

# *The Four Parishes News Magazine*

BECKLEY  
FOREST HILL  
HORTON-cum-STUDLEY  
STANTON St JOHN



Village litter-picking day in Stanton St John

*April 2023*

## The editor writes



I am writing this the day after Daffodil Day at Shotover House, where I spent a cold but enjoyable day with a wonderful team of volunteers who had given up their Sunday afternoon to direct traffic, serve refreshments, take payments, and all the other activities involved in organising a big event, (including clearing up afterwards!) The sun, which has been in hiding for the last 24 hours, is streaming in through my window as if to say 'If only you had chosen a different date for your event, I might have been here for you!'

As anyone knows, if they have been involved in planning an outdoor event in this country, we are completely at the mercy of the weather. There is nothing we can do about it, except make contingency plans and then just let it happen. In some ways it is quite liberating, if also very frustrating!

The degree of preparation that went into Daffodil Day this year was considerable and, once again, it has taken its toll on the time available to prepare this magazine. I will confess straight away that there has been no time to arrange for the usual proof reading, so any errors are likely to be down to me. Hopefully next time things will be a bit easier!

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 Clare Ferguson.*

*More details on page 25 of this magazine.*

**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](mailto: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](mailto:anthea@fourparishes.org.uk)

<b>LIST OF CONTENTS</b>	
<b>Church Services in the Four Parishes</b>	<b>Page 5</b>
<b>Letter from Anthea</b>	<b>Page 6</b>
<b>Church Matters</b>	<b>Page 8</b>
<b>General Articles and Information</b>	<b>Page 11</b>
<b>Village pages: Beckley</b>	<b>Page 15</b>
<b>Village pages: Forest Hill</b>	<b>Page 18</b>
<b>Village pages: Horton-cum-Studley</b>	<b>Page 20</b>
<b>Village pages: Stanton St John</b>	<b>Page 24</b>
<b>Classified</b>	<b>Page 30</b>

*We welcome contributions for future issues, but please get in touch with the editorial team beforehand at [4parishesnewsletter@gmail.com](mailto: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](http://www.fourparishes.org.uk/magazine).*

**The closing date for the May 2023 issue is 15 April 2023**

**To advertise in the magazine please email JULIA  
[adverts.4parishesnewsletter@gmail.com](mailto: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](mailto:linda@goffey.co.uk)

**Horton-cum-Studley** Carol Welch 01865 358122 [carol\\_welch20@hotmail.com](mailto:carol_welch20@hotmail.com)

**Stanton St John** Sue Baker 01865 351449 [susanjbaker24@gmail.com](mailto: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

<b>Rev'd Anthea Beresford</b> <i>Vicar</i>	anthea@fourparishes.org.uk Tel: 01865 351839
<b>Rev'd Hugh Lee</b> <i>Associate Priest</i>	hugh.lee@btinternet.com Tel: 01865 316245
<b>Rev'd Stephanie Bullock</b>	stephaniebullock9@gmail.com
<b>Rev'd Dr. Elizabeth Hoare</b>	liz.hoare@wycliffe.ox.ac.uk
<b>Betty Dye LLM</b>	betty.dye10@gmail.com
<b>Canon Prof. Nicholas Orme LLM</b>	n.i.orme@exeter.ac.uk.

## Churchwardens

### Beckley

Georgina Robson      Tel: 01865 351637      gina.robson@virgin.net

### Forest Hill

Jane Walker      Tel: 01865 872399      lyttleton@btinternet.com  
Pat Fraser      Tel: 01865 875679      triciaann49@gmail.com

### Horton-cum-Studley

Lynn Whitaker      Tel: 01865 358838      lyndawhitaker@btinternet.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, April 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
<b>2 April</b> <i>Palm Sunday</i>	<b>11am</b> Holy Communion	<b>9.30am</b> Holy Communion	<b>9.30am</b> Holy Communion	<b>11am</b> Morning Prayer
	<b>4pm</b> Benefice Children's Service and Messy Church at St Nicolas			
	<b>6pm</b> Taizé Service on Zoom			
<b>3 April</b> <i>Monday of Holy Week</i>		<b>7.30pm</b> Holy Communion		
<b>4 April</b> <i>Tuesday of Holy Week</i>	<b>7.30pm</b> Holy Communion			
<b>5 April</b> <i>Wednesday of Holy Week</i>			<b>7.30pm</b> Holy Communion	
<b>6 April</b> <i>Maundy Thursday</i>				<b>7.30pm</b> Holy Communion
<b>7 April</b> <i>Good Friday</i>	<b>12 noon</b> Benefice Service of Reflection (Hour before the Cross) at Beckley			
<b>8 April</b> <i>Holy Saturday</i>	<b>12 noon</b> Benefice Easter Vigil of Readings, Psalms and Prayers at Forest Hill			
<b>9 April</b> <i>Easter Sunday</i>	<b>11am</b> Holy Communion	<b>9.30am</b> Holy Communion	<b>9.30am</b> Holy Communion	<b>11am</b> Holy Communion
<b>16 April</b> <i>2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Easter</i>	<b>11am</b> BCP Morning Prayer	<b>9.30am</b> Holy Communion	<b>9.30am</b> BCP Holy Communion	<b>11am</b> Holy Communion
	<b>6pm</b> Iona Service at Beckley			
<b>23 April</b> <i>3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Easter</i>	<b>10am</b> Benefice Holy Communion Service at Beckley			
	<b>4pm</b> Family Church does Forest Church at Bernwood Forest			
<b>30 April</b> <i>4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter</i>	<b>11am</b> Morning Prayer	<b>9.30am</b> Holy Communion	<b>9.30am</b> Morning Prayer	<b>11am</b> Morning Prayer
	<b>6pm</b> Church Without Walls at Stanton St John Village Hall			

## A letter from Anthea

Hi everyone,



I am always struck by how strange it feels to be writing a letter a while before you are going to receive and read it, and which tends to try to look forward to the coming month – I am usually revelling in the ‘here and now’, not quite ready to whizz forward into the future. In some ways, I think that is a good thing – savouring the time at hand, relishing the moment, enjoying it for what it has for me, and not almost dismissing it in a rush to look to the future. But of course we need to plan ahead, to look out on to the horizon, and see what is coming.

