

# DRAYTON CHRONICLE

## Scarecrow Trail 2025

**1st**  
Wallace  
& Gromit



**2nd**  
Greggs'  
Sausage  
Roll



**3rd**  
Boris  
Johnson



# Chronicle Information



The next Drayton Chronicle will be the May issue, edited by Vicky Billingham, editor@draytonchronicle.net  
Key dates for next Chronicles:

Issue:	Deadline for Contributions:		Printed Chronicles available on:
	Adverts	Editor	
August	18 <sup>th</sup> July	21 <sup>st</sup> July	1 <sup>st</sup> August
September	15 <sup>th</sup> August	18 <sup>th</sup> August	29 <sup>th</sup> August

### Notes for Contributors

Contributions to and advertisements in the Chronicle are **very welcome**. Please send us your letters, reports from village clubs and societies, articles, tips and advice, photos, suggestions etc. Please be sure always to include your name, address, and (in case clarification is needed) your phone number. Without names we will usually not print an item at all. The editor reserves the right to place, edit, shorten or even reject contributions as required.

Please send your contributions by email to: [editor@draytonchronicle.net](mailto:editor@draytonchronicle.net)

Advertisement requests should be sent to: [advertising@draytonchronicle.net](mailto:advertising@draytonchronicle.net)

If email is not possible, please place your contribution, either typed or handwritten, in the Chronicle box outside Vickery's Hardware Store on Drayton Green, or post to Vickery's, 5 The Green, Drayton, Abingdon, Oxon. OX14 4JA.

After the deadlines, only urgent items will be considered for inclusion and then only if emailed, or delivered directly to the editor's house, by the Wednesday following the deadline.

Advertising charges: for single Block Advert (approx. 9cm x 4.5 cm):-

Advertiser Category	1 insert	3 inserts	6 inserts	12 inserts
Drayton Resident	£7	£19	£36	£70
Non-Drayton Resident	£8	£22	£43	£83

Double-sized adverts (approx. 9cm X 9cm) are charged at twice the above rates. All advertising MUST be paid for in advance, either electronically, in cash or by cheque made payable to 'The Drayton Chronicle' and placed in the box at, or sent to, Vickery's. Requests for advertisements should (preferably) be emailed to Stephen Fearnley, the Chronicle advertising manager ([advertising@draytonchronicle.net](mailto:advertising@draytonchronicle.net)), or placed in the box at Vickery's. If you wish to discuss your requirements, please phone Stephen on 01235 531347. Note: deadline for ads is the Friday before the deadline for contributions (see top of page).

**DISCLAIMER:** This Journal is published in good faith and great care is taken in its completion. The organisers of the DRAYTON CHRONICLE, and its Agents, therefore accept no responsibility for OPINIONS EXPRESSED, nor for the validity of any ADVERTISEMENT, nor for any EFFECTS ARISING WHATSOEVER.

**The DAMASCUS Parish**  
Drayton | Appleford | Milton  
Sutton Courtenay | Steventon

# Summer Journeys

COME AND JOIN US TO  
EXPLORE THE BIBLE  
BY MOUNTAINS, ROADS  
AND THE SEASIDE

Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> August - St Michael & All Angels Steventon  
Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> August - All Saints' Sutton Courtenay  
Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> August - St Peter's Drayton

**10am to 1pm (lunch included)**  
**Free event for families. Booking required.**  
**Search DAMASCUS Parish on Eventbrite**

**St Peter's Church  
Drayton**

**Children's Society Coffee Morning**  
Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> July 10am to 12 noon

Do come along to **10 Corneville Road, Drayton**  
and enjoy a chat and a cup of tea or coffee.  
Raffle!  
**Everyone welcome**

The Children's Society

## BAPTIST CHURCH

Church Secretary: Mrs Jayne Henderson.....Tel. 522161

Please refer to the Church Noticeboard for details of future

Look out for the Baptist Café with tea, coffee, cake and a chat –  
Thursdays 11.00am – 1pm in the Caudwell Day Centre.

