

# Holton, Waterperry & Waterstock News

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*APRIL 2025*

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Holton, Waterperry & Waterstock News is delivered monthly and free-of-charge to all households in the three parishes, with additional copies left in the parish churches.

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We welcome letters, articles and announcements from individuals and organisations, but reserve the right to edit or to publish or not.

**All copy must be received no later than the 18th of the month prior to publication and with its author's name attached - anonymous entries will not be considered.**

The views expressed are not necessarily those of the Editor.

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# What's On this April



Waterperry  
Gardens

**THEATRE: 5th April**  
MACBETH, QUANTUM THEATRE\*

**TRAIL: until 21st April**  
BIG EASTER BUNNY HUNT IN THE GARDENS

**FREE EVENT: until 27th April**  
SPRING GREENS EXHIBITION IN THE GALLERY

**NEXT MONTH - 10th & 11th May**  
THE MUSEUM CELEBRATES BEING OPEN 25 YEARS

**THROUGHOUT APRIL - FRITILLIARY SEASON IN THE GARDENS**  
**OPEN DAILY 10:00AM - 5:30PM**

\*Please see our website for more information or to book.



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## **April Church Services**

April 6 <sup>th</sup>	9.30 St Leonard's Waterstock 11.00 St Bartholomew's Holton
April 13 <sup>th</sup>	Palm Sunday walk and service 10.15 St Leonard's Waterstock 10.45 St Mary's Waterperry
April 18 <sup>th</sup>	12 noon Good Friday meditation St Mary's Waterperry
April 20 <sup>th</sup>	5.30am Sunrise service Whiteacres, Garsington 9.30 St Helen's Albury 11.00 St Bartholomew's Holton
April 27 <sup>th</sup>	8.00 St Mary's Waterperry 9.30 St Helen's Albury
May 4 <sup>th</sup>	9.30 St Leonard's Waterstock
May 11 <sup>th</sup>	9.30 St Helen's Albury 11.00 St Bartholomew's Holton 6.00pm St Mary's Waterperry

## **St Leonard's Waterstock**

### **Flowers and cleaning rota**

April 6th	A. Ashby
April 13th	A. Ashby
April 20th	Easter Sunday
April 27th	C. Tyce
May 4th	C. Tyce
May 11th	C. Tyce

## **St Mary's Waterperry**

### **Flower rota**

April 6th	Jacqui
April 13th	Rebecca
April 20th	All for Easter
April 27th	Helen
May 4th	Jan

# *Letter from the Vicarage*

Hello,

In some medieval books of hours the occupation for April is flower picking. I suspect this choice was not made by a farmer! April's derivation is uncertain – as with all the months the name derives from the Romans but in this case it's not clear why they called it *Aprilis*. Traditionally the thought is that it is from the verb *aperire* meaning to open. This would refer to the opening of buds and leaves that occur during the month. Another thought is that as many Roman months were named for gods and goddesses and April is associated with Venus the God of love, the month's name was taken from the Greek goddess of love Aphrodite and that Aprilis was originally her month - Aphrilis. Or it could derive from the Etruscans – the predecessors of the Romans in Italy, who named the month Apru.

No matter the origin there is the usual eclectic mix of celebrations beginning of course with Fools day to kick the month off – in the US there are the usual celebrations of food some oddly specific, April being Grilled Cheese and also Soft Bagel month. In New Zealand the third Wednesday is Administrative Professionals' day. Great to see these back office desk toilers suitably celebrated! And one for all of us to enjoy – the 6<sup>th</sup> is national beer day here in the UK. The 26<sup>th</sup> is Hug-a-Friend day – so if someone you know suddenly hugs you that's the reason. Obviously if that happens and it's not the 26<sup>th</sup> you might be a bit worried.

However and whatever we celebrate during the month we know and love April for the flowering of spring. The predominant colours are white and yellow, drifts of flowering bulbs that have hidden themselves in our woods, lawns and borders raise their heads and become resplendent and hawthorn, blackthorn, gorse and broom take their moment to show off in hedgerow and roadside. It's a very busy time for gardeners as seedlings are planted out and beds, boxes and tubs are re-planted and fingers are crossed up and down the country that we have seen the last of frosts. Never forgetting as Flanders and Swann had it:

*April brings the sweet spring showers,  
On and on for hours and hours.*

April is also the month of Easter, this year the weekend of the 18<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> – which is the ultimate 'opening up'. At Easter we celebrate the opening up of the way to God, new unconquerable divine life made available to all who desire it. On Good Friday we remember the gift of his life by Jesus and then on the Sunday we celebrate the break-out moment of the whole of history as the power of death is broken once and for all as he leaves his tomb empty. Spring is a reminder that there is always new life after 'death', the certainty of the seasons is a picture of the bigger truth of new life here and now and after death for us made certain through the events of Easter.