Yesterday was the first day of Spring. As I recall it, it was a bit of a miserable day, probably not helped by my personal circumstances that day. The day was dull and drizzly, and the wind quite cold. I do not recall seeing the sun shine, or any beautiful spring flowers showing their heads. It did not shout out to me that Spring had sprung! That said, as I reflected on the day, it felt as though it reflected rather well, the sombreness of the Lenten season we were in at the time.

Interestingly, the contrast to the previous Sunday was calculable. That day, as I entered Beckley Churchyard on the way to a service for Mothering



Sunday, my senses were assaulted by the beauty of nature – the warmth of the sun on my back; the bright colours of the daffodils and primroses, set against the vibrant green of the grass; the scent of the flowers was beautifully intoxicating; and the canopy was covered by an amazing blue sky above.

These two contrasting days, made me think about the change in season we have in the Church calendar, as we move into Spring, and then on into April. Our Lenten journey nears its end – that time of self-examination and repentance; of prayer, fasting, and self-denial; and of reading and meditating on God’s holy word. Our churches have, rightly, been plain and undecorated – no beautiful flowers – we have those to look forward to once more, in due course.

At the very beginning of April we have Palm Sunday, that day of celebration as we bring to mind Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem. In our services we read through the Passion narrative, reminding us of the events of that very first Easter.

Importantly, during Holy Week, we remember Jesus' suffering for us, as he journeys towards the Cross. We remember the denial, the betrayal, the trial, the mocking, the beating, and his crucifixion. As I heard the Bishop of Tewkesbury once say, it is important for us to engage with this special time, between the two Sundays, Palm Sunday and Easter Day, otherwise we go from the triumphal entry into Jerusalem that we remember on Palm Sunday, to the wonderful, joyful celebrations of Easter Day, bypassing the intervening story, essential to our understanding of the Cross and resurrection, and of Jesus' sacrifice for us. Please do look at the rota on page 5 to see what is going on throughout the Benefice, which you may like to join in with.

Easter Day is that glorious day, which some say is the most important day in the Christian calendar, when we celebrate the empty tomb and the news of the risen Lord, his resurrection, through which we have the gift of eternal life, if we choose to say yes to his invitation to follow him. In celebration of this good news, our churches will be beautifully decorated with spring flowers, and our senses will be enlivened by the beauty of their colour, and their aroma. We look forward to welcoming you into your churches to celebrate this wonderful occasion.

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.

In addition to the church services listed on page 5, there are other activities during the week, details of which appear on page 9 onwards. **All are welcome to join these activities. Please email me (Anthea) [anthea@fourparishes.org.uk](mailto:anthea@fourparishes.org.uk) if you would like to know more.**

### Holy Week and Easter

Holy week begins with **Palm Sunday** when we celebrate Jesus' triumphal arrival in Jerusalem. Crowds met him, throwing palm branches on the road. There was a celebratory atmosphere, but we must not forget that Palm Sunday sets before us the suffering of Jesus, and the cross. We receive Palm Crosses during our services across the Benefice, which we take home as a reminder. Palm crosses from this year are burnt to provide the ash for next year's Ash Wednesday service. There is also a joint gathering of the Benefice Children's Service and Messy Church in Forest Hill, in the afternoon.

To help ensure we do not go straight from the celebrations from Palm Sunday to those of Easter Day, and are once again reminded of the Cross and the suffering of Jesus for us, we observe Holy Week, through services, times of reflection and readings of the story of God's people. We look forward to welcoming you to services of Holy Communion from Monday through to Maundy Thursday at 7.30pm (see the rota on page x). On **Maundy Thursday** we leave the Church in silence.

On **Good Friday** we have a service of reflection on the 'Hour before the Cross' in Beckley Church, where we spend time thinking about Jesus' death on the Cross, remembering his suffering for us, his agony, his death, and then his burial. It is essential that we come to the Cross and face it squarely, in all its horrors – this time of reflection helps us do that.

**Holy Saturday** is a time of desolation and emptiness as we remember the reality of Jesus' death – his life was over! His death was every bit as complete and final for him as it is for us. At noon we meet in church in Forest Hill to bring to mind the story of God's people, through readings from Genesis to the Gospels, from the Psalms, and through prayer.



On **Easter Day** we gather across the benefice to celebrate what many consider the most holy day of the Christian calendar: the astonishing good news of the empty tomb and the risen Lord. We look forward to celebrating this special day together, when we say 'Alleluia, Christ is risen! He is risen indeed, alleluia!'

## Advent challenge and beyond

I hope you enjoyed reading through the stories of 1 and 2 Kings last month. For April, I am going to be gentle on us as there is Holy Week and Easter to engage with, mark and celebrate, so I suggest we read 1 Chronicles, and save 2 Chronicles for May. There are only 29 chapters in 1 Chronicles so that should not be too hard. 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, **excluding 11-14 April**. Please do get in touch 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 will be finishing *Let me go there: The spirit of Lent* by Paula Gooder at the start of April, and will then be moving on to a new book after Easter. If anyone would like to join us, please do get in touch.

