

The Four Parishes News Magazine

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



Horton-cum-Studley Garden Club Summer Social

September 2025

The editor writes



Here we are again, after what seems like a ridiculously short space of time! July and August have simply flown by, and having reached the end of the Bank Holiday weekend, my thoughts, like those of many others, are turning to September and the beginning of the new academic year.

The volunteers who assemble most of the content for this magazine have come up with plenty of 'diary dates' this month to enable you to plan ahead and make sure that you don't miss out on activities and events that interest you. I would definitely recommend that you look at all sections of the magazine, not just the one for your own village. It still surprises me how often people tell me that they weren't aware of events that regularly happen elsewhere in the Four Parishes!

Don't forget that you can use the QR code to read this magazine on your phone or tablet when you can no longer find the paper copy. Or simply type fourparishes.org.uk/magazine into your web browser.



Julia

All contributions to and advertisements in 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 Andrew Payne
in the garden of Studley Farmhouse, Horton-cum-Studley.
See page 29 for more information about HcS Garden Club.*

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

The Four Parishes News Magazine

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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 October 2025 issue is 15 September 2025

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

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

Beckley	Judith Rawlinson Email: judithrawlinson@hotmail.co.uk
Forest Hill	Stephanie Kitchen Tel: 07966 045144 Email: stephanie.kitchen@btopenworld.com
Horton-cum-Studley	Carol Welch Tel: 01865 358122 Email: carol_welch20@hotmail.com
Stanton St John	Sue Baker Tel: 01865 351449 Email: 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.

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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

Layout Designer: Catherine Matthews

Assistant Editors: Jonathan Barker, Anthea Beresford

Church Services in the Four Parishes, September 2025

	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
7 September <i>12th Sunday after Trinity</i>	11am Holy Communion	9.30am Holy Communion	9.30am Holy Communion	11am Morning Prayer
	4pm Children's Church at St Nicolas, Forest Hill			
	6pm Church without Walls at Stanton St John Village Hall			
14 September <i>13th Sunday after Trinity</i>		9.30am Holy Communion	9.30am Morning Prayer	11am Morning Prayer
	6pm BCP Choral Evensong at St Nicolas, Forest Hill			
21 September <i>14th Sunday after Trinity</i>	11am BCP Morning Prayer	10.30am Celebration of Harvest with Baptisms		11am Holy Communion
	6pm Iona Service at Beckley Church			
28 September <i>15th Sunday after Trinity</i>	10am Four Parishes Service of Holy Communion at St John the Baptist, Stanton St John			
	4pm 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,



The day I am writing this letter is rather unusual, but perhaps not especially surprising considering how this year has been. What do I have on my mind as I say this, I hear you ask? Well, I am thinking of a typically British subject – the weather! Today, where I am, has been a beautiful Bank Holiday Monday with no rain! That is not frightfully British is it!!! I hope you have all had a wonderful summer, enjoying the sunny

weather, keeping as cool as has been possible – not an easy thing in my experience. Finding a good time to walk Bertie has been tricky – he really has not understood that it has been too hot to go out at times! Before the hosepipe ban, I really should have got the doggy paddling pool out that I bought quite some time ago! I might even have been tempted to get in it myself!

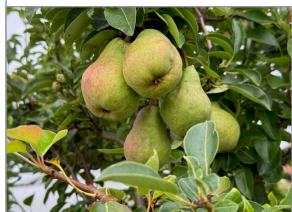
Sadly, the garden I am looking out onto, which is not mine, (although mine is similar), is parched, and desperately in need of rain. The grass is brown not the luscious green of earlier in the year, and plants are withering and dying.

Over the summer I have heard many conversations about gardens suffering from the lack of water, but so too crops, wildlife, rivers, reservoirs etc. I have been speaking in my letters these last couple of months about refreshment, and nature is showing us how desperate it is for refreshment – it is not only us that need refreshment. At least rain is forecast in these next few days and week – just in time for my holiday! Again! I should not of course complain as we desperately need rain – at least I have a raincoat to keep me dry (if I have it with me!), and a little rain never hurt anyone! I am proof of that as I got soaked through in one of the few rain showers over the summer.



As we move into the season of celebrating harvest in our churches, it is good to hear that this year's cereal harvest is safely gathered in in the dry and very early – although I understand yields are especially poor. Fruit

trees seem to be heavily laden with fruit, all coming rather early this season. It sounds as though vegetable crops are suffering so prices of those are likely to be high, and gardeners in the Four Parishes have been disappointed with their crops. I hope you can join us as we celebrate harvest, giving thanks for what we have. See page 10 for more details of services in September and October.

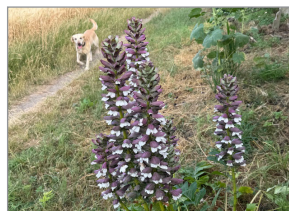
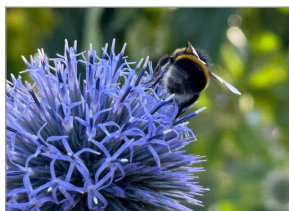


This is the time of year when exam results are published. I hope those who have been waiting for them have been pleased with the outcomes after all the hard work put in, and that you are able to move on to your next steps as planned, whether it be further study or finding work.

This is also a time when children and young adults are looking to new beginnings. I hope this is an exciting time, but it probably also holds concerns and worries within it, with a sense of the unknown. I imagine it might be a worrying time for parents too, as they see their children growing up at a frightening speed, and as they encourage them in these next steps. I think of the children about to start school or nursery for the first time; I think of those moving from primary to secondary school; and those moving on into further or higher education, or into the workplace. Hopefully each of you will have your own sense of excitement, albeit perhaps with some trepidation too. May you all feel supported, and may these new adventures help you continue to grow into the people you have been made to be. May we all encourage those in our midst who are taking giant steps in these coming months.

