompany us through Lent. Please do let me know if you are coming along, and I will ensure we have a book ready for you.
- **through emails for individuals:** you can sign up to receive daily emails during Lent here: <https://mailchi.mp/oxford.anglican.org/come-and-see> .

- **‘Come and See’ for families:** these resources are designed for households with primary-aged children, but they are accessible or adaptable for slightly younger or older children and young people. You can sign up for these resources here and you will receive a (free) email each Sunday throughout Lent with a film and links to the materials you can use as a family throughout the week: <https://mailchi.mp/oxford.anglican.org/come-and-see-for-families>.

I look forward to us journeying together through Lent using the ‘Come and See’ resources as we seek The Way of Love. Please do get in touch if you have any questions.

Anthea

Prayers for Peace

As the war continues in Ukraine, with the awful situation in the Middle East, trouble in the Red Sea and surrounding areas, and as God’s peace is not present throughout the world, we continue to pray for peace. We will meet for 15 minutes at 12pm on Wednesdays and Saturdays in February across the Four Parishes as follows:

Beckley	10 and 28	Forest Hill	3 and 21
Horton-cum-Studley	7 and 17	Stanton	14 and 24

STANTON HOUSE

REST RESTORATION RENEWAL



Happy New Year from Stanton House!

It was lovely to see so many of you at our Christmas Tea – thank you for coming!

We are excited to be having some guided retreats at Stanton House this year and would like to offer 10% discount to members of our 4 parishes.

Our latest retreats are:

“Making Space” - a 2-day retreat aimed at deepening your relationship with God
 Dates: **7 - 9 February and 15 - 17 March**

“Taking Time” - a 1-day retreat using creative movement and dance
 Dates: **24 February**

Check out our website for details and quote 4PN0224 to receive your 10% off!

Pound Lane, Stanton St John, Oxford OX33 1HF

Phone: 01865 358807 E-mail: office@stantonhouse.org.uk

Web: www.stantonhouse.org.uk

GENERAL

Dame Elizabeth Holford's Charity News of recent Bursaries

The Trustees have invited some of the young people who have received bursaries from the Charity to write a paragraph for inclusion in this magazine.

This month's piece is from Oliver Thornton who lives in Forest Hill.



*"The Dame Elizabeth Holford Trust has had an enormous impact on my education over the past three years. Having first applied for a bursary back in 6th form, the trust provided me with additional support throughout my A levels by funding online lessons for me. The following year, I received a grant towards a new study laptop, and lastly this summer, I was lucky enough to attend a month of Spanish lessons, without which I could not be where I am today. Following my A level exams, I received the results A*French, A*Spanish, A Biology, granting me a place to study Modern and Medieval languages at the University of Cambridge. The generous support that I have received, alongside personal encouragement from Chair, Alison Finch, have without a doubt been the catalyst to the many opportunities I am now faced with. I would encourage any young person in the Parish to take advantage of the support that we are so lucky to have available to us; this could be educational supplies, an online course or perhaps learning a new skill!"*

Anyone in the Four Parishes of school age and up to 25 years old can apply for an application form, at this email address: Holfordtrustchair@gmail.com.



Job Vacancies at Woodeaton Manor School

Woodeaton Manor School (OX3 9TS) is a Special Needs School for pupils with emotional, social and mental health difficulties. We are currently looking for enthusiastic, supportive and flexible individuals who understand the nurture approach to join our fantastic team of Teaching Assistants. The village of Woodeaton has no public transport so it is essential that you can provide your own transport. Details of the roles are:

Teaching Assistant

Hours of Work: 33.5 hours per week, term time only (38 weeks per year + 5.6 weeks paid holiday)

Salary Details: Grade 6 point 8–13 (depending on experience)
£24,702 - £26,873 pro rata (£18,752 - £20,401)

Job/Person Summary

The suitable candidate will be working with small groups of children and young people to support their learning, both inside and outside of the classroom, under the direction of our Readiness for Learning Lead and HLTAs. There is also the expectation to support our learners in line with the National Curriculum, Code of Practice, and Woodeaton Manor School Policies and Procedures.

Please do not be discouraged from applying if you have not previously worked at a Specialist Provision as comprehensive training will be provided, including an induction program and ongoing training from our onsite Educational Psychologist and experienced staff team.

Application Procedure

If interested please contact the school on 01865 558722 or email office.7002@woodeaton.oxon.sch.uk.

Safer Recruitment

Oxfordshire Schools are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. This post involves the type of work with children and young people that requires applicants to undertake a Disclosure and Barring Service check. The possession of a criminal record will not necessarily prevent an applicant from obtaining this post. All users are considered confidentially and according to the nature of the role and information disclosed.