As it happens the first Wednesday of April is designated the National Day of Hope – and hope is a very precious commodity. Easter is the life changing hope of eternity made real, eternal love being offered without price. And so this April I trust you will find the hope of Easter and the springtime joy of new life for you and all who you love.

Stay blessed,

*David*  
Rev David Bendor-Samuel  
01865 872102,  
dbendorsamuel@btinternet.com



# **Holton Parish Council**

## **Parish Councillor**

We are delighted that Andrew Mobbs has agreed to join Holton Parish Council as co-opted Councillor. Andrew has a long historical association with the village through both sets of grandparents Mobbs and Nixey's and it is a pleasure to have him join the Council.

## **Planning Applications:**

P23/S1407/RM. Oxford Brookes University, Holton. Oxford.

Reserved Matters, amended plans 23/02/2025. Drainage and strategies.

## **Holton Litter Blitz Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> March**

Brilliant turnout of villagers cleared the village of litter in the Spring sunshine. 16 bags of litter and debris collected. Thank you to everyone.

## **Annual Holton Parish Meeting**

The Annual Parish Meeting will be held on Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> May 7.30 pm in the main hall at Holton Village Hall. This is the meeting for the whole parish to hear reports from village organisations and to discuss matters of interest to villagers. This is not a Parish Council Meeting but is chaired by the Parish Council Chairman. Any items, other than the usual reports, which you may wish to be placed on the agenda please let the Clerk know in advance.

**The next Parish Council Meeting will be held on Monday 14<sup>th</sup> April 2025 starting at 7.00 pm** In Holton Village Hall Committee Room.

Agendas will be on the village notice boards and Parish Council website.

Contact details below.

Clerk to Holton Parish Council (Sonja Barter) Home Farm House, Holton, Oxford OX33 1QA

Email: [clerk@holtonoxford-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@holtonoxford-pc.gov.uk)

Tel: 01865 872334

Copies of Holton Parish Council Meeting Agendas and Approved Minutes can be viewed on the Holton Parish Council website [www.holtonoxford-pc.gov.uk](http://www.holtonoxford-pc.gov.uk)

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# **Bus Service For Holton Village Returns!**

I have just Bus Service No 49 will divert into Holton Village and will pick up and drop off at Holton Bus Shelter on a Tuesday and a Thursday from April 1<sup>st</sup> 2025.

Times 9.55 am Bus Shelter Holton arrive at High Street Oxford 10.55 Tuesdays and 10.45 on Thursdays.

Leaving High Street, Oxford 13.00 Tuesdays and Thursdays arriving back at Holton Bus Shelter 13.59 on Tuesdays and 13.49 on Thursdays if requested by those travelling on the bus.

‘Use it or Lose it!’

*Sonja Barter - Clerk to Holton Parish Council*

<b>CUDDESDON - THE BALDONS/KINGS COPSE - OXFORD</b>		
<b>SERVICE 49</b>		
<b>TUESDAY AND THURSDAY</b>		
	<b>49</b>	<b>49</b>
	Tu	Th
<b>HOLTON, Bus Shelter</b>	<b>09:55</b>	<b>09:55</b>
Cuddesdon, Green	10:05	10:05
Denton, Triangle	10:10	10:10
Garsington, North Manor	10:15	10:15
Toot Baldon, Mole Inn	10:22	...
Marsh Baldon, Seven Stars	10:25	...
Kings Copse Caravan Park	...	10:20
Cowley, Templars Square	10:40	10:30
<b>OXFORD, Carfax</b>	<b>10:55</b>	<b>10:45</b>

	<b>49</b>	<b>49</b>
	Tu	Th
<b>OXFORD, Turl Street</b>	<b>13:00</b>	<b>13:00</b>
Cowley, Templars Square	13:15	13:15
Kings Copse Caravan Park	...	13:25
Marsh Baldon, Seven Stars	13:30	...
Toot Baldon, Mole Inn	13:33	...
Garsington, North Manor	13:40	13:30
Denton, Triangle	13:45	13:35
Cuddesdon, Green	13:49	13:39
<b>HOLTON, Bus Shelter</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>R</b>

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# **Holton Village Hall**

## **Village Hall Committee AGM**

The Village Hall Committee AGM will take place on Thursday May 8th in the Village Hall at 7.30pm. The AGM will then be followed by the May monthly committee meeting. All villagers welcome to the AGM.

## **Afternoon teas.**

The coffee mornings and afternoon teas at the Village Hall continue to be a great success. Many thanks to everyone who helps for all their hard work. There will be afternoon teas in April 2025 on 10th and the 24th. They will be from 2.30pm until 4.00pm. These events are really well attended so come along for Tea, Coffee, Cake and a chat with friends and neighbours.