As ever, 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

Church opening and services

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

Advent Challenge and Beyond

How has your summer reading gone? I hope you have managed to keep up with the plan. Perhaps the longer summer days have made it a little easier. I confess that at the time of writing, I am still a little behind but am carrying on. I hope this encourages you if you have slipped behind a little. We are doing really well, so please do not give up now!

For September we will aim to finish 2 Corinthians, read the whole of Galatians and Ephesians, and up to chapter 2 of Philipians.

This probably sounds rather daunting, but it is no harder than any other month we have already conquered, and if we manage this, we are three-quarters of the way through the New Testament! That would be amazing and leaves us on the downhill run to finish the reading in a year! Let's keep going and continue to encourage one another. We can do this! Please do let me know how you get on. I am hoping to get up to date by the end of September. A good target to aim for!

Ongoing midweek activities on Zoom

We are continuing Morning and Evening Prayer and the Four Parishes 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		Y		Y
Evening Prayer at 6pm	Y		Y	
Benefice Book Group at 7.30pm			Y	

Book Group

At the time of going to press we are still reading *Living Jesus* by John Pritchard, but in September we will be starting a new book, yet to be decided. If you have been thinking of joining us this might be a good time to do so. We are a friendly group who meet virtually by Zoom on a Thursday

evening at 7.30pm for an hour. Please do get in touch with Anthea in you would like to come join us. New members are always welcome.

Home Group Study on the Acts of the Apostles

The study group is resuming on 15 September following the summer break. It is continuing its look at the Acts of the Apostles on a Monday afternoon at 2.30pm at Studley Farm House, Horton-cum-Studley. Anyone from around the Four Parishes is welcome to join in. If you are interested in being involved, please contact Annie Payne by email at anniefpayne@gmail.com. All are welcome.

Prayers for Peace

As the situation in the Holy Land and the Middle East continues to show no signs of abating or a peaceful settlement being reached, with discussions for peace in Ukraine seemingly making little progress, and as news of unrest from Sudan and Myanmar continue to come through, it is clear that God's peace is not present throughout the world, so we continue to pray for peace. We will meet for 15 minutes at 12pm on Wednesdays and Saturdays in September across the Four Parishes as follows:

Beckley	3 and 13
Forest Hill	6 and 24
Horton-cum-Studley	10 and 20
Stanton	17 and 27

Children's autumn craft workshops

It is wonderful that we can once again start the Children's craft workshops in Beckley Church this autumn on Fridays from 3.30-4.30pm. These are aimed at primary school children and are run by the 'Acting the Bible' and 'Crafty Church' teams – but you don't need to have attended either of those to come and join in the fun. Children must be accompanied by an adult please. There will be light refreshments. Please hold the dates:

Friday 17 October: Harvest Workshop

Friday 14 November: Remembrance Workshop

If you have never been before, please do come along. All are welcome. Bring a friend!

Harvest in the Four Parishes

We will be celebrating harvest in all of our parishes churches over September and October, so please hold the dates and think about coming. You may also like to be involved in decorating the churches or providing harvest gifts. Please do look out for more information in the October issue.

St John the Baptist, Stanton St John	21 September, 10.30am Harvest Morning Prayer with baptisms (see page 31)
St Nicolas, Forest Hill with Shotover	5 October, 11am Harvest Holy Communion
The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Beckey	12 October, 9.30am Harvest Morning Prayer
St Barnabas, Horton-cum-Studley	12 October, 11am Harvest Holy Communion

For more information about any of the items on pages 8-10 of the magazine, please contact me, Anthea Beresford.

Email: anthea@fourparishes.org.uk

Telephone: 01865 351839 **Mobile:** 07876 527514



St John the Baptist Church, Stanton St John taken from my garden on 5 May 2025 with our tree of Judea in the foreground.

Gina Moore

GENERAL

Situations wanted

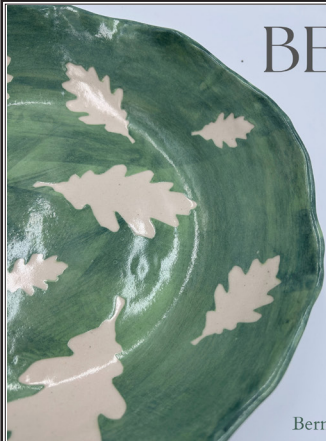
Highly regarded female carer with 20 years of health and companionship experience. I try to bring smiles and friendship to the elderly.

Email : theotmoorcarer@gmail.com

Marta Pieprzak - carer

Experienced carer seeks private work. Highly regarded, compassionate, kind, and dedicated, with 10 years experience in patient's homes as live-in carer. Mature lady with local references and extended DBS, own transport. Can undertake personal care, administer medication, meal preparation and shopping.

Email: marta.pieprzak@gmail.com



BERNWOOD POTTERY

Hand crafted ceramics and pottery classes

Autumn Workshop Dates:

Friday, September 5th, 9:30am – 12pm

Saturday, September 27th, 2pm – 4:30pm

Friday, October 3rd, 9:30am – 12pm

Saturday, November 1st, 2pm – 4:30pm

For more information contact Elizabeth:
www.bernwoodpottery.com

Bernwood Pottery • Old Arngrove Farm • Horton-cum-Studley • OX33 1DG

Public Meeting, Beckley Village Hall, Monday 22 September at 7pm

Local Government Reform for Oxfordshire

How will it affect us?

The Government wishes to reform local government to simplify it from the current two tiers - District and County Councils - to one tier by creating Unitary Authorities. The aim is to increase value for money for council taxpayers.