The Aliens have landed

by Lyn Ebbs

It's easy to tell what defines an alien species when you live somewhere like the British Isles, and you think of land mammals. It was either here before the last ice age (native) or someone brought it, deliberately or accidentally (introduced). It's more of a problem when it comes to classifying birds, as the majority are capable of getting here by their own efforts. How do we decide if they arrived by natural spread, were introduced deliberately, escaped or even just turn up sporadically? Let's look at the evidence for four species.

There are fossil records from Derbyshire of Little Owls, so they were once



native to Britain, but that population has since died out. The current population is descended from introductions in Kent and Northants in the 1800s from where they spread out to other parts of England and Wales. Now the Little Owl is classified as a naturalised introduced

breeder. Their diet is mostly invertebrates and small mammals, and their preferred habitat is a mixed one of farmland and hedgerows, with suitable old trees to provide nest holes. Though the scientific name, *Athene noctua*, implies that they are nocturnal, they can often be seen in daytime. Having previously become extinct in Britain, their numbers are again declining, and they would be on the red list of Birds of Conservation Concern if they were classed as native. It's not just here but also in their native range in Europe that numbers are falling, mainly driven by low food availability due to intensive farming.

Collared doves, familiar locally as a garden bird, and preferring a range of open lowland habitats, has definitely come here by natural movement. The species began spreading from its Eastern Mediterranean homelands in the 1930s, reached Britain in the 1950s and Oxfordshire in the 1960s. They only have two eggs per clutch but can



Collared Dove - Brian Ludwig (rspb-images.com)

nest several times a year, which accounts for their dramatic long-term increase in numbers and range. However, their population appears to have peaked in the early 2000s with the emergence and spread of the disease, trichomonosis.

There are few birds that look more alien to the UK than Ring-necked



Parakeets, with their bright green plumage, rose-coloured neck ring and flashes of blue and yellow in the tail. There are some urban myths that account for their presence here: they were released from the set of the 1951 film *The African Queen* or that Jimi Hendrix released a pair in Hyde Park 1968.

More prosaically, they have been escaping from captivity over a long period and now have a breeding population of around 12,000 pairs. Their status changed from rare non-native breeding bird to a commoner one in 2008. They are most common in the south-east of England where they are frequent visitors to bird tables. Sightings peak during winter months when they form noisy roosts; in December 2023, a local one on the edge of Florence Park in Cowley contained 56 birds.

Then there are birds that appear and disappear, like the Waxwing. They only come here in winter, and only then if crops of berries closer to their breeding grounds in Russia and Scandinavia are running low. These variable conditions make their appearance difficult to predict; they can come in ones or twos or in sizeable flocks, and at any time during the winter. They are Starling-sized, with pinkish-buff plumage and touches of yellow and bright red on the wingtips, which give them their name. Coming from across the North Sea, they are most likely to be seen on the north-east coast but if the berry crop there is poor, they will spread south and west. A flock of 50 birds was seen in Thame in mid-January; if you still have rowan berries (their favourite food) in your garden keep your fingers crossed that these exotic visitors could pay you a call.



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.

Wheatley Library

In the spirit of the new year, there are a few new initiatives occurring in the library over the next few months.



We have a new Digital Helper session on alternate Thursday afternoons 2:30-3:30p.m. for anyone who needs help with a specific computer or online query. Please contact us to book a Digital Helper session or speak to a member of staff in the library for further details.

A new Storytime session will begin soon on alternate Saturday mornings for children ages 4 – 7, so keep an eye out for specific dates and times that will be posted in the library and on our website at bit.ly/WheatleyLibrary.

Here's a reminder of our regular events:

- **Rhymetime: free & every Friday, 10.30 am for kids up to 5 yrs old**
- **Digital Helper: free & alternate Thursdays, 2.30 – 3.30pm**
- **Jigsaw Puzzle Swap: first Saturday of each month, 9.30 – 12.30 pm**
- **Art Group: 1st & 3rd Monday afternoon, 4 – 6 pm**
- **Textile Fibre Group (weaving, needle-felting, spinning, braiding): 1st & 3rd Monday afternoon, 2 – 4 pm**

For news and event updates, follow the 'Friends of Wheatley Library' Facebook page. Our Wheatley Friends Group would benefit from additional members so if you'd like to join, please visit wheatleylibrary.org or send a Facebook message.

We recently recruited several fantastic new volunteers to work in the library so please keep your eye out for those new faces, who we are very happy to have on board!

For library queries, please email wheatley.library@oxfordshire.gov.uk or call 01865 875267.

Hope to see you soon!