## LOCAL METHODIST WORSHIP

High Street, Milton  
Sunday Service: 10.30 am  
Local contacts: Geoff or Jean Caudle, 531409

# ST PETER'S CHURCH, DRAYTON



Rector	Revd Helen Kendrick	<a href="mailto:rector@damascusparish.org.uk">rector@damascusparish.org.uk</a>
Administrator	Alison Bampton	<a href="mailto:admin@damascusparish.org">admin@damascusparish.org</a> 01235 847179

The church is open daily, **Sun-Sat 10.00 am- 4.00 pm**  
(Nb all information is correct at time of going to press)

### REGULAR SERVICES:

- Sunday 8.00 am** Holy Communion with Healing Prayer  
(BCP 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of the month only)
- Sunday 9.30 am** Regular Sunday Service;  
1<sup>st</sup> Sunday **Holy Communion**  
2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday **Family Service\***  
3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday **Holy Communion with Healing Prayer**  
4<sup>th</sup> Sunday **Morning Praise**
- Thursday 9.45 am** Holy Communion (1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursdays),  
or Celtic Morning Prayer (2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Thursdays)

Everyone is warmly invited to join us.  
\*Change to our regular services

 Follow us on Facebook for online updates about services and events!

Search:  
St Peter's Church, Drayton, Abingdon  
or scan the QR code below:



### REGULAR ACTIVITIES:

**Knit and Natter** - All are welcome for our Knit and Natter on the **first Monday** of the month, 2 – 4 pm. No need to be a knitter if you'd just like a natter!

**Bellringing Practice**  
Every Monday evening 7:30pm

**Tuesday Connect** - We have started having tea, coffee and biscuit afternoons on the **first Tuesday** of the month, still from 2.30 – 4.00 pm. We look forward to welcoming as many of you as possible.

**Pebbles Baby and Toddler Group**  
**Wednesday mornings 10.00 am – 11.30 am (term-time only)**  
If you have a baby or toddler, you would be so welcome to join us. We meet in Church. For more information, please contact Katy or Cheryl [draytonpebbles@hotmail.com](mailto:draytonpebbles@hotmail.com)

## PARISH REGISTER

### Baptism

25<sup>th</sup> May Lyla Joy Edmunds

### Burial of Ashes

6<sup>th</sup> June Rodney Hale

# ST PETER'S LETTER

## From the DAMASCUS Ministry Team...

### Dear Friends,

The monthly letter from the DAMASCUS ministry team is written and sent to everyone in the DAMASCUS parish; Drayton And Milton, Appleford, Sutton CoUrtenay, Steventon. Each village has its own magazine, and each one is as unique as the community there.

Earlier this year I wrote about how fortunate our villages are to have the many social and recreational opportunities, which enrich our community. I encouraged more support and help for the volunteers because without them, our communities would be more the poorer.

What does community mean to you? The Oxford English dictionary gives community the definition of "shared ownership". Other dictionaries give community to mean "people who live in a particular area". The importance of community, in Christian faith, has been and is still strongly held. St Paul wrote letters to the first Christian communities scattered around the Mediterranean, supporting them in the beginnings of the early church. In one of his first letters he writes to the Thessalonians "Encourage each other with these words and build each other up." (1 Thessalonians 4:18, 5:11) And to the people in Corinth he wrote, "Encourage one another and be of one mind, live in peace. And the God of love and peace will be with you." (2 Corinthians 13:11). The supporting of one another, in terms of faith, continues in a variety of ways. This autumn, there will be a course "The Bible for Beginners" being run by the DAMASCUS ministry team. "The Bible for Beginners" has something for everyone and aims to encourage and build up our faith and to encourage and support those seeking faith. Look out for more information coming soon on notice boards and web pages in your community!

Our places of worship are meant to be somewhere to find and feel "shared ownership", a sense of belonging as part of the community. Fortunately, there is a church in each of the five villages where not only worship but community can be shared in moments of joy and of sadness, celebrations and remembrance. I finish with a prayer of thanksgiving for our community of villages and for our community of faith.