## **Quiz Night 11<sup>th</sup> April**

Following the success of the 6<sup>th</sup> December Quiz Night, another event has been arranged for 11th April. Jas Smith-East will be returning as our quiz master and to register teams please email [admin@holtonvillagehall.co.uk](mailto:admin@holtonvillagehall.co.uk). A harvest supper will be provided and the bar will be open. Bar open at 7.00pm and quiz starts at 7.30pm. Cost £10 per head.

## **Summer BBQ Friday 1st August 2025**

Arrangements are ongoing to organise the summer barbeque this year. If you can help in any way please contact [admin@holtonvillagehall.co.uk](mailto:admin@holtonvillagehall.co.uk).

## **50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary**

It will be fifty years since the Village Hall was opened and the Village Hall Committee are looking to organise an event to mark the occasion. Look out for further details coming soon.

## **Future Events**

For up to date information on all events at the Village Hall please access the website at [www.holtonvillagehall.co.uk](http://www.holtonvillagehall.co.uk)

## **Booking the Village Hall**

If you would like to book the Village Hall please call **07873 857063** or please E-mail [bookings@holtonvillagehall.co.uk](mailto:bookings@holtonvillagehall.co.uk)

Mel Ault  
[mel\\_ault39@outlook.com](mailto:mel_ault39@outlook.com)

# **Holton Cock and Bull**

It is surely a well-loved aphorism but, sadly, it is not always true that absence makes the heart grow fonder.

Mr Vaslav Kanjovic from Belgrade broke the world record for remaining underground. Accompanied by two ducks he stayed below for 1 year, 3 months and 6 days. He emerged triumphant, only to discover that his wife had divorced him.

Wishing to assure his girlfriend of his undying devotion, William Gaunt, an engineer from Stoke on Trent, sent her two letters a week while employed in Papua New Guinea on a six-month contract. On returning home, he was said to be 'upset' to learn that she had married the postman.

*Name and address supplied*



## Recipe: Chocolate Fudge Easter Cakes

140g soft butter  
140g golden caster sugar  
3 medium eggs  
100g SR flour  
25g cocoa, sieved

For the frosting :

85g milk chocolate, broken  
85g soft butter  
140g icing sugar sieved  
235g white chocolate

Decorations : Maltesers and mini eggs

- Heat the oven 190c/170 fan/gas5
- Put 16 cases in a fairy cake tin
- Put all the cake ingredients in a bowl and beat until smooth
- Fill each case up to two thirds full
- Bake for 12-15 minutes
- Make the frosting by first microwaving all the chocolate on high for 1 minute
- Cream the butter and icing sugar together and then beat in the melted chocolate
- Spread the frosting on the cooled cakes and decorate with Maltesers and mini eggs

*Holton and Waterperry WI*

## *Dr Rogers Trust*

The Dr Rogers Trustees will be meeting in April 2025 to consider applications from apprentices, trainees and students, aged 14 to 21, who are resident in the parish of Holton, for grants to assist in the purchase of books and equipment or towards the cost of educational trips or courses.

A maximum of 2 grants per applicant will be considered, the first whilst at school and the second for undertaking further education up to the age of 21.

If you would like further information, please contact:

Carol Johnston, Trustee/Clerk, Chance Cottage, Holton

Email: [carol.johnstonfj@btinternet.com](mailto:carol.johnstonfj@btinternet.com)

Applications **must** be made **in writing** to the above by 5<sup>th</sup> April 2025.

# *Holton News*

The Village is currently putting on its spring coat when the weather permits. There are daffodils, aconites, periwinkles and a profusion of primroses in the verges. The trees and bushes are now joining in the fun and the cherry on the green is a picture. Typically at this time of year, the weather swings from cold to warm and when its cold things slow down. The sun is doing its best to warm things up and the days are now rapidly getting longer and by the time you read this the clocks will have gone to summer time with even longer days. Then we shall see leaves and blossom galore.

No change on the 'lake' on the Holton turn. This feature has stubbornly remained despite some blocked drain clearance by Highways. Let's hope they do some more soon, and the blessed thing goes for a long time.

We welcome to the village James and Natalie Heritage, and their family, who have moved into Kirton House. James is a local lad and he and Natalie were married in Holton Church and held their Reception in the Orchard in 2019. They obviously had to return here from London (!) and we wish them all a very happy family life here.

We are looking forward to the Holton Players production of 'Enchanted April' which is showing on 3<sup>rd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> and hope to have a short review for the next edition.

We have recently experienced an invasion of orange suited chaps and lots of strange vans. What are they doing? I believe that this is the second phase of the village being cabled by Gigaclear. We hope that the result is not going to be similar to the first phase which caused chaos and destruction through this and other villages. The next phase will be the visit of sales reps as they try to gather customers for their service.