*Wheatley Library
The Merry Bells, High St
Wheatley, Oxford
OX33 1XP*

News from The Maple Tree



Our New Year is well under way and by the time you read this, we will all be used to writing 2024! All sessions are drop-in, except our popular Maple Chefs which is bookable via Eventbrite. We have a few changes to our programme this time at The Maple Tree.

- **Mondays: Messy Monday at 10-11.30am and Twinnies at 2-4pm**
- **Tuesdays: Once Upon a Rhyme-Time at 10-11.30am**
- **Wednesdays: Little Explorers at 10-11.30am and Maple Chefs at 1-3pm**
- **Thursdays: Baby and Bump Cafe at 9.30-11.30am and The Maple Tree at Forest Hill Village Hall at 11am-12pm**
- **Fridays: Little Chatterboxes at 10-11.30am**
- **Family Fun at 10-11.30am, 3rd Saturday every month**

Check out our Website and Facebook page for more details and look out for our next Paediatric First Aid training, coming in February.

Did you know that it costs nearly £100,000.00 to keep The Maple Tree running for a year? Please do get in touch if you would like to help with the fundraising. **Our next big event is Daffodil Day at Shotover House on Sunday 17 March. We need volunteers to direct traffic and pedestrians, collect tickets, serve teas, coffees and cakes, and to bake goodies in advance, if you are unavailable on the day.**

Have you thought about becoming a Friend of the Maple Tree offering monthly financial support or volunteering at one of the sessions above? These are two other ways that you can support our lovely children's centre charity (registered charity number:1174117).

We are here to help if you need advice or support: 01865 236700 or 07849 466249.

Email: info@mapletree.org.uk

Website: www.mapletree.org.uk

Facebook: www.facebook.com/TheMapleTreeWheatley

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

Laura Spencer , The Maple Tree Centre Manager



John Howell MP writes...

Even before the Christmas decorations were down, or perhaps before they went up, speculation on the date of the General Election has been hotting up. It could actually be as late as January 2025, but whatever the date, the campaigning is already underway. Not just in the battle for media attention and getting messages out, but also in more subtle ways. In Parliament the increase in emails on specific issues referring to the next Party Manifesto is noticeable. In parliament the use of mechanisms to promote specific issues, such as Early Day Motions and Westminster Hall debates appears to be increasing.

.... I have already made public that it is not my intention to put myself forward as a candidate for the next General Election. I have served the Constituency since initially being elected in 2008 and have been returned to Parliament in four subsequent elections. I continue to take an interest in the views of constituents and, with the support of my team, assist those constituents wanting help. However, I am in the happy position of being able to sit tight when an email tells me that the senders vote at the next General Election depends on my reply to their email. Such emails often spring from campaign groups and, whilst I will continue to reply with my view, it is really the views of the various Parliamentary Candidates for the Constituency that should be of greater interest. I will have moved on to pastures new.

The above is an extract from John Howell's Monthly Parish Newsletter, January 2024.

A Note on Voter ID

Voters in England now need to show photo ID to vote at polling stations in some elections.

This applies to:

- UK parliamentary elections, including general elections, by-elections and recall petitions
- Local elections and by-elections
- Police and Crime Commissioner elections

Visit <https://www.gov.uk/register-to-vote> for more information.

Otmoor Flyer - Travel Card Refunds

The Otmoor Flyer Organising Group is now able to refund unused individual journeys on the Flyer.



Please present your travel cards before 31 March 2024 to the following people for a cash/cheque refund of £1.50 per unused journey:

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

Anne Purse, Beckley – Tel: 07787885717

Malcolm Leeding, Forest Hill – Tel: 01865 872034

Rowan at Stanton St John Village Shop – Tel: 01865 351532

Please write your name and contact details on the travel card so we can get back to you with your refund.

To all the people who have used the Otmoor Flyer we thank you for your custom and for the part you have played in securing a regular and more frequent bus service in the Four Parishes. To the Parish Councils who have so generously subsidised the Otmoor Flyer with an annual subsidy over seven years, we are grateful for the part that you played in getting the 108 service up and running once more.

Please spread the word and encourage local people to use the 108 bus!

The Otmoor Flyer Organising Group



13 Middle Road, Stanton St John
01865 351532 / 07795 415819
stantonvillageshop@gmail.com



We're open Monday to Saturday 9am-1pm & Sunday 9-11am, provide friendly service, deliver FREE across our 4 parishes on Tuesday, Thursday & Friday afternoons AND do bicycle repairs.

SOME CUSTOMER COMMENTS:

"Such a good range, I don't need to go to Waitrose so often."

"With two young children, we love our twice-weekly milk delivery."

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

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.

Beckley Passion Play:

Performers wanted from across the Four Parishes!