Three proposals are currently under discussion:

- A single unitary council for Oxfordshire - Oxfordshire Council (responsible for all services for Oxfordshire residents)
- Two unitary councils, namely:
 - Oxford and Shires created from the existing district councils of Cherwell, Oxford City and West Oxfordshire
 - Ridgeway Council created from the existing district councils of South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse and the existing unitary council of West Berkshire
- Three unitary councils, namely:
 - Greater Oxford - Oxford City Council plus 48 rural parishes in the Green Belt around Oxford, including ours
 - The remaining part of Shires minus Oxford and without the annexed parishes in the Green Belt
 - The remaining part of Ridgeway without the annexed parishes in the Green Belt

How will it affect us? What questions should you ask?

Development - Oxford City Council's Plans for 'Greater Oxford' include a proposal that, by 2040, an additional 43,000 to 67,000 new homes could be built in the Green Belt Countryside on the edge of Oxford. 67,000 more houses would mean c.160,800 more people, nearly doubling the population of Oxford, with a similar number of additional cars. We have experience from the Land north of Bayswater Brook development of the implications for us, wildlife and the countryside.

Service Delivery and Cost - Currently the County Council delivers approximately 80% of services. In 2024/5 it spent £1,439 million on adult

social care, SEND, education, highways, transport, fire and rescue etc. The budget for social care alone is 51%. District Councils provide planning, housing, environmental health, licensing, rubbish collection etc. Oxford City Council's total expenditure last year was £246 million, SODC's £94.5 million.

The District Councils have no experience or expertise in delivering the services the County currently delivers. Do they have or can they acquire the competence to deliver such complex, costly services? What would the set-up costs be and what would the rise in costs and council tax be, given that the services would then need to duplicate new infrastructure for two or three councils?

There are other major issues that we can only touch upon here: democracy and representation for our communities/parishes in any new unitary authority. Would we have fair representation or be subsumed? Rural transport, climate change, the environment and transport?

We have invited senior representatives for each proposal to come and speak at our public meeting. We have asked them to explain their proposal and the implications and benefits to us and to answer your questions. Cllr Liz Leffman, Leader of Oxfordshire County Council, has confirmed that she will speak in person. We await confirmation from the others.

The decision will be made by the Minister, but it will affect our parishes and each household - which authority will provide services; development of the Green Belt; how much council tax you will pay.

Please join us at Beckley Village Hall, Woodperry Road, Beckley, Oxford, OX3 9UZ on Monday 22 September at 7pm with any questions you may have.

If you have any queries about the meeting, please don't hesitate to contact Ginette Camps-Walsh, Chairman Beckley and Stowood Parish Council, email: g.camps-walsh@beckley-and-stowood-pc.gov.uk.

Web Development

by Lyn Ebbs

Every story should have a thread and, this month, mine is made of silk. All spiders produce silk, though not all of them spin it into webs and, of those that make webs, not all use the familiar, flat spiral design then wait in the centre of the web for their prey. A single spider can produce up to seven different types of silk for different uses. Smaller spiders can use silk in a process called 'ballooning' or 'kiting' which allows spiderlings to float through the air for dispersal. They produce one or more gossamer threads which are so light that air movement or even electric fields are strong enough to lift the spiders into the air. Was it just me or did other children catch the silken thread of Money Spiders and whirl them round their heads saying: 'Money Spider, Money Spider, bring me some money!' before sending them on their way?



Bigger spiders also use single threads for transport. The Flower Crab Spider, which you might see in your garden, moves from flower to flower by dropping down or climbing up a single thread of silk but once it arrives at its chosen spot it becomes an ambush predator. The 'crab' part of its name derives from the way it can scuttle sideways or backwards and

for the strong front legs with which it grabs its prey. They come in a number of colours, some quite subdued, but others very bright: green, pink, white or yellow. Some species are even able to change colour over a period of days to match their surroundings. Those powerful front legs allow them to grab and hold on to prey much bigger than themselves while paralysing it with a venomous bite.

Webs are not just traps. A common slender-bodied spider that you might see sunning herself on top of a leaf uses a quick sprint to capture flies and other insects. Mating is a dangerous game for her male suitors; they present a gift of food to the female while laying perfectly still and pretending to be



dead. When the female investigates the food, the male will suddenly jump up and mate with her. After mating she carries her large, round egg-sac in her fangs. When the young are about to hatch, she builds a silk sheet among the vegetation to act as a tent, to shelter them. She is the Nursery Web Spider, and stands guard outside until her young are old enough to leave on their own.



With its yellow and black stripes, and looking unlike any other spider that occurs in the UK, it's fairly obvious how the Wasp Spider got its name. Originally a Mediterranean species, it first appeared in the UK in the 1920s in the southwest but was not recorded in Oxfordshire until 2007. It has been seen locally in Lye Valley and on Otmoor. There is a huge size difference between the sexes: females reach an impressive 14-17mm, whilst males only attain 4-6mm; mating is therefore a hazardous process for the males, and they usually end up getting eaten. These spiders do make an orb-shaped web like common garden spiders but with a zigzag pattern of silk through the centre. It is thought that this zigzag pattern reflects UV light and therefore attracts pollinating insects like flies, bees and moths.

Spiders have been spinning webs since at least the time of the dinosaurs; a very early specimen was found embedded in a piece of amber from the Cretaceous period. Depending on its function, the silk itself has remarkable properties of strength, stretch and flexibility. In that time, spiders have evolved many different designs: tunnels, funnels, sheets, tangles as well as orb spirals. Even if you are not keen on the designers, as autumn mists appear, I hope you will take a closer look at their wonderful constructions and take time to appreciate their elegance.



Lyn Ebbs has lived in Stanton St John for 37 years and has been volunteering at the RSPB Otmoor Reserve at Otmoor Lane, Beckley, since 2009.