### Heavenly Father,

*Thank you for our village and for every person who lives here.*

*Help us to care more for our community, to share your love,  
and to stand for your truth. Amen*

**Reverend Rosie Bruce**

Please let us know if you need help of any kind, so that prayer and practical support can be offered

### YOU STAY, WE PRAY (JULY 2025)

29 <sup>th</sup> June – 5 <sup>th</sup> July	Lockway
6 <sup>th</sup> – 12 <sup>th</sup> July	Whitehorns Way
13 <sup>th</sup> – 19 <sup>th</sup> July	Corneville Rd; Crabtree Lane; Lesparre Close
20 <sup>th</sup> – 26 <sup>th</sup> July	Drayton Rd; Milton Rd; New Cut Mill; Fisher Cl; Marcham Rd; Meads Cl; Rippington Court; Stone Hill
27 <sup>th</sup> July – 2 <sup>nd</sup> August	Steventon Rd; Kiln Lane; Mott Cottages; Barton Court

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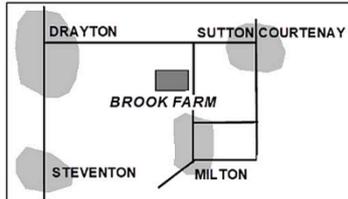


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**JUDICIAL REVIEW:** The Judicial Review has now taken place – June 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup>. The outcome from it – success or failure – will be known after mid-July. We shall send an update to all members and supporters as soon as we know the result. If we succeed, we hope that the Secretary of State will call a Public Inquiry. If not – difficult times ahead, but be sure, GARD are not giving up.

**HANNEY ROAD CLAY COMPACTION TRIALS:** Experts from GARD visited the CCT site on 20th May but, in spite of requests, they were not allowed a close look at the test embankments. In their opinion the CCT tests were neither large enough nor long enough to establish key design issues. They also noted that **Thames Water, after finding out about the different clays on the site, have made design changes to the embankments.** These will highly likely lead to significant cost increases and possibly time extensions to complete any reservoir, if one is approved.

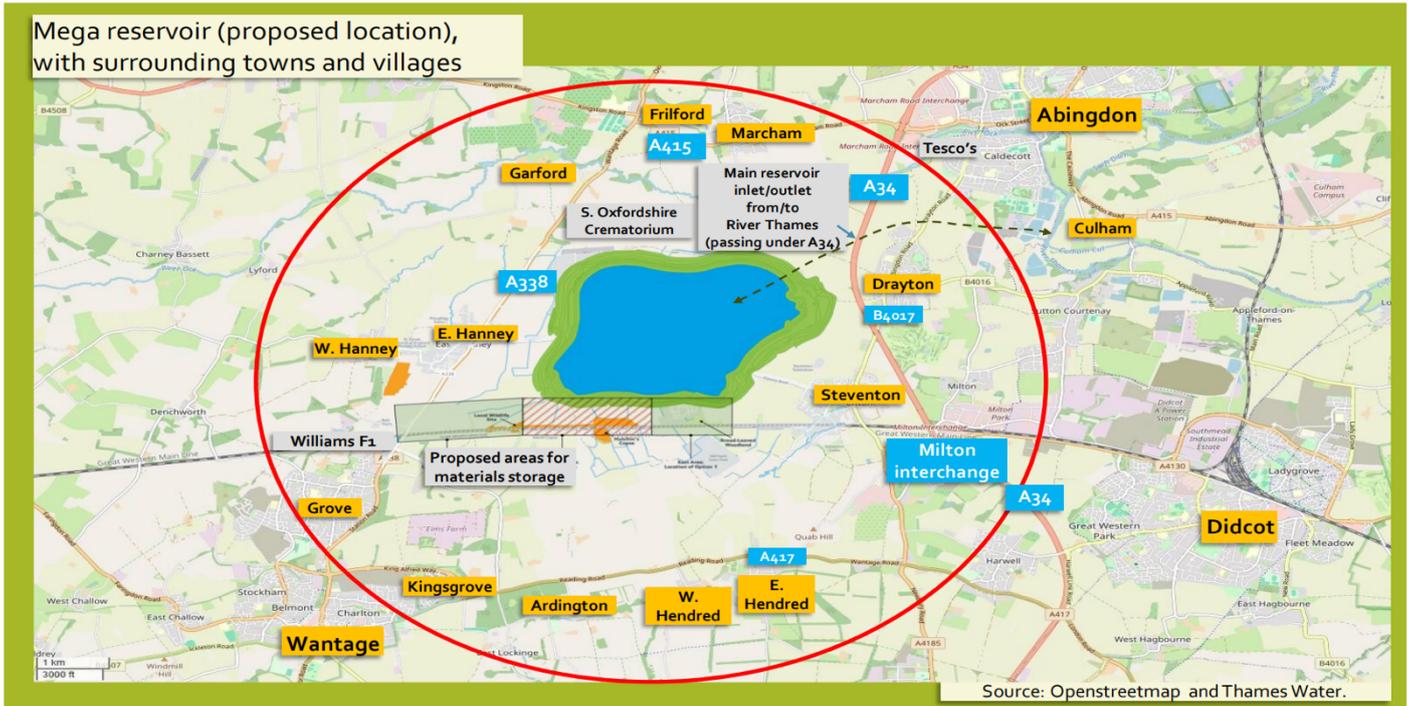
Look out for the NEW GARD WEBSITE: we shall post the result of the Judicial Review here as soon as we know it.