Beckley is proposing to bring back its Passion Play, last performed 20 or so years ago. The scripts remain intact, as do the three crosses. The play will be performed principally in Beckley High Street on **Easter Saturday, 30 March**. All we need now are willing participants, young and old alike, no matter where you live! There are no scripts to learn and costumes are optional.

Come and help us revive a village tradition, have some fun, and mark Easter in a special way. If you'd like to take part, please contact Susy Jepson on susy.jepson@gmail.com or Anthea on anthea@fourparishes.org.uk as soon as possible.

Beckley & Stowood Parish Council

The next meeting of the Parish Council will be held on **Monday 12 February at 7pm in Beckley Village Hall**. 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 if you would like to get in touch with the Parish Council and Parish Council information can be found on the website www.beckley-and-stowood-pc.gov.uk.

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.

Save the date!

Beckley Open Gardens Sunday 23 June

Open gardens, teas, plants, cakes, art show, raffle

More information to follow

Beckley and Area Community Benefit Society Ltd

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

BACBS continues its popular events at our community-owned pub The Abingdon Arms, Beckley, to which all are welcome. Do come, enjoy, and support your local pub.

Cake and a cuppa

Next session will be on **6 February at 3.30pm**, at The Abingdon Arms. Meet neighbours or other parents and their children for cake, a drink, and a friendly chat.

Pub quiz

1st Wednesday of every month: the next quiz will be on **8 February at 7.30pm** – with pizza! Table bookings advisable - or you can just turn up and join an existing team. Thanks to The Abingdon Arms, there's a free round of drinks for the winning team.

Community walks

Next walk will be **17 March, 2pm start**.

Sunday evening talks

Last Sunday of the month, 6.30pm in the pub. Talks are usually from local experts and cover a wide range of topics. Do join us in the pub for a drink and a stimulating evening! If you absolutely can't make it and would like to listen to a recording or would like more information, email info@bacbs.org or go to bacbs.org/events.

The February talk, on Sunday 25 February, will be by Lorraine Dixon, Professor and Director of the Oxford School of Nursing and Midwifery at Oxford Brookes University. Lorraine will give us a talk on 'Nursing: past, present, and future'.

Then on **Sunday 24 March** (exceptionally not the last Sunday of the month to avoid Easter Sunday), **Susan Canney of Horton-cum-Studley** and Director of the Mali elephant project will give us an update on her work on conservation of elephants in West Africa.

BACBS Good Neighbour Scheme

To request a lift, ring either 07514 791910 (if no answer, leave a message) or email BACBSgoodneighbour@gmail.com.

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.

Music at St Nicolas

A huge thank you to all the members of the St Nicolas Choir who turned out on cold winter evenings in December and January to rehearse in church as well as learning music on their own at home. Through their efforts, we have been able to enjoy a feast of music at our Christmas services from Christingle on 3 December to Candlemas on 28 January and everything else in between.

In February we resume our more normal pattern of services, with Choral Evensong from the Book of Common Prayer on the 2nd Sunday of the month at 6pm. We also like to have a few singers to lead the music at our monthly Benefice Children's Service at 4pm on the 1st Sunday of the month, and there are other opportunities to sing throughout the year.

The choir rehearses from 7.15-8.30pm on the Wednesday evening preceding a service and for about 45 minutes immediately beforehand. Specially recorded rehearsal tracks are usually provided on our website, and singers are expected to use these to practice at home.

Singers of all ages and abilities are welcome, as long as they have the basic skills needed for singing in a choral environment, and we will always do our best to ensure that everyone has a rewarding experience.

Peter and Julia Stutfield (email julia.stutfield@gmail.com)

Save the Dates!

The dates for Cream Teas and Summer Music at St Nicolas in 2024 are:

Saturday 22 June

Sunday 28 July

Sunday 25 August

Saturday 21 September

Local musicians are invited to perform in the garden during the afternoon or to take part in an early evening concert in the church.



Jazz on the Hill at Forest Hill Village Hall Tuesday 13 February, 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. Parking available in the village streets. Wheelchair accessible.

Daffodil Day, Sunday 17 March

‘Daffodil Day’, in the private gardens of Shotover House, has been the main annual fundraising event for St Nicolas Church for over 20 years. In 2022 St Nicolas invited The Maple Tree children’s centre charity in Wheatley to run it as a joint venture and this year, with the support of the Shotover Trust who own and manage the house and grounds at Shotover, they will be doing it again on **Sunday 17 March from 2 - 4.30pm**.



Advance tickets will be available to purchase online from Friday 16 February, so put the date in your diary and watch out for details or visit <https://www.stnicolasforesthill.org/>. As in 2023, free off-site car parking will be available at local schools and the routes for walking or cycling will be clearly signposted. Advance booking is particularly recommended if you are hoping to park on site, as priority will be given to ‘Blue Badge’ holders or those with limited mobility.