Jason's Law

Support for Suicide Bereaved Families

[Editor's note: from time to time we receive requests from our readers to publicise a charity or campaign that is particularly important to them. The following appeal was sent to us by a resident of Stanton St John.]

Families who lose someone to suicide often face investigations and inquests completely alone.

Jason's Law would ensure every suicide bereaved family receives a Family Liaison Officer (FLO) and professional support.



Support Jason's Law: Equal Support for All Bereaved Families

When a family loses someone to suicide, the aftermath is often filled with overwhelming challenges. Yet, support is inconsistent. Some families receive help, while others navigate this difficult journey alone. This disparity isn't right or fair.

Jason's Law aims to change that by ensuring every suicide-bereaved family receives:

- A dedicated Family Liaison Officer**
- Professional support during police investigations**
- Guidance through coroner and inquest procedures**
- Clear direction to specialist bereavement services**
- Protection from secondary trauma during their most vulnerable time**

No family should have to face the complexities of grief and legal processes without professional support.

Take Action

Sign the petition and share this post to raise awareness.

<https://petition.parliament.uk/petitions/731608>

Every signature matters. Every share counts.

Please support this important legislation by signing the petition on the government website. Scan the QR Code, or type <https://petition.parliament.uk/petitions/731608> into your web browser.



British Legion Poppy Appeal

The photo below was taken on 2 August at Old Mill Cottage in Stanton St John. The occasion was to thank Gina Robson for her dedicated work over a number of years as Poppy Appeal Organiser for Beckley, Elsfeld, Forest Hill, Horton-cum-Studley and Stanton St John.



The gathering was attended by Yanto Evans, manager of Oxfordshire Poppy Appeal, together with several representatives and poppy collectors from the above villages, and members of the Four Parishes Ministry Team. Yanto presented a short history of the Royal British Legion and spoke in particular about the Oxfordshire Poppy Appeal.

Gina was presented with a Certificate of Appreciation and an enamelled poppy brooch for her kind and dedicated service as the organiser of 'FOREST HILL EHC 15'. Her successor is Fariba Battye from Stanton St John.

Gina and our other volunteers have done an amazing job year after year, raising a total of £2,584 in 2024. This money helps the Royal British Legion to provide life changing support to the Armed Forces Community, which includes making crisis grants in times of need, providing special dementia care, and running sports-based recovery programs for wounded, injured and sick servicemen and women and ex- service personnel. None of this would be possible without the help of Poppy Appeal supporters. Information about becoming a volunteer can be found at britishlegion.org.uk.



Litter bins = not recycling

If you want to recycle, please take these items home and put them in your green wheelie bin:

- Cans, bottles and plastic food containers – just give them a rinse first.
- Newspaper



These items aren't recyclable, so it's ok to put them in a litter bin:

- Sandwich packaging – please ignore the label, these can be messy or include a mix of different materials which may not be recyclable.
- Empty crisp packets – though some retailers recycle these.
- Chocolate wrappers.
- Disposable coffee cups.
- Fast food packaging.
- Film lids from food packaging.

Recycle ♻️



Defibrillators

On Tuesday 9 September in Stanton St John Village Hall at 7.30pm, Andy Long from South Central Ambulance Service will give a talk about defibrillator training and heart matters (see page 34)

This is a topic that everyone should know more about. The meeting is hosted by Stanton St John Women's Institute, but it is open to all, so please go along and enjoy the friendly atmosphere.

By an extraordinary coincidence, we have been collecting photographs showing locations of 'our' defibrillators, with the aim of publishing the information for the benefit of all. Some examples are shown below:



**Beckley
Village
Hall**

OX3 9UZ



**Forest Hill
Village
Hall**

OX33 1DY



**Horton-
cum-
Studley
Phone Box**

OX33 1AS



**Stanton
St John
Village
Hall**

OX33 1HD

What is a defibrillator?

The following information is from the British Heart Foundation website, which also enables you to find your nearest defibrillator by typing in your postcode. *A defibrillator is a device that gives a jolt of energy to the heart. It helps get the heart beating again when someone is in cardiac arrest and their heart has stopped. Anyone can use a defibrillator. You do not need training. Once you turn it on, it will give clear step-by-step voice instructions.*

For more information about the Stanton St John WI and their activities, see page 34.

BECKLEY

Beckley Church

Details of all church services and general church news can be found on pages 5 - 10. Any changes to the published schedule of services will be on our website www.fourparishes.org.uk.

Ride and Stride, Saturday 13 September

Ride and Stride is an annual sponsored walk or ride (bicycle, horse, mobility vehicle, or whatever you have!). It's one of the main sources of funding for Oxfordshire Historic Churches Trust (OHCT),, which gives grants for improvements or repairs to churches or chapels of any denomination throughout Oxfordshire. Our church here in Beckley received a generous grant for stonework repairs in 2009.

Do consider taking part! All funds raised go to OHCT, and 50% can be passed on to a church or chapel of your choice. There are some sponsorship forms on the table in the church, or you can go to www.ohct.org.uk/ride-stride. Please contact me if you have any questions.

Gina Robson 01865 351637 ginarobson5@gmail.com

Concert by the Galliard Trio, Saturday 27 September, 5pm

The Galliard Trio (flute, oboe/cor anglais, and harpsichord/bassoon) will make a very welcome return to Beckley Church for an evening of Beethoven, Ibert, Britten, Debussy, Telemann and Bach. This will be followed by drinks and nibbles and a chance to meet the musicians. The concert will be free but we would be grateful for donations.

Coffee (or tea!), Cake and Chat

Saturday 27 September, 10.30am-12pm in Beckley Church

A chance to catch up with friends and neighbours, meet newcomers, and take a look at our 'library' - everyone welcome, please come and join us!