## Easter Garden competition

I thought it would be great to have another Easter Garden Competition. Once again the rules are very loose. The garden can be of any medium. Examples could be a painting, a traditional 'garden' with plants, soil etc, a cake, knitted, crocheted – whatever you would like. Once completed, send me a photo by email with your name. We will display the photos on the Four Parishes website for all to see. The closing date for entries is 7 April, and the winner will be announced on Easter Day, 9 April. There will be a small prize for the winner. The idea is that you have great fun producing

the garden, and that the photos will bring joy to everyone. All ages are eligible, from the youngest to the oldest in the Benefice. Please do spread the word so we have a good number of entries.

## 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 April across the benefice as follows:

Beckley	8, 26
Forest Hill	1, 19, 29
Horton-cum-Studley	5, 15
Stanton St John	12, 22

## Annual Meetings of Parishioners and Annual Parochial Church Meetings

It is that time of year again! The Annual Parochial Church Meetings (APCM) have to be completed by 31 May this year, and so dates have been set for these. The related Annual Meeting of Parishioners is on the same day, immediately before the APCM.

Here is advanced notice of the meetings:

<b>Beckley:</b>	<b>23 May at 7.30pm in Church</b>
<b>Forest Hill:</b>	<b>16 May at 7pm in Forest Hill Village Hall</b>
<b>Horton-cum-Studley:</b>	<b>3 May at 7.30pm in Church</b>
<b>Stanton St John:</b>	<b>24 May at 7pm Stanton Village Hall</b>

## Revisions of Electoral Rolls

Electoral rolls need updating in readiness for the Annual Parochial Church Meetings in the Benefice.

If you are on the current roll of your Church, you do NOT need to complete a new form this year. If your name is not currently on the roll, but you would like to be included, then you must complete a form. Forms are available in each of the Churches in the Benefice. If you cannot locate them, please contact the Electoral Roll Officer of the related Church (see details below).

To qualify for inclusion on the electoral roll of a Parish Church, you must

be living in the Parish, or be a regular worshipper in that Parish. If you have any questions about this, please do contact the Electoral Roll Officer of the related Church (see details below).

After the revision of each of the electoral rolls, an updated copy will be exhibited for inspection at each Church.

Here is the timetable for these reviews:

<b>Beckley:</b>	<b>25 April – 8 May</b>
<b>Forest Hill:</b>	<b>18 April – 1 May</b>
<b>Horton-cum-Studley:</b>	<b>5 – 18 April</b>
<b>Stanton St John:</b>	<b>26 April – 9 May</b>

For further information, please do contact the Electoral Roll Officer of your Parish Church:

<b>Beckley:</b>	Gina Robson (01865 351637)
<b>Forest Hill:</b>	Pat Fraser (01865 875679)
<b>Horton-cum-Studley:</b>	David Slingo ( <a href="mailto:stbarnabaspcchcs@gmail.com">stbarnabaspcchcs@gmail.com</a> or 07850 004700)
<b>Stanton St John:</b>	Sue Baker (01865 351449)

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## GENERAL

### News from The Maple Tree

Hello from The Maple Tree in Wheatley!

A huge thank you to everyone involved in Daffodil Day at Shotover House on 26 March, which raised over £3,000 to be shared equally between The Maple Tree and St Nicolas Church, Forest Hill with Shotover. After weeks of careful planning, we were worried that the weather would keep most people away, but fortunately the afternoon was dry and plenty of visitors came to wander round the gardens and enjoy tea and cake.

The Maple Tree 'Stay and Play' sessions at Forest Hill Village Hall continue on Thursdays from 11am-12pm, with the support of regular volunteers from Forest Hill and Stanton St John. Email [info@mapletree.org.uk](mailto:info@mapletree.org.uk) for more information.



## Dear Deer?

by Lyn Ebbs

Compared with birdwatching it's much harder to get good views of the UK's mammals; there are fewer of them, and many are mainly active after dark. But you can easily see a few of the larger ones around our villages – deer. Six species of deer live wild in the UK: red deer, roe deer, fallow deer, sika deer, Reeves's muntjac, and Chinese water deer. The ones most often seen locally are our native roe deer; long-term resident, fallow deer, and relative newcomer, muntjac.



Fallow deer - Ben Hall (rsfb-images.com)

In decreasing order of size, fallow deer are biggest, standing 90cm at the shoulder. Typically, they are light brown in colour with white spots on the back. The males' (bucks') antlers, when fully grown, are palmate, with some points coming off a thin flat section. Their white rump patch has a border of black with a black stripe on

its tail. The species has been identified in remains dating from the 1st century at the site of the Fishbourne Roman Palace in West Sussex. But our current population was introduced soon after the Norman conquest and was recorded in the Domesday Book. Over subsequent centuries, animals have escaped or been released into the wild from deer parks. Our local population is thought to be the herd from Holton Park which dispersed to nearby woods when a World War II hospital was built in the grounds. The females (does) live in large herds throughout the year in open, agricultural environments. In most populations the bucks will defend a rutting area in the autumn and the mated does give birth to a single fawn the following June or July.

The native roe deer has a more solitary life but may form small groups in winter. They are smaller and daintier than fallow deer standing 75cm at the shoulder. In the summer their coats are bright rusty red but in winter turn a dull, slate grey colour. Bucks have short three-pointed antlers when fully grown. Both sexes have no visible tail. They have large ears and large black eyes. Their noses and mouths are



Roe deer Ben Hall (rspb-images.com)

surrounded by a pale area. Roe deer are particularly associated with the edges of woodlands and forests and use agricultural fields in these areas too. It is the most widespread British deer being recorded in nearly every county. Like fallow deer, roe deer have a rutting season in late summer or early autumn and the young are born in

May or June the following year.