In March the latest film from the producers of 'Film Night' was Paddington 3. This is a nice little film but not as good as the first two IMHO. My 11 year old granddaughter liked it though. We spent a pleasant afternoon until we got stuck in the queue at the Vue as there was a football match ending as we left the cinema. This did not affect our enjoyment of the film and we had the leisure to discuss it at great length. The big question was 'would we see it again?' Here our 11 year old was outvoted 3 to 1 against.

Take care

*Mel Ault*  
[mel\\_ault39@outlook.com](mailto:mel_ault39@outlook.com)



# **Holton Bus Shelter News**

## **Book Week**

Thank you to everyone who supported the Book Week in February, to Emma Mobbs for suggesting that we give it a try, and to Andrew Mobbs for making some windows to help keep the book stock dry. As usual it's nice to see our old bus shelter having a new lease of life. From the feedback we've received so far it seems to have been popular enough to be worth repeating. There wasn't much trade in non-fiction though so next time it will just be fiction. The dates for the rest of the year are listed below. Any further thoughts on how to improve it are very welcome. It would be particularly helpful to know if the children's section was of interest.

## **Art Weeks**

Last year the bus shelter hosted a lovely 'Art Weeks' display with pictures and creative contributions from many people in the village (and their visiting families). This year we'd like to try running the exhibition for the full three weeks of the festival, weather and paper munching wasps permitting. So, over to you. We are looking for your/your child's drawings/paintings/photos or other pieces of creativity to hang in the bus shelter. There will be paper available in the bus shelter in the lead up to the event. Contributions from all welcome, young and not so young. This is an opportunity to add some colour to our bus shelter, it's definitely not a competition! Please either bring along to the Bring and Take on 27th April or drop off at Treetops (just down the dead end, near the green) before 30th April and we will do the rest. Please pop your name and address on the back so that items can be returned. Thank you.

## **Bring and Take, Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> April, 10.00a.m - 1.00p.m.**

The spring Bring and Take is not far away now. We will have the usual concoction of books, puzzles games and plants available to take away. If you want to come down and have a look we would love to see you. Why not bring along any spare plants/seedlings to swap. Hopefully the weather will have warmed up and the sun will be out but if not we will be able to use the new gazebos, that we obtained through a generous grant from SODC, to shelter under.

## **Bus Shelter dates for this year:**

Bus Shelter Spring Bring and Take	Sunday, 27 <sup>th</sup> April
Art Weeks	Saturday, 3 <sup>rd</sup> to Monday, 26 <sup>th</sup> May
Bus Shelter Summer Bring and Take	Sunday, 13 <sup>th</sup> July
Book Week	Saturday, 16 <sup>th</sup> to Sunday, 24 <sup>th</sup> August
Bus Shelter Autumn Bring and Take	Sunday, 28 <sup>th</sup> September
Book Week	Saturday, 1 <sup>st</sup> to Sunday, 9 <sup>th</sup> November
Christmas Bus Shelter	Sunday, 7 <sup>th</sup> December

*Allan East, Holton Parish Council*

# ENCHANTED APRIL

By Matthew Barber



**3<sup>RD</sup> 5<sup>TH</sup> APRIL**  
**HOLTONPLAYERS.ORG**

This amateur production is presented by arrangement with Music Theatre International on behalf of Josef Weinberger Ltd.  
www.mtishows.co.uk | www.josef-weinberger.com

**Venue: Holton Village Hall**

**Time: 7.30pm**

**Tickets: £12**

**Contact: [holtonplayers.org](http://holtonplayers.org) or call Deb on 01865 873737**

*What's On* in the Museum



Waterperry  
Gardens

**25** *Year Celebration*

**8th May – 10am - 4pm**

**VE DAY CELEBRATION**

To commemorate the Women's Land Army contribution to the war effort, the Museum will be presenting a display of images from Waterperry Gardens alongside the tools that would have been used.

Along with a commemorative blanket created by local crafters.

Do get in touch if you would like to contribute.

**10th & 11th May – 10am - 4pm**

**25 YEAR CELEBRATION**

A two day celebration in and around the Museum, including:

Fun, educational activities for children and adults throughout the day.

Sale of interesting and surplus memorabilia.

More event details to follow on the Waterperry Gardens events page.



# Quiz Night

At Holton Village Hall

**Fri 11<sup>th</sup> April**

7pm for 7.30pm start

**£10 per head including 'Ploughmans  
supper'**

**Bar Open from 7pm**

**Tickets in advance only - by  
Monday 7th April**

Book your team of up to 8 in advance –  
If you don't have a team, just contact us and we  
can slot you in with another team.

**Contact:** email [admin@holtonvillagehall.co.uk](mailto:admin@holtonvillagehall.co.uk)  
or phone 07873 857063



## *From your County Councillor*

As I go around the Division, potholes are very understandably a cause of immense frustration amongst councillors. It's that time of year where they are traditional at their worst when the cold wet weather exacerbates an already chronic and increasingly difficult situation. It is also election season and so there are social media posts and leaflets apportioning blame for who is responsible and that makes people even more angry and frustrated. I don't wish to further inflame that situation but I do want to try and lay out why I believe we have a problem on the roads, what we are doing about it and what should be done long term.