We need volunteers to direct traffic and pedestrians, collect tickets, serve teas, coffees and cakes, and to bake goodies in advance, if you are unavailable on the day.

If you would like to help out in any way please contact Julia Stutfield (07766 103427 or julia.stutfield@gmail.com).

'Pop Up Coffee Shop' in Forest Hill Village Hall

Friday 23 February, 10.30am -12.30pm



Tea, coffee and cake
All profits to local charities



More information from Julia Stutfield
07766 103427 or julia.stutfield@gmail.com

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

The Thursday morning 'stay and play' sessions in Forest Hill Village Hall are a wonderful way for parents, grandparents and carers of small children to meet and chat in a friendly and supportive environment. Through our affiliation with The Maple Tree Children's Centre in Wheatley (see page 19), we also have access to all sorts of support and advice.

If you have a new baby or are expecting one soon, why not drop in to introduce yourself to us or get in touch with Julia Stutfield 07766 103427 or julia.stutfield@gmail.com.

Forest Hill with Shotover Parish Council

The next meeting of the Parish Council will be held on **Thursday 29 February 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 noticeboard. Current agendas and minutes are posted on the noticeboard outside the Village Hall. Archived agendas and minutes can be found on the website.

Mickle Way and parking on the white lines - reminder to residents that the junctions are to remain clear at all times, as per the Highway Code, so residents can enter and leave the junctions safely.

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.

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.

Once again, the Crib Service saw standing room only as families packed into the sparkling church to celebrate Christmas. Thanks, on behalf of Lynn and myself, to all involved, especially the children who delivered readings and prayers. *Nick Mynheer*

The upkeep of our Grade II listed church is always a challenge, so we are very grateful to all those who made donations following a splendid reception at the Priory for the 'Friends of St Barnabas', kindly hosted by Robert Venables and Gary Morris.

Friends of St Barnabas Talk, Sunday 6 February, 6pm

The next Friends of St Barnabas talk will be given in **St Barnabas Church on Sunday 4 February at 6pm** by Professor Peter Heather of this village. Peter is Chair of the Medieval History Department and Professor of Medieval History at King's College London. Peter will talk on his latest book *Christendom: The Triumph of a Religion, AD 300-1300*. This is an opportunity to join fellow villagers and find out about Peter's work.

The Friends was started many years ago by Bill Bailey, who lived in Forge Close, and exists to support the maintenance of our beautiful Victorian, Butterfield church. We arrange talks from time-to-time and get together to say 'thank you' to our village supporters. We invite anyone who might be interested in the talk subject matter, or finding out more about how to become a 'Friend', across the four parishes, to come along.

Coffee and Chat, Saturday 10 February, 10am-12pm

Coffee and Chat has been happening for a year now and will continue each second Saturday throughout 2024 in St Barnabas Church. The intention is to provide an informal meeting space for neighbours, and we are grateful to everyone who has supported these coffee mornings. There is no charge, although donations are appreciated. Everyone, including dogs, welcome. A reminder that we always offer plant based options at any social event at St Barnabas.

Pop-up Pub - first Friday of each month

Following a successful trial back in November, and some helpful verbal feedback and on the village Facebook site, the Pop-up Pub will be on the 1st Friday of each month from 6pm until 8.30pm. Starting 2 February 2024.

The first 3 months will be in St Barnabas Church, felt to be a more 'cosy' environment for the winter months (at least in atmosphere if not temperature!). Families are welcome. Come and meet up with fellow villagers for a beer, cider, wine or soft drink and social chat.

Horton-cum-Studley Playground Update

We would like to thank the Otmoor Challenge for their generous donation to the new playground, which was very gratefully received. We are still a long way short of our target for a new playground and some of the equipment is unsafe.

We would be grateful for any new committee members or help with leading a fundraising event or donations directly to the funds.

If you are interested please contact Natalie Parish natalieparish@gmail.com or Stuart MacFarlane s.macfarlane799@btinternet.com or 07906 216549.

Botley West Solar Farm, the Ox-Cam Arc and East-West Rail

By the time you read this magazine the first and only statutory consultation on the Botley West Solar Farm (BWSF) proposal will be over. Despite requests from CPRE and others to delay the consultation until after the holiday period, the promoters, PhotoVolt Development Partners (PVDP), chose to run it over the Christmas period, the last open display meeting being on 19 January. Relatively few members of the public turned up at most meetings. Were people too busy, uninformed or simply not interested that nine square kms of agricultural land just West and North-West of Oxford may soon be covered with over 2.5 million very large metal and glass solar panels, delivering their maximum power for no more than three hours each day?

Boundary changes mean that Horton-cum-Studley falls within the new Bicester and Woodstock constituency for the national elections due this year. Much of BWSF is within this constituency and so should be an election issue for at least one of the Four Parishes.