Save the Date: Tuesday 11 November, 7pm in Beckley Church

Commemorating Armistice Day through Poetry over the Centuries

We will be having our usual Remembrance Sunday service starting in the churchyard at 10.45am on 9 November, but on Armistice Day itself we are planning an evening of reading of war poetry in the church. More information will follow in the October and November magazines.

Beckley and Stowood Parish Council

The next meeting of the Parish Council is on **Monday 8 September at 7pm** in **Beckley Village Hall**.

Public Meeting on Local Government Reorganisation

All residents in the Four Parishes and locally are invited to a public meeting at Beckley Village Hall on Monday 22 September at 7pm to hear speakers from all three proposals for unitary authorities in Oxfordshire under Local Government Reform.

We have invited senior representatives for each proposal – One, Two or Three new Unitary Authorities to come and speak at our public meeting. **See pages 12 and 13 of this magazine for more information.**

Please come along. Any queries - g.camps-walsh@beckley-and-stowood-pc.gov.uk.

Vacancy for Parish Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer Beckley and Stowood Parish Council

Are you committed to helping your community? Do you want to be involved in our parish?

Beckley and Stowood Parish Council is seeking a motivated and efficient Parish Clerk to join our dynamic team. If you are an organised individual with a passion for community service, we want to hear from you!

Part-time, flexible hours - 30 hours per month

Salary (depending on experience) SCP 7 - SCP23 (£13.69 - £17.85 per hour)

Home based with attendance at monthly Parish Council meetings at Beckley Village Hall, Woodperry Road, Beckley, OX3 9UZ. Laptop and printer provided.

For further information and a full job description please apply to Cllr Ginette Camps-Walsh, Chairman Beckley and Stowood Parish Council - g.camps-walsh@beckley-and-stowood-pc.gov.uk.

Beckley Bonfire and Fireworks Night

Saturday 8 November, 6pm

You are cordially invited to Beckley's extremely popular annual firework display and bonfire at Beckley Village Hall Playing Fields. There will be a hog roast supplied by the Abingdon Arms, cakes, mulled wine, and refreshments.



Gates open at 5.30pm. Bonfire at 6pm, fireworks 6.30pm.

Parking free. Entrance as previous years £5 per person – 5 years old and under free.

Beckley and Area Community Benefit Society Ltd (BACBS)

Open share offer

The share offer to support the future of The Abingdon Arms is still open. Shareholders are now entitled to 10% off food and drink at the pub: for further information email theabingdonarms@gmail.com.

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. For more information email info@bacbs.org or visit <https://bacbs.org/events>.

We hope you all had a good summer and are back ready to enjoy your pub activities!

Pub quiz

1st Wednesday of every month at 7.30pm - with pizza! The next one will be on **Wednesday 3 September**. Table bookings advisable - or you can just turn up and join an existing team.

We suggest that teams should comprise no more than six people. No charge to enter, and thanks to The Abingdon Arms, there's a free round of drinks for the winning team.

Community walk

Walks are usually on the 3rd Sunday of the month, and the next one will be on **21 September**, led by Julia Hanson-Abbott and Mish Tullar. Come and join us and meet your neighbours on a gentle walk of a couple of hours, finishing up with refreshments in The Abingdon Arms.

Sunday evening talks

Last Sunday of the month, 6.30 pm in the pub.

On **28 September**, **Mary Stuck from Horton-cum-Studley** will give a talk titled ***Cripps the Carrier: the teller and his tale***. The Victorian author R D Blackmore is best known as the author of *Lorna Doone*, but having spent his early life in Elsfield, he set several of his historical novels around these villages, including *Cripps the Carrier*.

Our October talk will be given jointly by the two impressive women who run **Waste2Taste, an award-winning community interest company** addressing food waste and food poverty via a catering business and community café in Cowley.

In November, local artist and evolutionary biologist Jonathan Kingdon will give us an illustrated talk on the evolution of life in Africa, where he grew up – his paintings and sculptures are outstanding and it promises to be not just fascinating but also an exceptionally illustrated talk.

More information about the BACBS More than a Pub activities can be found at <https://bacbs.org/events>.

Beckley Art Group Exhibition, 11 and 12 October

Beckley art group, which meets every Friday morning, is holding its usual annual exhibition in Beckley Village Hall over the weekend of 11 and 12 October from 10am to 4pm.

Twenty artists will be exhibiting about 100 paintings, with a considerable range of styles. The excellent tea bar will be there too! So put the date in your diary and come along to enjoy the show!



FOREST HILL

St Nicolas Church

Details of all church services and general church news can be found on pages 5 - 10. Any changes to the published schedule of services will be on our website www.fourparishes.org.uk.

Ride and Stride 2025

It's that time of year again! Ride and Stride is on Saturday 13 of September this year. I will be riding again - I've forgotten how many years I have taken part in this. If you can sponsor me, thank you very much.

What I raise will be divided equally between St Nicolas and Oxfordshire Historic Churches Trust. Thank you to all who have sponsored me over the years I have been riding.

Pat Fraser, Churchwarden, St Nicolas Tel: 01865 875679

Dates for your diary

The beginning of the new academic year has inspired me to get organised! Here are some key dates for events in Forest Hill and Shotover:

Sunday 12 October, 6pm in St Nicolas Church

'My Beloved Spake': Choral Evensong with the St Nicolas Choir celebrating the music of English composers Orlando Gibbons (1583-1625) and Thomas Tomkins (1572-1656).

Friday 24 October, 10.30am-12pm in Forest Hill Village Hall

Return of the 'Pop-up Coffee Shop'!

Sunday 9 November, 6pm in St Nicolas Church

'Far from Home' Remembrance Day Concert in aid of War Charities.

Sunday 7 December, 4pm in St Nicolas Church

Children's Christingle and St Nicolas Day Celebration.