Why has the problem rash of potholes arisen?

1. For over a decade the previous government slashed funding to local government. This was particularly focused on “non-statutory” expenditures – as highways are. Nearly three-quarters of Oxfordshire County Council (OCC)’s revenue expenditure is taken up by adult, disabled (some extremely disabled) and children's care plus SEND (Special Educational Needs), EHCPs and other Children’s and Social Services. The numbers and complexity of these cases has mushroomed nationally. Expensive EHCP cases rose from 2 thousand in 2015 to 7 thousand by 2025. In addition longevity means that older people are increasingly growing as a share of our population. Central Government has failed to fund these obligatory requirements adequately. Yet, quite rightly, no party has proposed ceasing or curtailing this compassionate provision. At last, steps are promised to improve funding for 2025-26. But in the face of this historical decline the local Conservatives proposed cutting the Council Tax rise from the 5% as recommended by central government, to 4.5% - at a cost in 2025-26 and every year thereafter of £2.5m.
2. As a result of the above the historical funding, provision for Highways maintenance and resurfacing has been slashed to less than half what is needed. All across the country a rash of extra potholes has been breaking out. Even before being defeated in county elections in 2021, the local Conservatives had admitted that it would have cost over £600m (now plus inflation) to put Oxfordshire’s roads and bridges back into a proper condition!
3. I believe that the pothole problem has been worse in Oxfordshire for the following reasons:
  - a. Oxfordshire is a geographically large and rural county with lots of country roads.
  - b. During the Conservatives tenure they cut back gully clearing to a 4-year programme – resulting in storm floods and causing related potholes.
  - c. Patching alone is not enough and for too many years, under austerity, they cut back on capital funds for resurfacing and road renewals
  - d. The cumulative effect of the above over 14 years now has been to let water and ice into the very spine and shoulders of our roads - such that lurking below there is now a mass of fissures just waiting to break out as more and larger potholes!

It is fair to note that in the years since 2013 – with different parties – there have been efforts to improve matters and to encourage use of better systems and equipment. The original contractor was taken over - twice. The Conservatives extended the original contract - twice – such that it now ends in March 2025 – a full 15 years! In 2019 – with a strong intervention by (then) Lib Dem opposition councillors - a Highways “Deep Dive” report was authored by Cllr Jenny Hannaby, 16 recommendations for change were made (& all accepted) - including tougher

supervision – particularly of work by the contractor's sub-contractors. The report noted that by then Oxfordshire's roads were in such a state that 55% would be at "end of life" within 15 years! Also that the underlying harm sustained meant potholes would grow by 32% within 5 years. It noted that worsening weather could well cause more growth! In May 2021 the Conservatives tenure ended.

The background is important, but residents simply want stuff to work! So what is being done?

A. The change of UK Government, the Chancellor's autumn budget and 2025-26 Local Government funding settlement has at least provided a bit better provision - with particular focus on social care, SEND and potholes.

B. The OCC budget has provided for an extra £50m 2-year fund for capital improvements to our highways. Separately, extra funding has been provided to revert to an annual gully clearing regime (see 3b above) and for extra improvements, so there should be less dangerous storm flooding - and fewer potholes arising from it. But it should be noted that this capital expenditure involves incurring debt. The asset value of Oxfordshire's road network is worth in excess of £5 bn – so protecting those assets makes sound financial sense - it is also necessary to maintain safety.

In the long term funding the roads off the back of ever increasing borrowing makes no sense. So we are trying to invest in active and public travel and discourage unnecessary road trips where possible (difficult in our rural communities) The Liberal Democrats don't want to see massive future road building projects like the £400m HIF1 scheme we inherited between Didcot and the Gold Balls roundabout. But however we cut it we will at some point need to properly fund our highways network. It costs £45m to maintain the status quo and we get something like £11m that is simply not sustainable long term.

All the best

*Tim Bearder,  
County Councillor, Wheatley Division,  
tim.bearder@oxfordshire.gov.uk  
Tel 07789754727*

## **Holton & Waterperry W.I.**

AGM's are lively with our re-elected president, Stella Oakes at the helm. We enjoyed pancakes and refreshments before the business of the AGM. Reports were received from the treasurer and the secretary which detailed all the varied activities we have been up to. As well as entertaining meetings, we have held monthly walks, fundraising stalls, visits, courses and meals out as well as social time.

The committee all agreed to stand for another year and we thank them warmly for organising such diverse activities.

A trivia type, printed, multiple choice quiz followed with much amusement.