David Rogers

Horton-cum-Studley Parish Council News

Several parishioners have raised concerns about the effect of building work in Church Lane: access for vehicles and pedestrians; the deteriorating condition of verges and general safety along this narrow road. The Parish Council and our District Councillor challenged Cherwell District Council (CDC) (which approved the planning application), about the lack of a proper construction and traffic management plan. CDC's response included the following:

"There were no planning reasons...which required a Construction and Traffic Management Plan. The Council understands the grass verge is the responsibility of Oxfordshire County Council Highways Dept. and it is outside the red line plan which accompanied the planning application. Once a planning permission has been granted, the Council cannot amend or alter the permission. As such, the matters raised are not breaches of planning control and planning enforcement has no powers to intervene."

Obstruction of the highway is usually a matter for the police and a report may be made to them via their website: <https://www.thamesvalley.police.uk/>.

The damage to the grass verge would be a matter for OCC Highways and this may be reported to them for any action deemed appropriate via their website: <https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/>."

It is good to see the new bus service (Route 108) is being supported by villagers, connecting us with Oxford and Bicester. Whilst the Oxford Bus Company endeavours to keep to a complex timetable, there may be the occasional wait given some of the narrow roads and access issues involved along the route, so patience is sometimes required.

Within the Parish Council, Councillor Kim Brown has established a working link with Age UK to support any villager with practical advice and guidance, especially during winter months. Please contact Kim at hcspcbrown@gmail.com if you know of anyone who may welcome such information.

Parish Council meetings, open to all in the village, are normally held on the second Thursday of the month, the **next meeting being on Thursday 8 February at 7.30pm in the Millennium Village Hall.**

David Slingo: Chair

Horton-cum-Studley Gardening Club

By the time this newsletter goes out we will have held our January AGM which, this year, includes our home-grown version of 'Gardeners' Question Time', with several knowledgeable members sharing wisdom and insights.

Among things to look forward to in 2024 will be talks on photographing Garden Plants, Insects and Birds, on Composting and visits to Upton Wold in Moreton in Marsh (the 'Hidden Garden of the Cotswolds') and Kingsbridge Farm in Steeple Claydon, with its colour-themed herbaceous borders, topiary and beautiful views.

As I write this, the sun has made its first appearance in weeks, it seems. The first snowdrops have survived the deluge and other signs of life are peeking through in patio pots, a relief when seasons are becoming disconcertingly unfamiliar. It will be interesting to see what happens when El Niño finally wears itself out (allegedly this Spring) and whether temperatures may 'normalise' somewhat.

Meanwhile, gardening adjustments to cope with the unexpected can bring opportunities. My own front garden is currently a quagmire, which I understand can support certain ferns and grasses. The plan is to research well before investing in new plants, though.

Plant sales will feature regularly in upcoming meetings. Besides bringing enjoyment and raising funds, when members have grown things successfully in their own gardens, it is likely that they will be happy in similar soil, so that's another plus.

We very much look forward to welcoming members old and new in 2024. For more information, please email me at mjcbt2013@gmail.com.

Melanie Jones, Chair 07766 708303

A message from Sadie Paige

On behalf of the Paige family, I would like to thank the community for the kind words, thoughts and prayers, following the death of Helen Paige.

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.

Christmas Lights Friday 8 Dec

A huge thank you to all those who helped at and attended our Christmas lights evening. It was a lovely get together once again, hopefully enjoyed by all.

Monthly Coffee Mornings in Stanton Village Hall

Monday 12 February and
Wednesday 6 March, 10.30am - 12pm

Come for tea, coffee and cake! Everyone is welcome. For further details, please contact Sue Baker 01865 351449.

How our Village Church can Thrive



In the middle of our lovely village stands a glorious Grade 1 listed building built nearly a thousand years ago. Many of you pass it every day on your way to work, on a bus or bike, in a car, walking your dog, going to the village shop or visiting your village neighbours. This building, our church, built hundreds of years ago is the centre of this village and provides a quiet contemplative space in the middle of our busy lives.

We would like to invite you as a villager to join those of us responsible for maintaining this building and its grounds (the PCC) to talk about how we all might preserve the building and ensure its survival in years to come for future generations. We want to hear ideas from across the village community about how this might happen.

Please join us on **Saturday 2 March, 10.30-12pm in Stanton Village Hall**. Tea, coffee, and delicious cakes should help our creative juices flow and aid the conversation. Let us know if you can come, by email at carla.stanley@rectoryfarmpyo.co.uk, so we ensure there are enough cakes for everyone!