Sunday 22 March 2026, 2-4.30pm at Shotover House

'Daffodil Day' in aid of St Nicolas Church and The Maple Tree.

If you are new to the village and want to know more about any of the above, please don't hesitate to contact me by email (julia.stutfield@gmail.com) or mobile (07766 103427).

The Maple Tree at Forest Hill, Thursdays 10.30am-12pm

The Thursday morning 'stay and play' sessions for babies and toddlers continue to run in Forest Hill Village Hall every week throughout the year. There is no need to book, but please email julia.stutfield@gmail.com or message Julia on 07766 103427 if you have any questions.

The sessions are run by Laura Spencer, Manager of The Maple Tree Children's Centre in Wheatley, and staffed by regular volunteers from Forest Hill and Stanton St John. We usually have about 6 children attending at any one time, along with parents, grandparents or carers, but over the past year we have had a session with only 1 child and another with at least



13 children! The smaller numbers (in comparison with The Maple Tree in Wheatley) make it easy for the adults to meet and chat, and for new friendships to develop.

Some of our 'regulars' are starting school in September and we wish them all the best as they begin to settle in. Younger children disappear off to nursery from time to time and we are always sad to say goodbye, but delighted that some of them come back to visit us when the opportunity allows.

For a full list of activities run by The Maple Tree Children's Centre in Wheatley, see www.mapletree.org.uk.

Forest Hill Fitness Update

Following our Forest Hill 'Fitness Survey' last year, there has been a sustained growth of interest in fitness classes. From September, there will be three classes on offer in Forest Hill Village Hall:

Monday, 6pm - Yoga with Paul (07443 627829, see also page 36)

Wednesday, 5pm - Pop-Up Pilates (book at pop-up-pilates.com)

Friday, 12.30pm - Pop-Up Pilates (book at pop-up-pilates.com)

Village Hall Hire

To hire Forest Hill Village Hall, email Stephen Robinson spr500@gmail.com.

Forest Hill with Shotover Parish Council

The next meeting of the Parish Council will be held on Thursday 11 September at 7pm in Forest Hill Village Hall.

Dates of future meetings can be found on the Forest Hill website: www.parish-council/foresthillwithshotover and on the Village Hall noticeboard. Current agendas and minutes are posted on the noticeboard outside the Village Hall and the website. Archived agendas and minutes can be found on the website.

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

OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Holton/Wheatley: A40 London Road - proposed 'gap' closure

NOTICE is given that Oxfordshire County Council proposes to make the above order under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 and all other enabling powers. The effect of the Order for road safety reasons is to close the (currently gated) crossover gap in the central reservation of the A40 London Road dual carriageway, which serves the junction with the B4027 Wheatley Road to Forest Hill.

Documents giving more details of the proposals are available for public inspection online by visiting: <https://letstalk.oxfordshire.gov.uk>. Hard copies may be made available on request.

Objections to the proposals and other representations specifying the grounds on which they are made may be sent in writing to the address below by the end of **12 September 2025**. The Council will consider objections and representations received in response to this Notice. They may be disseminated widely for these purposes and made available to the public.

Traffic Regulation Order & Schemes (Ref: CM/12.6.251/407/P0338) for the Director of Environment & Highways, Oxfordshire County Council, County Hall, New Road, Oxford, OX1 1ND. (Email: christian.mauz@oxfordshire.gov.uk, Telephone: 0345 310 1111).

Reminders from the Parish Council

Parking - residents are reminded to be mindful of how they park and to not block pavements with vehicles which make access difficult for pedestrians, especially along Stanton Road and near to the Recreation Ground.

Bins - please put your bins out as late as possible and bring them back in as soon as possible. There have been complaints of bins blocking the pavements and making access difficult for pedestrians.

Fix My Street - please report any road or street problems, with a photograph, via the Oxfordshire County Council website (fixmystreet.oxfordshire.gov.uk) or the Fix My Street App.

Help Keep Our Pavements Clear - as we enjoy the summer months, all residents are asked to please take a moment to inspect their property and ensure that any hedges or branches encroaching onto public paths are trimmed back. Overgrown vegetation can obstruct walkways, reduce visibility, and pose safety risks, especially for children, elderly residents, and those with mobility issues. Keeping pavements clear helps maintain the beauty and accessibility of our village for everyone.

Thank you for your cooperation and for helping us keep our community safe and welcoming.



Jazz on the Hill at Forest Hill Village Hall

Tuesday 9 September, 7.30-9.30pm



Join Julie, Will and their musician friends to celebrate jazz with plenty of opportunity for instrumentalists and vocalists to make music with a house band, and to take the seat in the rhythm section as well if wished. Or just come to listen and soak up the atmosphere!

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.

HORTON-cum-STUDLEY

St Barnabas Church

Details of all church services and general church news can be found on pages 5 - 10. Any changes to the published schedule of services will be on our website www.fourparishes.org.uk.

The Dog and Collar (St. Barnabas) opens its doors on Friday 5 September. 6-8.30pm. Come and join friends and fellow villagers. Everyone is welcome!

Coffee and Chat, Saturday 13 September, 10am-12pm

Everyone is welcome to pop in. No charge but donations always welcomed.

Ride and Stride

Ride + Stride will be taking place this year on Saturday 13 September. You can take part by cycling, walking around Oxfordshire Churches and raise monies for Oxfordshire Historic Church Trust.

For more information visit www.ohct.org.uk or contact lyndawhitaker@btinternet.com.

Spud in a Bucket, Pumpkin Weigh-In and Sunflower Measure Sunday 5 October, 3-4 pm at St Barnabas Church

Keep your spuds undisturbed in their buckets for the big reveal!

Bring all your pumpkins and sunflowers along so we can admire them. All shapes and sizes welcome.

Refreshments available. Any donations on the day will be shared between Parkinsons UK and St Barnabas church.