Our next meeting is on April 1st when we will hear Steve Wilkinson on the topic of 'Defying Logic - Mind Reading/Mentalism'. Something different!

Visitors are always welcome.

*Barbara Martin*



## Wheatley Library

Welcome to spring! Joining the library is free, allows you access to all 44 county libraries, and everyone is welcome. 😊 We offer more than just books!

We also provide free digital support every Thursday 2:30 – 3:30pm. Book yourself in for guidance from our Digital Helper for a variety of needs including using your mobile phone, laptop, or tablet. You can

also learn to access our free audiobooks or e-books on BorrowBox, Libby and PressReader, as well as Which?, Ancestry, Find My Past, Naxos, & Playlist for Life, among other online resources.

Please join us for the following regular events in the library:

- NEW Storytime from 22 March: every Saturday, 10–10:45am, kids 4-8yrs old
- Rhymetime: every Friday, 10:30–11am, kids 0-5 yrs old
- Digital Help: every Thursday, 2:30–3:30pm
- Jigsaw Puzzle Swap: 1<sup>st</sup> Saturday each month, 9:30am–12pm (5 April, 3 May, 7 June)
- Textile Fibre Group: 1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday each month, 2–4pm

For news and updates, follow the 'Friends of Wheatley Library' Facebook page or visit [wheatleylibrary.org](http://wheatleylibrary.org). For library queries, phone us or email [wheatley.library@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:wheatley.library@oxfordshire.gov.uk). Access our library website directly at [bit.ly/WheatleyLibrary](http://bit.ly/WheatleyLibrary).

### **Opening Hours:**

Monday	Closed
Tuesday	2 - 7pm
Wednesday	9.30am - 1pm & 2 - 5pm
Thursday	2 - 5pm
Friday	9.30am - 1pm & 2 - 6pm
Saturday	9.30am - 1pm
Sunday	Closed

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# ***From your Member of Parliament***

Dear residents of Holton, Waterperry and Waterstock,

It's been a busy few months both in Parliament and here in the constituency. I wanted to take the opportunity to share some of the key developments and actions that have taken place recently.

## **Improving ADHD Services in Oxfordshire**

Our campaign to improve ADHD services in Oxfordshire is gaining traction. I joined other MPs in writing to the Health Secretary to call for urgent action, and I followed this up with a conversation with local NHS leaders to push for the restoration of much-needed specialist services. I am hopeful that some of these services, particularly for young adults transitioning from CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services) to adult services, will be brought back soon.

## **Local Council Developments**

I will be stepping down in May as an elected Councillor but in February, I attended both council budget meetings:

- The Oxfordshire County Council budget included a historic £59 million increase in funding for road maintenance.
- At South Oxfordshire District Council, the budget was passed with an increase in grants for community and voluntary groups, which are vital for their continued support and success.

## **National Legislation and Water Issues**

In January, there were some significant discussions on national legislation. One key piece of legislation focused on improving the regulation of water companies and addressing issues with sewage. Unfortunately, several proposed amendments to strengthen the Bill, such as tightening rules around bonuses for water company executives failing to meet performance standards, were not included in the final version.

I also spoke in support of an amendment that would enforce higher ecological standards in National Landscapes and National Trails. This is particularly important to us here in Oxfordshire, as we work to protect our countryside.

## **Flooding Crisis Update**

The flooding crisis continues to be a priority for me. In response, I tabled an Early Day Motion in Parliament calling for the Government to review eligibility criteria for flooding support schemes. It's vital that all affected properties are given the support they need.

## **Waterstock Golf Course**

At the time of writing there has been no decision on the planning appeal into the Waterstock Golf Course. I spoke in favour of South Oxfordshire District Council's refusal of proposals to build on the land along with your county and district councillor Tim Bearder who has been fighting it for years.

It has now been nearly 2 months since the Inquiry closed so the decision must be imminent, please feel free to sign up to my mailing list if you want to hear the latest when it happens - [www.oxonld/get-involved/get-email-updates](http://www.oxonld/get-involved/get-email-updates).

## Supporting Local Organisations

I was pleased to meet with the parents of the Oxfordshire Smartphone Free Childhood Thame group, where we discussed ways to improve online safety for our children. This meeting was ahead of the second reading of the Safer Phones Bill in March.

I also visited Thame Citizens Advice and the Sharing Life Trust food bank, both of which are doing essential work in supporting vulnerable residents locally. It's clear that their efforts are invaluable, and I offered my support for the work they do in the community.

As always, I am holding regular surgeries and responding to residents on individual cases. If you have any concerns or need assistance, please don't hesitate to get in touch.