Elizabeth Harrison 1942-2023



Elizabeth Harrison was born in New Zealand and worked for several years in Papua New Guinea (PNG) before eventually moving to the UK, where she lived in Stanton St John for many years.

Her first marriage was to the swashbuckling Graeme Galbraith who led her from Sydney to PNG and the enchanted social life of an ex-pat there in the 1960s.

However, it was through this move to PNG and her work that she met the great love of her life, Geoffrey Harrison. Geoffrey was much taken by this rather chic and yet strong woman and once she decided to visit the UK, he was there at Heathrow to meet her and Elizabeth's chapter in the UK began.

Throughout her varied and interesting life, she had two burning drives:

- The first was to educate herself and she assiduously focused on using her intelligent mind to gain understanding, challenge ideas and develop intellectual insight on the broadest range of themes from the judiciary to the arts. She was extremely well read and loved debate.
- The second drive was an ambition to improve opportunities and life chances for others and this is reflected in her work as a civil servant in public health in PNG and in Oxford and her 21 years as a magistrate.

All of this was underpinned by a forensic ability to organise – creating structure and programme management were strong competencies for Elizabeth and all of these were oiled and facilitated by her natural charm and persuasiveness.

Elizabeth's and Geoffrey's was a happy relationship of 34 years of marriage. Their greatest joy was adding Clare to their family and the subsequent delight of Clare's own family in Brett, Paul and Josh. Trips to Australia were a source of great pleasure to visit them over there and in meeting up with other friends there.

Elizabeth became Honorary Secretary to the Friends of Christ Church Cathedral in 2006, assisting with fundraising for Cathedral projects and widening awareness of the Cathedral's presence, ministry and mission. A Requiem Service was held for her at the Cathedral on 10 January 2024.

Elizabeth's daughter, Clare, has written to say just how immensely grateful she has been for the support from many people in Stanton St John. "They, along with others, really held Josh and I together in a most difficult time."

* * * * *

Stanton St John WI

February's talk will be ***Awareness and Avoidance of Scams***. Our Vice President, Wendy Walker will give us the latest advice available, as she is a serving Police Officer who has direct contact with victims of such crimes. Do come along to discover more and have a warm welcome from our group, on **Tuesday 13 February at 7.30pm in Stanton St John Village Hall**.

On **Tuesday 27 February** our members are having a ***workshop on Indian Block Printing***. We were fortunate to win a Bursary from Oxfordshire Federation Of Women's Institutes so will enjoy the evening at a discounted rate. Details will be sent to members and also outlined at our regular monthly meeting on 13 February.

Cover Photo

Our cover photograph was taken by Caroline Clark on Sunday 7 January when the Banbury and District Vintage Ploughing Society hosted their Cup Match at Rectory Farm. The photographs below were taken on the same day by Julian Money.



Christopher Bulstrode 1951 - 2003



Christopher Bulstrode moved to Stanton St John in 2001 with his partner (later wife), Victoria Hunt. They fell in love with the area and its surrounding countryside and have remained here ever since.

Chris was just 16 when he was awarded a scholarship to Oxford to read medicine. To fill the year before he was 17 he was offered a junior post at the Max Planck Institute in Bavaria under Konrad Lorenz studying animal behaviour. He was fascinated. When he started in Oxford the following year, he found the labs and thinking not to his taste, and within a term he changed to Zoology specialising in ornithology and in marine biology. At a loss what to do after his degree, a wise tutor advised him never to make a career out of what you love most. So, he decided to start again in Medicine, this time in Cambridge after which he returned to Oxford for his clinical studies.

Following a spell in Africa he returned to Edinburgh to take his FRCs and start his training in Trauma and Orthopaedics. He was appointed to Oxford as Clinical Reader, then Professor, specialising in hip and knee replacements where he remained for the rest of his working life, only doing NHS work, never private practice which he disapproved of.

After a spell on the General Medical Council, where he found it almost impossible to bring about change, Chris joined the Territorial Army aged 56 as the oldest recruit ever, went to Sandhurst, and was immediately deployed to Afghanistan where he worked for seven months in the field assessing medical and refugee problems with the local Afghans. On his return he joined Médecins du Monde (MDM) and was deployed to Gaza to perform re-constructive surgery on the injured Palestinians, later helping in Haiti, Ukraine and setting up and running the UK's Ebola Hospital in Sierra Leone. He received a CBE for his humanitarian work from his old classmate, Prince (now King) Charles at Buckingham Palace.

Remaining a keen ornithologist throughout his life he took great pleasure in developing the Stream and feeding area for the birds at The Stream House. Chris died on 7 December 2023 from complications associated with a degenerative neurological condition. He leaves two families and a wide circle of friends and colleagues who will miss him greatly.