Also generally solitary, Reeves's muntjacs are new arrivals; the first record of them in the UK was in 1894 when they were brought from China to Woburn Park. After escapes and releases a feral population established locally in the 1930s and now, we even see them in our gardens. Since 2019 they have been classed as an invasive alien species. They are the shortest of our three, standing at 50cm, but are thickset, with a 'hunched' appearance, as their rumps are higher than their shoulders. They have a wide, flat tail, which they raise to display a white underside when disturbed. Bucks have short simple antlers and two blackish lines running down towards the snout. Does and fawns have dark crown patches. They are also known as the 'barking deer'; the bark is loud for its size. Unlike our other two species they don't have a rut; they breed all year round and the does can conceive again within days of giving birth.



Since the removal of our large predators, the population and distribution of all the deer species is increasing in the UK and their impact on their environment and interaction with us is also increasing. They have had an impact on the flora of woodlands from grazing, as well as on shoots from coppiced trees. As deer numbers increase road traffic casualties occur more often; over 50,000 deer get hit by vehicles every year.

*Lyn Ebbs has lived in Stanton St John for 34 years and has been volunteering at the RSPB Otmoor Reserve at Otmoor Lane, Beckley, since 2009.*

## Useful Information about the Alternative Fuel Payment (AFP)

This government scheme seeks to help households not using gas or electricity as their main source of heating. It makes available a grant of £200 to households using alternative fuels, e.g.

- liquid petroleum gas (LPG)
- oil
- wood
- solid fuel
- tank or bottled gas

Most homes that are eligible for this payment will get it automatically as a credit on their electricity bills from February 2023. If you think you should have got a payment but have not, contact your electricity supplier.

If you don't receive this payment automatically, there is information on how to apply for this grant on the government website <https://www.gov.uk/apply-alternative-fuel-bill-support-if-not-automatic>

You can apply if

- you pay for the energy your household uses
- you're applying for your main, permanent home

You will need:

- an email address or phone number (if you have one)
- your bank account details
- proof that you've spent £200 on alternative fuels to heat your home since September 2022 (for example, a delivery note or receipt)

If you cannot apply online, you can call the helpline: 0808 175 3943  
Monday to Friday, 8am to 6pm.

*Peter Wingfield-Stratfield*  
*Stanton St John*  
*01865 358863,*  
*peterws@tobeistodo.co.uk*

## BECKLEY

### Beckley Church

Details of all church services and general church news can be found on pages 5 - 11. Any changes to the published schedule of services will be on our website [www.fourparishes.org.uk](http://www.fourparishes.org.uk).

### Decorating the Church for Easter

We shall be decorating the church for Easter on Saturday 8 April at 10am. Please do come and join in! If you have any spring flowers or greenery you could spare, that would be wonderful, but if not, do come anyway. Everyone is so welcome!

### Beckley Organ Update

The work continues, and, as you will see from the photo, there are bits of the organ all over the chance!



Clevedon Organs are working hard, both inside the church and in their workshops, to give us a beautiful and functioning instrument. As well as the water damage, the longstanding problems with the pneumatic front pipe mechanisms, and the general overhaul which was required, woodworm was discovered in the blower box and wind control.

Because of the additional work, sadly it is now unlikely the organ will be operational by Easter but should be by the time of the Coronation!

## Beckley & Stowood Parish Council

The next meeting of the Parish Council will be held on **Thursday 6 April at 7pm at Beckley Village Hall**. Any changes to the published meeting dates will be on the website [www.beckley-and-stowood-pc.gov.uk](http://www.beckley-and-stowood-pc.gov.uk).

## SODC Local Elections on Thursday 4 May 2023 and Photo ID

At these elections, **voters will need to bring photo ID with them to be able to vote at a polling station**. A wide range of photo ID will be accepted, including passports, driving licences, a disabled parking blue badge and proof of age PASS ID cards. You can still use your photo ID if it's out of date, as long as it looks like you.

If an elector does not have an accepted form of photo ID, they can apply for a free voter ID document known as a Voter Authority Certificate. The deadline to apply for voter ID for this election is 5pm on Tuesday 25 April. Information in respect of this requirement is available on the South Oxfordshire District Council website and via the Electoral Commission website.

The Clerk's email address is [clerk@beckley-and-stowood-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@beckley-and-stowood-pc.gov.uk) and Parish Council information can be found on the website [www.beckley-and-stowood-pc.gov.uk](http://www.beckley-and-stowood-pc.gov.uk)

For information on Beckley Village Hall please see [www.beckleyvillagehall.org](http://www.beckleyvillagehall.org) and to enquire about a booking please contact the Booking Secretary, Mel Green, at [booking@beckleyvillagehall.org](mailto:booking@beckleyvillagehall.org).

## 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](mailto: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 April, 6.30pm *The Tradescants: Ark to Ashmolean***

Former resident of Horton-cum-Studley and gallery guide at The Ashmolean, Anna Steven will tell the story how the museum's core collection came from London to Oxford and opened as the first Ashmolean Museum in 1685.

### **Sunday 21 May, 6.30pm *Menopause: Is it me or is it hot in here?***

Everything you want to know about the menopause... Consultant Obstetrician and Gynaecologist at the Royal Free and Beckley resident, Sapna Shah and Peter Hintridge, Consultant Gynaecologist specialising in menopause and endometriosis, will answer key questions on the menopause. Why the sudden change? Why does HRT go in and out of fashion? What is HRT anyway? Does it work? And is it safe?