If you would like to contact me, you can reach me at: [freddie.vanmierlo.mp@parliament.uk](mailto:freddie.vanmierlo.mp@parliament.uk)

Best wishes,

*Freddie van Mierlo MP*

## **Advertise in The News**

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## **April Birthdays**

**A very Happy Birthday this month  
to:**



**Elodie who will be turning 9  
Arthur who will be turning 10  
Charlotte who will be turning 11  
Matthew who will be turning 17**

*(to have a birthday included in the magazine, please email Dominique -  
domisqueak@gmail.com)*

# *Waterperry News*

The Parish Council has set up a group to come up with ideas to help wildlife in the village.



**If you are under 16** this is your chance to tell us what *you* would like us to do (or to do differently) to increase biodiversity and protect wildlife in Waterperry.

As a ‘thank you’ for your suggestions, you will have a choice of a bird pouch or bug house to help the wildlife in your own garden. All your ideas are welcome and if you are passionate about your project, we would love you to be involved with us in setting it up and seeing it through.

Please send your ideas to: [mail@waterperry.org](mailto:mail@waterperry.org) or [clerk@waterperrywiththomley-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@waterperrywiththomley-pc.gov.uk), and make sure you include your name, age and contact details (closing date **Sunday 27 April 2025**).

## **Our projects so far.....**

Our first project is to plant up an agricultural trough, kindly donated by Will & Lois Selmes of Rectory Farm, with a selection of mostly native plants to increase the biodiversity of the village verge. So, as the days start to get longer and warmer, keep a look out for the planter at the entrance to the village. It will have a variety of plants that will be good for pollinators but see if you can also spot the fox & cubs, purple toadflax and sneezewort!



## **The churchyard**

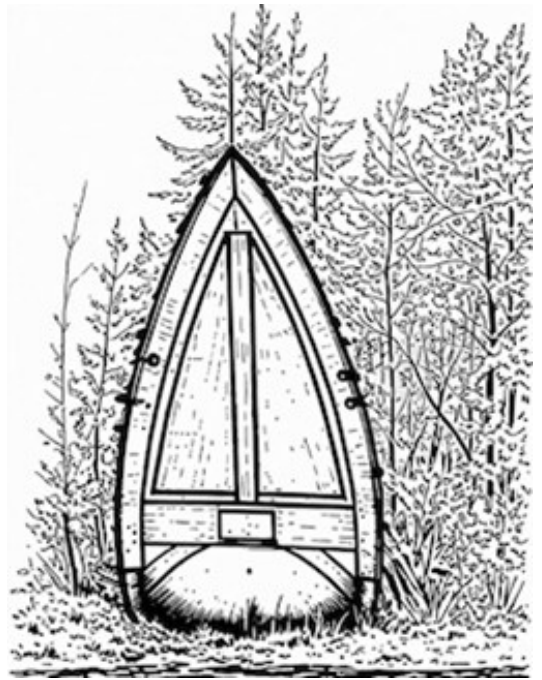
Our village has a ‘secret’ space that most visitors and even some villagers don’t know exists – our wonderful little walled churchyard. This churchyard, still an active burial ground for parishioners, has been largely untouched for centuries and this makes it a haven for wildlife: not necessarily the big exciting four-legged variety, kept out by the surrounding high wall, but potentially for all sorts of small and interesting wild plants and creatures. There are brambles and ivy, dainty wildflowers, cushiony mosses and vibrant lichens, all supporting a myriad of insects and creepy-crawlies. In turn, these all support a population of birds and small busy mammals such as fieldmice, shrews and voles and quite possibly toads and maybe grass snakes or slow worms. All quietly going about their industrious lives mostly undisturbed. It would be exciting and important to identify the life within the churchyard, so we’ll be looking at projects to involve as many people as possible to help record the findings.



### Sharing information

Did you know there is a lovely new noticeboard (perfect for fitting parish notices into) on its way soon to the village?

In the meantime we are exploring the idea of repurposing our custom handmade noticeboard into a feature heritage trail Interpretation board, celebrating the rich history, unique wildlife, and natural beauty of our village. This would include historic photos, key moments, and highlights of local flora and fauna, making it a focal point for both residents and visitors. With inspiration from similar successful projects in Waterstock and Wheatley, we hope to secure a national lottery heritage grant to bring this vision to life. We would love your help—if you have old photographs, stories, or images of special wildlife and plants, please get in touch and be part of this exciting community project.



Young Waterperry Wildlife Watchers – your ideas are wanted!

*With warm wishes from Sue, Caroline and Dawn*

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[msmelectrical61@gmail.com](mailto:msmelectrical61@gmail.com)



A great place to grow

Happy Spring from The Maple Tree!