Film Night in Stanton St John Village Hall
Saturday 17 February, 7.45pm

The Stanton St John Film Club presents the last movie with Michael Caine and Glenda Jackson:

THE GREAT ESCAPER



Bernard Jordan (Michael Caine) escapes from his care home to attend the 70th Anniversary of the D-Day Landings in France. A fitting final film for two British acting legends

The film will start at 7.45pm but doors will be open at 7pm. Before and after the film, delicious cakes and drinks are available whilst the bar will serve wines and Tropical Escape cocktails.

Since only 60 seats are available in the Village Hall, please reserve your seats for the screening as soon as possible via Sue Baker (susanjbaker24@gmail.com) or in the Village Shop.

Tickets at £5 (cash only) will be sold on the door. Any profits raised will be used to enhance the Village Hall for future screenings.

Stanton St John Parish Council

The parish council consists of six councillors, all unpaid, who voluntarily give up their own time for the overall good of the village. Councillors come from all walks of life; however, they are generally very busy people, who have full lives and roles and responsibilities outside of the parish council. Councillors meet once a month in the evening (except for August) for a full council meeting and may attend other ad-hoc meetings from time to time. Members of the public can attend these meetings and speak in the public forum.

The parish council has responsibility for and makes decisions that affect green and open spaces, annual events in the village, memorials, recreation and play areas and neighbourhood planning. In addition, the parish council helps local groups and advocates for better services and facilities. The parish council is also a statutory consultee for planning applications.

Since I've been a Clerk in the parish (approximately 18 months) the main tangible achievements I've seen are:

- Electric chargers installed in the Village Hall car park
- Millenium Green lights installed
- Co-ordination of a successful litter picking day in March 2023
- Provided support for Jubilee celebrations

Work In Progress:

- A second defibrillator
- Traffic Working Party
- Neighbourhood Planning

Although there are currently no vacant councillor positions, the village needs people to become involved in planning its future. Three people have so far expressed an interest in participating in the Neighbourhood Planning process, which is a great start, but more are needed. Please look out for the date of next Neighbourhood Planning meeting on our website stantonstjohnparishcouncil.gov.uk or on the parish noticeboards.

The village also needs an individual and/or group to lead on the litter picking day in March. Please email the Clerk on stantonstjohnpc@gmail.com if you can help.

Anita James

Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer to Stanton St John Parish Council

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towards **Oxford City**
via Piddington, Horton-cum-Studley & Beckley

108

Mondays to Saturdays (except Public Holidays)

Bicester Pioneer Square stop 1		1120	1430	
Langford Medical Practice		1130	1440	
Blackthorn Bus Shelter			1449	
Piddington Bus Shelter			1454	
Boarstall St James's Church		1142	1500	
Horton-cum-Studley Forge Close	0727	0915	1147	1505
Beckley The Abingdon Arms	0735	0923		
Forest Hill Powell Close	0745	0932		1614
Stanton St John Village Shop	0749	0936		1618
Beckley The Abingdon Arms				1623
Headington Shops stop HS2	0806	0946	1200	1518 1633
Brookes University stop B5	0811	0951	1205	1523 1638
Oxford Carfax	0826	1001	1215	1538 1653

No service on **Sundays** or Public Holidays

towards **Bicester**
via Forest Hill, Horton-cum-Studley & Piddington

108

Mondays to Saturdays (except Public Holidays)

Oxford Turt Street stop T1	1010	1310	1550	1735
Brookes University stop B2	1021	1321	1601	1751
Headington Shops stop HS6	1025	1325	1605	1755
Forest Hill Powell Close		1334	1614	1804
Stanton St John Village Shop		1338	1618	1808
Beckley The Abingdon Arms		1343	1623	1813
Horton-cum-Studley Forge Close	1035	1350		1820
Boarstall St James's Church	1040	1355		
Piddington Bus Shelter	1046			
Blackthorn Bus Shelter	1051			
Langford Medical Practice	1100	1410		
Bicester Pioneer Square	1110	1420		

No service on **Sundays** or Public Holidays

Bus Stops for the 108:

1. **Horton-cum-Studley:** bus shelters on the Brill Road near The Forge and at the bottom of Horton Hill.
2. **Beckley:** bus stop at the Abingdon Arms pub on the High Street.
3. **Stanton St John:** bus stop at the village shop on Middle Road.
4. **Forest Hill:** bus stop in Powell Close and on the Stanton Road (B4027) near Mickle Way.

For any concerns and queries, contact:

Horton-cum-Studley and Beckley - Jill Meyjes: telephone 01865 351496

Stanton St John - Jill Meyjes: telephone 01865 351496 or John Battye: telephone 01865 358984, email john.battye1@gmail.com

Forest Hill - Malcolm Leeding: telephone 01865 872034