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

## 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](mailto:BACBSgoodneighbour@gmail.com).

If you know of anyone who might need help, and perhaps does not know this service exists, please let them know. If you would like to volunteer, please email the above address.

# FOREST HILL

## News from St Nicolas

Details of all church services and general church news can be found on pages 5 - 11. Any changes to the published schedule of services will be on our website [www.fourparishes.org.uk](http://www.fourparishes.org.uk).

May we wish you ALL a happy and peaceful Easter.

Here is a reminder of services at St Nicolas for Holy Week and Easter:-

**Monday 3 April 7.30pm      Holy Communion**

**Saturday 8 April 12noon      Easter Vigil of Readings, Psalms and Prayers**

**Easter Sunday 9 April 11am   Holy Communion**

## Decorating the Church for Easter

We welcome anyone who would like to come to church at 10am on Saturday 8 April to help decorate for Easter. No experience necessary!

**The APCM (Annual Parochial Church Council Meeting) has been arranged for Tuesday 16 May at 7pm in the Village Hall.** Please see pages 10-11 for more information.

The **Plant and Produce Stall** outside Lyttleton, Main Street will commence again on Saturdays from 9 to 5pm, beginning 15 April.

## Daffodil Day at Shotover House

A huge thank you to everyone involved in organising and running Daffodil Day at Shotover House on 26 March. After weeks of careful planning, we were worried that the weather would keep most people away, but after a morning of rain, the afternoon was dry and plenty of visitors came to wander round the gardens and enjoy tea and cake. The event raised over £3,000, to be shared equally between St Nicolas Church and The Maple Tree Children's Centre in Wheatley.

## Forest Hill Earth Day Litter Pick

**Saturday 22 April 3-5pm**

Collect equipment at village hall, all welcome.

Refreshments available.

## Forest Hill with Shotover Parish Council

The next meeting of the Parish Council will be held on **Thursday 13 April at 7pm in Forest Hill Village Hall**. This is the Annual Parish Meeting and will be followed by the Parish Council meeting afterwards. Dates of future meetings can be found on the Forest Hill website [www.parish-council.com/foresthillwithshotover](http://www.parish-council.com/foresthillwithshotover).

Current agendas and minutes are posted on the notice board outside the Village Hall. Archived agendas and minutes can be found on the website.

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

## Local Elections on Thursday 4 May 2023 and Voter ID

The elections are for South Oxfordshire District and Parish Councils, including Forest Hill with Shotover PC. **The UK Government has introduced a requirement for voters to show photo ID when voting at a polling station at some elections. This new requirement will apply for the first time in England at the local elections on Thursday 4 May 2023.**

Please refer to page 16 for more information or <https://www.southoxon.gov.uk/south-oxfordshire-district-council/local-democracy-and-elections/elections-and-voting/new-for-2023-you-will-need-to-show-photo-id-when-voting-at-a-polling-station/>.



**Forest Hill Cafe**

**Village Hall 11 - 3pm**

Light lunches  
Tea/Coffee/Cake



**Last Friday of the month**  
**Apr 28/May 26/June 30**

The poster features a light green background with a central brown wavy shape. It includes illustrations of green leaves and berries in the top left and bottom right corners. The text is centered and uses a mix of bold and regular fonts.

# HORTON-cum-STUDLEY

## News from St Barnabas

Details of all church services and general church news can be found on pages 5 - 11. Any changes to the published schedule of services will be on our website [www.fourparishes.org.uk](http://www.fourparishes.org.uk).

## Our church in our community

Would you like a say in decisions about the church in our community? Are you involved in family church activities, or perhaps relatively new into the village, or simply not clear how to get involved?

Earlier in the newsletter is mention of the Annual Meetings, which for St Barnabas will be on Wednesday 3 May. Prior to these there is an opportunity to join the electoral roll of the parish, which can lead to being able to vote at the Annual Parochial Church Meeting when lay representatives are elected to the Parochial Church Council (PCC), the group taking decisions about our church.

If the answer to the above is 'yes', get in touch via [stbarnabaspccchs@gmail.com](mailto:stbarnabaspccchs@gmail.com) or contact David Slingo on 07850 004700.

## Coffee and Chat

There is no Coffee and Chat in April as it falls on Easter Saturday. The next one will be 13 May. No charge, donations only.

## Horton-cum-Studley Gardening Club news

According to T S Eliot, *'April is the cruellest month'*, in stark contrast to Geoffrey Chaucer's April, with its sweet showers, piercing the drought of March to the root, bringing forth tender shoots and leaves, and little birds making melody.

T S Eliot was profoundly depressed when he wrote *The Waste Land*. In the midst of marital turmoil, and reflecting on the devastating legacy of World War One, he saw the coming of Spring with all its glory and promise as a beautiful but deceptive glimmer of hope in a bleak world. Chaucer's lively evocation of the new, young sun and sweet, gentle breezes inspiring folk to go on pilgrimage offers a much brighter depiction of the new season.

In a single hour as I sat down to write this (in early March), a light dusting of snow which fell overnight melted away once touched by a few pale rays of mid-morning sunshine. It's a funny old time in the garden for a novice like me: should I prune and tidy, or leave things until the worst frosts have passed? Which shrubs should I cut right back almost to ground level, and which just to last year's growth? Fortunately, there is so much expertise to call on, not least among other members of the Gardening Club!