Thank you for bearing with us during our recent closure. We are now back in full swing;

Mondays: Messy Mondays at 10:00-11:30am and Twinnies at 2:00-4:00pm

Tuesdays: Once Upon a Rhyme-Time at 9:30-11:30am and Mum's Cafe at 2:00-3:00pm. (This session offers you a safe space to come and chat to other mums and mums-to-be; a place to make friends and share your experiences, whether good or challenging)

Wednesdays: Baby Cafe at 9:30am-12:00pm (The Health Visitors are on hand on the first Wednesday of every month from 9:15-10:45 to answer questions and address concerns)

Thursdays: Little Explorers at 9:30-11:30am and at 10:30am-12:00pm The Maple Tree at Forest Hill Village Hall

Fridays: Little Chatterboxes at 10:00-11:30am

Family Fun at 10:00-11:30am, 3rd Saturday of each month, but on the second Saturday this month due to Easter.

All sessions include; a place for babies to play, arts and crafts for toddlers and older children, activities inside and out, a snack-time for little ones, a drink for the grown-ups, a listening and empathetic ear, and a circle time to close the session; all for a suggested donation of £3.00! (Yes, we have finally succumbed to a 50p increase after 7 years!)

We need some volunteers on Tuesday mornings from 9:30-11:30 and on Wednesday morning from 9:30-12:00. Do you have any spare time, enjoy working with children and families, and are you good at making a cuppa?! If so, please email [Laura@mapletree.org.uk](mailto:Laura@mapletree.org.uk)

Check out our Website and Facebook page for details about our programme and special events, including our popular Emergency Paediatric First Aid for parents and carers.

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

Email: [info@mapletree.org.uk](mailto:info@mapletree.org.uk)

Website: [www.mapletree.org.uk](http://www.mapletree.org.uk)

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/TheMapleTreeWheatley](https://www.facebook.com/TheMapleTreeWheatley)

Instagram: @themapletreecentre

Laura Spencer  
The Maple Tree Centre Manager

# *Waterstock News*

As we step into spring, the warmth of the sun and the sight of daffodils are a welcome relief after the cold and damp of the winter months.

As many of you are aware, life changed significantly for a few of us in the village back in September when the area saw a month's worth of rainfall in the space of a few hours. Personally, we would like to say a huge thank you to everyone that reached out to offer assistance and particular thanks to Janet and Stephen who gave us a home to stay in for the first week post flood. We eventually found a temporary home in Thame where we have been for the last 6 months. Whilst we are obviously keen to return home, the children are enjoying the independence that being able to walk to and from school has brought them and, after our treadmill was unfortunately destroyed by the flood water, Lizzie is also taking full advantage of the novelty of having pavements and streetlights as she trains for the London Marathon.

Rob Arthur provided a recent update on the ongoing efforts to address flooding issues in the village. After reaching out to Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) Highways for support, Rob worked closely with their team, including Carl Stallwood, who visited the village in January to inspect the problem areas. In February, Chloe from the OCC Highways Engagement team joined Rob and Geoff Talbot for another walk-round to assess flooding and surface damage. As a result, potholes were repaired by March 19th, and further inspections will take place in May and November. Rob is still awaiting feedback from Carl on proposed actions to improve culverts and ditches, but Chloe has kindly agreed to follow up on this, ensuring that these matters continue to progress. Thanks to Rob for initiating these discussions.

We would like to extend a warm welcome to Sarah Bell, the new owner of Kimmeridge. It's always exciting to see new faces in the village, and we hope Sarah will feel at home here as she settles in.

Finally, as I write this, there is still no news regarding the outcome of the Planning Inquiry, but we expect a decision any day now.

Wishing everyone a pleasant and sunny Spring ahead!

*Keith Stubbs*



It is with great sadness that we announce the closure of Waterperry Farm Shop, after nearly 7 wonderful years of trading. Since we first opened it has been a true privilege to get to know so many of you and become a community hub for the village - thank you to those of you who have supported us.

This decision has not been an easy one due to a number of reasons.

Firstly, increased overheads for small businesses, most recently from the latest budget, have made profitability almost impossible.

Despite our unwavering commitment to providing high quality, ethically farmed meat, we have found it increasingly difficult to compete with supermarkets and sellers who care less about the origins, welfare & slaughter of their meat.

Staying true to our values and prioritising animal welfare, sustainability & supporting local farming has always been at the heart of what we do. To run an independent farm shop comes at a big cost and sadly economies of scale from the big players have beaten us.

I would like to thank our incredible team who, I'm sure you will agree, have consistently produced outstanding produce for you all to enjoy.

The farm will continue as normal and the farm team here are planning for a busy lambing & calving period ahead and onwards into 2025. We will continue to uphold our values on the farming side of the business and continue with the routes to market we have established there.

With thanks for your support and best wishes for the future.

Lois & the Waterperry Farm Shop team.

*In better news... coming very soon...we hope to return 'back to the beginning' and offer home grown beef & lamb boxes on a smaller scale, direct from the farm. To be kept up to date, please put your email address into the contact form on our website [www.waterperryfarmshop.co.uk](http://www.waterperryfarmshop.co.uk), and we will keep you posted!*