Dedication of Carved Organ Panel, Sunday 26 October

10am - Church Service including Dedication of Organ panel.

3pm - Gordon Curtis memorial concert.

The organ in St Barnabas, which replaced an earlier instrument, was designed by Richard Vendome, using a defunct instrument in St Bartholomew Church, Nettlebed as a starting point. It was built in the 1980s by volunteers from Horton-cum-Studley and beyond, under the direction of Gordon Curtis, who lived in the village until his death in 2024. The concert will be given by Richard Vendome and friends.

Horton-cum-Studley Gardening Club

As the summer draws to a close, a new season of Gardening Club events is getting underway. We have enjoyed memorable visits over the summer, including trips to Rousham Park and Green and Gorgeous, a 6-acre working flower farm on the banks of the Thames near Wallingford. Summer culminated in a delightful social evening for members and guests, courtesy of Annie and Andrew Payne, in HcS, who were kind enough to invite us to share their magnificent garden in an extremely well-attended event.



Photo Louise Flanagan

Upcoming events include a **visit to Worcester College Gardens on 16 September**, and a **talk by Anna Stevens on 18 November on William Morris prints**.

Many of us will be finding things challenging in the garden following the recent hosepipe ban. Tips for keeping things alive and well include:

- Using washing-up/bath water (provided it doesn't contain strong detergent or bleach: grey water is fine, and can even benefit the soil in some cases). Best used within 24 hours, and poured on to the earth, not the plants - and not onto edibles.
- Investing in water butts: it's surprising how much the odd rare downpour can collect!
- Installing a drip irrigation system if you can still find one in stock: I am envious of a neighbour's healthy yew hedge this summer, courtesy of an irrigation system, while my own is on its last legs... Use of these systems is permitted despite the ban.
- Planting drought-resistant plants: there is a huge amount of information online.
- Mulching around the base of plants as this will help retain any available moisture.

We look forward to seeing new members; plant sales will continue, as will the chance to meet friends and neighbours over a cuppa and a piece of cake.

Happy gardening, and let's all pray for rain!

Melanie Jones, Club member

Horton-cum-Studley Parish Council

Parish Council Vacancy

- Do you want to help make the parish of Horton-cum-Studley an even better place to live?
- Are you interested in making a difference to your community?
- Can you fairly represent the views of local residents?
- What time or expertise have you to offer to help shape the future of the village?

Following a resignation, we have a vacancy for a Parish Councillor which can be filled by co-option as there was no requirement to call a by-election and the next elections are not due until May 2026.

The Parish Council is involved in the delivery of some local services, improving the quality of life for residents and representing the voice of the community. Some of the Parish Council's current responsibilities include maintaining the Village Green; commenting on planning applications within the Parish; liaising with district and county authorities to ensure delivery of their services; and maintaining street furniture such as bus shelters, seating and dog bins. The current proposals for government reorganisation make it more important than ever to have an effective Parish Council.

Parish Councillors are community leaders who give their time freely to represent the interests of the community and are involved in decision-making, monitoring and progressing local interests. The Parish Council usually meets 11 times a year in the evening of every second Thursday of the month.

If you are interested in becoming a Parish Councillor please contact the Parish Clerk, Alexia Lewis at hortoncumstudleyparishcouncil@gmail.com to complete a short application form (by 9 September 2025) which also contains details of eligibility and the process for co-option.

STANTON ST JOHN

Stanton Church

Details of all church services and general church news can be found on pages 5 - 10. Any changes to the published schedule of services will be on our website www.fourparishes.org.uk.

Celebrating harvest with baptisms in St John the Baptist 21 September at 10.30am

We are celebrating harvest in Stanton St John on 21 September. **Please note the unusual service time of 10.30am.** We have a double baptism to make the service even more special. If anyone else has been thinking of getting baptised, or having their child baptised, please do get in touch with me to make arrangements. We look forward to welcoming you to this special service. All are welcome.

If you wish to donate any harvest gifts, or help with decorating the church, please do get in contact with our Churchwarden Carla Stanley at churchwardenststj@gmail.com.
Anthea

Monthly Coffee Mornings in Stanton Village Hall, 10.30am-12pm

Monday 8 September, Wednesday 1 October

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

Dates for your Diary

Looking ahead to December, here are some dates for your diaries:

Friday 5 December, 6-7.30pm: 'Christmas Lights' Celebration on the Millenium Green.

By popular request, there will be a **Stanton Community Choir** at the 'Christmas Lights' event lead by David Willcock and Sue Baker. **Rehearsals will be in Stanton Village Hall on Sundays 16 November, 23 November and 30 November, 5-5.45pm.** All singers, of whatever age, are welcome! Any questions, email Sue Baker on susanjbaker24@gmail.com.

Saturday 29 November, 7pm in Stanton Church: Advent Carols with Ashley Goodall and the Shotover Singers.

Stanton St John Film Club

Saturday 20 September at 7.45pm, Stanton St John Village Hall



Madeleine (Line Renaud) relives her life in the backseat of the cab driving her through Paris to a nursing home, with troubled chauffeur Charles (Dany Boon) as her confessor. Madeleine's tale starts off rose-tinted but it's not straightforwardly nostalgic.



Copy and paste this link into your browser or use the QR code to watch a trailer: [Driving Madeleine - Official Trailer](#) [IMDb](#).

Doors open at 7pm for delicious cakes and hot drinks before the film; the bar will be serving wines.

Please reserve your seat beforehand (only 60 available) either in the Village Shop or with Sue Baker: susanjbaker24@gmail.com. Tickets at the door, £5 (cash only).



Dr Pink's Charity Registered Number 309160



The Trustees welcome applications for small grants from young people (up to age 25) who live in the village of Stanton St John.