I'm beginning to learn, largely through having little time to devote to my own garden, that nature has an incredible capacity to do its own thing, to regenerate and thrive, despite (or perhaps because of) being neglected. I had despaired of ever seeing anything of the belatedly (November) planted spring bulbs as there was no sign of life by the end of February. But suddenly, after a few warmish days, the bright green tips of daffodils and tulips – and even some late crocuses – have started bursting through. Monty Don did say that even March was not too late to get your winter bulbs in! They may not look their best this year but by next spring they'll be well-established, according to Monty.

With a view to cutting down on expensive fertilisers, I've been reading up on growing comfrey, the nutrient-rich foliage of which can be used as compost, or soaked in water to make liquid feed for summer crops. Apparently, you need to buy 'Bocking 14', as this will avoid the fast-growing comfrey from self-seeding where it isn't welcome. Care must also be taken when handling, and around pets, as it can be a skin irritant and is harmful if eaten.

For me and, I'm sure, for many of us, Springtime does indeed offer hope and expectation, as well as endless opportunities to learn more about the joys of gardening. Deborah Sears shared her vision and creativity with us recently in her wonderful talk on starting a new garden. We have many more informative evenings ahead of us: do come along and join us and keep an eye on the Horton Facebook page and in the window of Stanton's Village Shop for dates of upcoming meetings.

If you'd like to know more about our programme for 2023 contact me on 07766 708303 or [mjcbt2013@gmail.com](mailto:mjcbt2013@gmail.com).

*Melanie Jones, Chair; Horton-cum-Studley Gardening Club*

## Spud in a Bucket Competition: new for 2023!


What weight of potatoes can you grow from just 1 in a bucket? Please ask me for a potato and the guidelines for the competition (reproduced below).

# SPUD IN A BUCKET


WHAT WEIGHT OF POTATOES CAN YOU GROW FROM JUST ONE IN A BUCKET?

WHAT DO YOU NEED?


① STANDARD 12L B&Q-type BUCKET  
(you punch the holes in the bottom.)



② COMPOST




③ WATER




WHAT DO YOU DO?

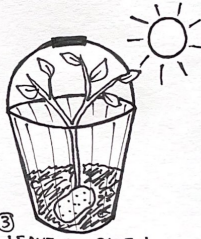
① GET YOUR SEED POTATO FROM CATHY.  
(IT'S A PINK FIR APPLE!)




② PUT COMPOST IN THE BOTTOM OF THE BUCKET. PLACE POTATO ON TOP + COVER WITH MORE COMPOST.




③ LEAVE OUTSIDE + WAIT FOR THE STEM AND LEAVES TO APPEAR.




④ KEEP ADDING MORE COMPOST AS THE PLANT GROWS - WATER AS NEEDED.



⑤ WHEN THE LEAVES HAVE TURNED BROWN, IT'S TIME TO SEE WHAT IS INSIDE - DON'T PEEP UNTIL WEIGH-IN!



⑥ BRING YOUR COMPLETE BUCKET TO ST. BARNABAS CHURCH FOR THE WEIGH-IN: SUNDAY 8th OCTOBER 3-4PM



There will of course also be giant pumpkin and tallest sunflower competitions again this year. Plants will be available from late May outside 3 Mill Lane in Horton-cum-Studley. The weigh-ins will be Sunday 8 October.

Good luck to everyone!

Cathy Jenkins (07941 245726)

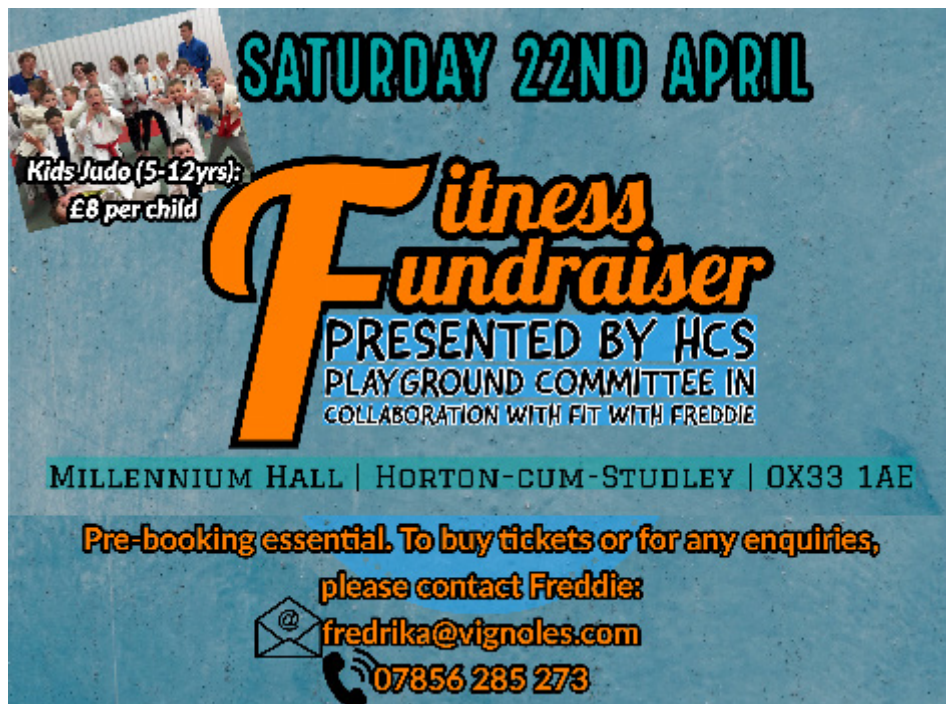
22

## Horton-cum-Studley Parish Council news

This year in May there is one seat up for election in the Launton and Otmoor Ward of Cherwell District Council.