Grants are available for those in further education and apprenticeships and have been awarded in the past for the purchase of textbooks, practical tools, uniforms and expedition equipment.

Applications (or further information) in writing to Elaine Warner, 1 Stanton Cottages, Stanton St John or elaine.warner@icloud.com.

The closing date for applications is 30 September 2025.

Who was Dr Pink?



Robert PINCK or PINK or PINCKE, (1573–1647), was the eldest son of Henry Pink of Kempshot, a small village in rural Hampshire.

He was admitted to Winchester College in 1588 where he was a contemporary of John White (founder of the Colony of Massachusetts) who was born in Stanton St John and whose father was a farming tenant of New College. At the time only Winchester College pupils were admitted to New College.

Dr Pink matriculated at New College, Oxford in 1594, was elected fellow in 1596, graduated B.A. in 1598, and M.A. in 1602. In 1610 he became Proctor, and in 1612 bachelor of medicine. In 1617 he was elected Warden of New College, in 1619 he was admitted to the degree of B.D. and D.D. From 1620 he was Rector of Stanton St John. He was appointed Pro-Vice Chancellor of the University of Oxford by convocation in 1642. In those unstable times Dr Pink was a Royalist and imprisoned for some time by the Parliamentarians.

Dr Pink died on 2 November 1647, and is buried in New College chapel where there is a carved monument of him. He was much lamented by the members of his college, because he had been a vigilant, faithful, and public-spirited governor; by the poor of the city of Oxford because he had been a constant benefactor to them . . . and “generally by all who knew the great virtues, piety, and learning of the person”. He left books to New College Library, a legacy to the Bodleian, and many other benefactions, including one for the children of Stanton St John.

Dr Pink's Charity (registered name DR ROBERT PINK) makes small awards (up to about £150) to support people under 25 years of age resident in Stanton St John, and is not 'means tested'. Grants are awarded annually.

Dr Pink's portrait above is © Warden & Scholars of New College, Oxford and is reproduced by their kind permission.

Stanton St John Women's Institute



We enjoyed our break over the summer which included a visit to Ripon College in Cuddesdon. The weather was a little too warm for us to explore the grounds but the college buildings and the old and new chapels were pleasantly cool. We benefitted from the knowledge of our guide, Connor, who told us so much about the college's history and the process of ordination.

Now it's back to business as usual. On **Tuesday 9 September at 7.30pm in Stanton Village Hall Andy Long from South Central Ambulance Service is coming to talk to us about defibrillator training and heart matters.**

This ties in beautifully with the National WI chosen resolution this year:



Bystanders Can Be Lifesavers. The meeting is open to all, so please come along and enjoy the friendly atmosphere with the members of SSJ WI. See also page 19.

We are holding our regular autumn **Coffee and Craft Morning this month on Saturday 13 September, 10.00-12.30.** We aren't just selling cakes, we will be turning some of this season's fruit into delicious jams and chutneys. We want to encourage you to repair loved items rather than replace them with new ones. For example, if you have a favourite item of jewellery that needs a new catch or if the hem has dropped on your smart skirt, bring them along and we will aim to use our skills to fix them for you. We also have an adorable elephant that needs a name, so please come and help choose one.



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Stanton St John Parish Council

Here's a quick round-up of what was discussed at our meeting on 14 July:

- **Lights outside the Village Hall:** A resident raised concerns that the new sensor lights aren't bright enough, making it tricky for people to find their way safely, especially in the car park. The Council will investigate this to see what can be done.
- **Traffic Working Party:** Watch this space, will discuss in September.
- **Dog Bins:** Good news – we can get a larger bin at no extra cost! The Clerk is also checking whether adding a second bin would be affordable.
- **Planning News:**
 - The Parish Council had no objections to a proposed extension at Woodside House, Woodperry Hill.
 - The application to convert a barn at Breach Farm into three homes was **refused**.
 - Extensions at 3 Bayswater Road and 3 Silver Birches, along with a new hay barn at Breach Farm, were all **approved**.
- **Finances:** As of the end of June, the Parish Council holds a healthy balance of just over £41,800 across its accounts.
- **Neighbourhood Plan:** No update this month but watch this space.

The next Parish Council meeting will be on **Monday 1 September at 7.30 pm in the Village Hall**, and residents are very welcome to attend and speak in the public forum at the start of the meeting.



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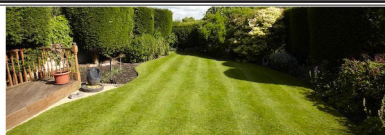
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12 – 2pm

Manor Farm, Oakley Road, Horton-cum-Studley OX33 1BG

Please contact key stall holders directly or Lisa Mynheer (01865 351340 or lisamynheer@gmail.com) if you have **contributions for stalls or offers of help**. Alternatively, bring contributions, (except Bric-a-brac), on the day.

Please leave Bric-a-brac at the back of St Barnabas Church before Monday 22 September. Thank you.

STALLS

- **RAFFLE** – Lis Pugh (Donations gratefully received, especially of food suitable for a hamper and new items that would appeal to children)
- **CAKES & HOME BAKED** – Caroline Badger
(no fresh cream, please)
- **PRODUCE & PLANTS** – Carol Welch
- **PAPERBACK (only) BOOKS** – Nick Mynheer
- **TOYS, CHRISTMAS & BRIC-A-BRAC** – Julia Slingo
- **CHILDREN'S GAMES**
- **TEAS & COFFEES** – Lisa Mynheer
- **LUNCHES** – Lisa Mynheer (Soup & Roll; Hotdogs)

This is always a truly traditional country village event for all ages. We hope that as many of you as possible can support it and use the opportunity to meet your neighbours and friends whilst at the same time helping to raise funds to keep our beautiful Victorian village church open and in good order.

We need YOUR support and help please to keep this lovely event going!