**Following the Elections Act 2022, photographic identification is needed at polling stations before being given a ballot paper to vote.** If you are a proxy, meaning you vote on behalf of someone else, you will also need to show photo ID before you vote. For full details, go to Cherwell District Council's dedicated voter page at <https://www.cherwell.gov.uk/info/11/elections/1041/voter-id>. See also page 16 of this magazine.

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](mailto:hortoncumstudleyparishcouncil@gmail.com).



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£8 per child**


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 **07856 285 273**

# STANTON ST JOHN

## Stanton Church

Details of all church services and general church news can be found on pages 5 - 11. Any changes to the published schedule of services will be on our website [www.fourparishes.org.uk](http://www.fourparishes.org.uk).

## Bric-a-brac

Thank you very much for supporting Stanton church's 'Bric a Brac' window in the Village shop in January. We raised £337.12!

## Create, Coffee and Chat Saturday 22 April, 10-12.30

Do you knit, crochet, embroider, sew, make cards, or do any other craft? Or would you 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.

We are planning a community project to create a new wall hanging for the hall to commemorate recent events such as the Platinum Jubilee, the Coronation, and even the SSJ WI's 100th birthday. Do bring your ideas. There will be a swaps table where you can pass on any unused fabrics, notions etc, and a yarn store. Cost £3 to include coffee and biscuits (and maybe even cake!) Further information from Judy Nisbet [judy@robertnisbet.com](mailto:judy@robertnisbet.com) or 01865 351448

## Stanton St John WI

Please note the new date is the 2nd Tuesday of the month!

Our **Open Meeting Talk on 11 April by Marie-Louise Kerr**, is called *Oxford's Penicillin*. Oxford's First Penicillin jab was given at the Radcliffe Infirmary in February 1941. We will discover the link between its Molecular Structure and a Nobel prize won by a woman. All are welcome to come to the meeting at 7.30pm in Stanton Village Hall. Refreshments are included, and we simply request a donation of approximately £4 to defray expenses. Wine is also available.

## Monthly Coffee Mornings in Stanton Village Hall (10.30 – 12.00)

Come for tea, coffee and cake on 12 April or 10 May. Everyone is welcome. For further details, please contact Sue Baker 351449 / Sarah Coyne 358876.



## Stanton St John Parish Council

### Village litter-picking day (see photo on front cover)

A big thank you to all the volunteers who joined in the village litter-pick on Saturday 18 March, and to Rectory Farm for providing refreshments afterwards. Your efforts really make a difference!

### Local elections - Thursday 4 May

District and Parish Council elections will take place on Thursday 4 May.

**This year, for the first time, voters will need to show some form of photo ID in order to vote at a polling station.**

Nominations for parish councillors must be submitted by 4pm on Tuesday 4 April. More information is available from South Oxfordshire District Council: on their website under Local Democracy and Elections, or email [elections@southandvale.gov.uk](mailto:elections@southandvale.gov.uk), or phone 01235 422528.

### April Parish Council meeting

Please note this will be on **Monday 24 April in the Village Hall**, a week later than the usual pattern of third Monday of the month. The meeting will start at 7.00 pm, aiming to finish by 7.30 pm, to be followed by the Annual Parish Meeting.

### Annual Parish Meeting

**The annual open parish meeting will be held on Monday 24 April at 7.30 pm in the Village Hall.** This is a great opportunity to catch up with the activities of all the various groups, clubs and charities in the village, and to meet some of the people involved. All residents welcome!

### Speed limits in the village

The public consultation on proposed changes to speed limits in the village will be complete by the time you read this magazine. We hope to have further information from OCC Highways soon afterwards so that we can let everyone know what the next steps will be.

To contact the Parish Council, please email the Clerk at [stantonstjohnpc@gmail.com](mailto:stantonstjohnpc@gmail.com).

## Edgar Pearson Litt

23 June 1928 – 25 February 2023



Edgar was born to Thomas & Sarah Litt, at Beckfellican, Raughton Head, Cumbria. The name Edgar was his mother's maiden name, and his middle name 'Pearson' was the maiden name of his paternal grandmother. He had 3 sisters Ellen, Winnifred and Marjorie, and 2 younger brothers Thomas & William. Marjorie caught diphtheria and passed away aged 4 on 30 December 1938.

The family with young children Winnie, Ellen and Edgar moved from Cumbria to a farm in Cuddesdon Oxford. They later farmed at College Farm and Ways Farm in Horspath.

Edgar started selling vegetables on Horspath road estate using a butcher's bike and attached a 2-wheel trailer on the back as business grew; he then progressed to a horse and cart and eventually had a shop on the Horspath Road. He continued his mobile greengrocery round and expanded it to as far as Ambrosden, Merton & Grendon Underwood until he retired at the age of 70. He then concentrated on growing vegetables, mainly for Rectory Farm, and keeping chickens, supplying many people with eggs right up until a few weeks before he passed away.

He met Margaret Hill, a war widow with a young daughter Georgina, when he was 18. She lived in Thame with her sister Nurse Lydia Gubbins and Edgar cycled to Thame several times a week to see her. They married in 1952 and eventually moved to College Way, Horspath, where they lived for many happy years and where their children, Stephen and Carol, grew up.

In 1972 the family moved to Jesmond, Bayswater Road, which had some land attached so Dad could return to growing and selling his produce, including pigs, geese, turkeys and chickens, vegetables, and sweet peas, which he sold to the university college balls in May and June.

Sadly, Margaret and Edgar's marriage ended, but Edgar eventually met Sylvia and they married in August 1987. They had a happy life together enjoying the garden and a few holidays, including a Rhine Cruise with friends Charlie & Ruby Jones.

Edgar's son Stephen passed away in December 2020 from Covid. Sylvia gradually became more disabled, and Edgar cared for her until she passed away on 8 January 2022.

The recurring theme in all the messages from Edgar's friends is of a happy caring man who would help anyone or anything (including a swan which he brought home one summer to Horspath for us to look after!). He was probably one of the kindest people you could meet: he didn't judge people by the colour of their skin or whether they were rich or poor, but took them at face value, and treated everyone the same.

He loved nature and growing things; his pride was his garden and exhibition sweet peas.

He worked nonstop until almost the day he passed away, and never gave in to aches and pains, always saying, "use it or lose it".

One message summed Edgar up:

*"He had a way of looking at you like he'd just seen the sun come out. Just really happy to see you. I expect he did that to everyone he met!"*

We'll all miss that lovely smile and glorious blue eyes, and his way of making you feel special.

*Carol Knight, (daughter)*

## **In Memory of the Selfless Service of Edgar Litt, the recently deceased Bell Captain of St John the Baptist Church, Stanton St John**

*By John Battye, Stanton St John*

In 2005 Stevie Cross an ex. aeronautical industry engineer, arrived in Stanton St John as the new vicar.

On discovering that the church had five bells that hadn't been rung for many years, one of the first ancillary community supportive jobs that Stevie did was to get the bells checked for safety and operability. She then organised a tea party in the vicarage and called on those who were willing to ring. Of the very few that attended the party, Edgar Litt was the most experienced and, fortunately for the village, enthusiastically accepted the role of Bell Captain.

Thursday evening was designated as practice night, during which the first job was to ensure that everyone could ring safely; this in itself was a non-trivial task, as in general the bells weigh rather more than those employing their muscle to power them. Once the team achieved that, they started ringing rounds, a system in which the bells are rung cyclically in rhythmical sequence from the highest to the lowest pitched and when this was tolerable, they began ringing the calls to prayer on Sunday mornings. In time the team moved on to adding a bit more musicality by ringing 'call changes' then 'hunting'.

Because of other commitments not everyone could ring every Sunday, but with the slow accretion of a few more members over time the situation improved. Over the years people came and went. Ringers joined us from other villages, some moved away to live elsewhere. All in all we passed through good times, when it was not too difficult to get five bells up at once, to poor times when we simply couldn't achieve it. I notice that we have had over twenty people listed as ringers at Stanton at some time or other, although less than half of that number rung fairly regularly for more than about a year. The team are always on the lookout for new recruits.

Edgar started bell ringing at the age of eighteen in Horspath and over his lifetime had been a church bell campanologist for over half a century, an achievement honoured a few years ago during a ceremony at Dorchester Abbey. He was the ultimate stalwart member and captain of the bell ringing team at Stanton St John over the last two decades. Stanton's team not only rang for regular church services but also for weddings, funerals and other ceremonies and as such the wonderful sound of the church bells added to the charm of the events, a feature which both long term residents and new-comers owe largely to Edgar's spiritual commitment.

Right from 2005 when the bells were recommissioned, until only a few weeks before his death at the age of ninety-four, Edgar dutifully fulfilled his role week by week, year by year. Without him, there would not have been anything like the continuity of bell ringing in Stanton that there has been over the last twenty years. Surely the whole village are very grateful to him for his unflagging display of community spirit in being the major factor in ensuring that the beautiful sound of church bells has echoed throughout the village for so long. Let's all hope that his legacy continues. May his soul rest in peace.



## LET THE CORONATION COUNTDOWN BEGIN !!

Clear your diaries for the village celebration

**Sunday May 7<sup>th</sup>: 1pm - 4pm**  
**MILLENIUM GREEN, STANTON ST JOHN**

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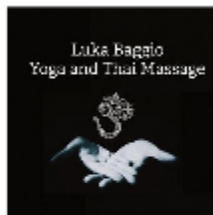
*PPE will be worn for your safety and mine*

### Yoga with Luka!

*Stanton St John Village Hall*

Thursday 6.15pm-7.15pm

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# The Otmoor Flyer Bus Service

**Forest Hill and Stanton St. John on Mondays & Thursdays  
Horton cum Studley and Beckley on Tuesdays & Fridays  
into Headington and Oxford**

***16 passengers - ramp for a wheelchair or a child carrier***

**PLEASE NOTE THAT THE BUS DRIVER CANNOT ISSUE A TICKET, ACCEPT CASH OR SELL  
TOKENS**

**Accompanied children aged 11 and under travel FREE OF CHARGE**

## **Inward Journey to Headington and Oxford:**

Pick up is at 10.30 a.m. for Forest Hill and Horton cum Studley  
*Bus stop in Forest Hill is in Powell Close and Stanton Road*  
*Bus stop in Horton cum Studley is the bus shelter on the Brill Road*

Pick up is at 10.40 a.m. for Stanton St. John and Beckley  
*Bus stop in Stanton St. John is outside the village shop*  
*Bus stop in Beckley is next to the red post box on the High Street*  
Bus stops on the London Road in Headington and at the City Hall on St.  
Aldates

## **Outward Journey from Oxford and Headington:**

Picks up from Broad Street outside Balliol College at 1.15 p.m.  
Picks up in Headington at the main gate into Bury Knowle Park at 1.30 p.m.

## **BUS TOKENS COST £15.00 FOR 10 SINGLE JOURNEYS**

Tokens can be obtained from the following people/places:  
The Village Shop in Stanton St. John – Telephone 01865 351532  
Malcolm Leeding in Forest Hill – Telephone 01865 872034  
The Abingdon Arms in Beckley – Telephone 01865 655667  
Jill Meyjes in Horton cum Studley – Telephone 01865 351496

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