**GARD and CPRE's Petition** calling for a Public Inquiry was submitted to the Secretary of State Steve Reed on June 19<sup>th</sup> with almost **6500** signatures.

**WHAT CAN YOU DO?** Join GARD, like and share GARD's Social Media posts, display a poster or banner at your home. Write to the Secretary of State for the Environment, Steve Reed; to your MP Olly Glover and to your Councillors (County, District and Parish). For email details contact the GARD Secretary [gard.secretary@gmail.com](mailto:gard.secretary@gmail.com)

**AFTER THE JUDICIAL REVIEW:** when we know the outcome, we can decide the next action. We know that we shall be needing funds raised from the public. Please donate. Here are the payment details for Membership or Donations Bank transfer to Group Against Reservoir Development Account Number: 71266438 Sort Code: 40-45-36 Please include **your name** as a reference & email [gard.secretary@gmail.com](mailto:gard.secretary@gmail.com)

**Derek Stork, Chairman GARD**



- **A 150 billion litre (150 Million cubic metre) embanked ('bunded' reservoir)**
- **Water area 4 square miles (size of Gatwick Airport) – construction site 7 square miles.**

# LETTER FROM WESTMINSTER



Dear all

July marks one year since being elected as the MP for our constituency. Learning how parliament operates, establishing a constituency office and recruiting a team took some time, but I can now reflect on our work over the last 12 months.

Since the election, my team and I have opened over 7,000 cases and responded to 12,500 emails to constituents. Some involve signposting local people to the services they need, but others are more complex and take time to work through. Cases cover many topics, from health and care, to immigration and international trade.

## Asking the Questions

Alongside helping constituents on a personal level, I have been able to use cases and local issues to inform efforts to drive national policy changes. I've been asking questions of Ministers in the House of Commons, speaking in Westminster Hall debates, securing one-to-one meetings with Ministers and taking part in cross party groups: the Transport Select Committee, and the Planning and Infrastructure Bill Committee. These are just some of the ways I have been able to voice your issues to the people with power to influence them. Recent successes include getting a decision on an export licence for local business which saved several jobs.

## Big Local Issues

There has been some progress, too, on the big issues impacting our constituency: I secured a meeting with the rail minister to make the case for Grove Station; the County Council has started work on a feasibility study. I have presented a bill to ensure infrastructure targets accompany housing targets, which the housing minister has taken an interest in. Finally, after being rescheduled and delayed by the minister's office, I have secured a meeting with the water minister about the SESRO reservoir to make her aware of all local concerns. Of course, on all these and many other local issues, there is more work to do.

## Local Visits

Recently, I have had the pleasure of the visiting the Cornermen project, based in South Moreton, doing fantastic work to support men's mental health; discussed ideas to get people taking action to reduce their carbon footprint with trustees of local charity myzerocarbon.org at a recent constituency surgery in Wallingford; and attended the South East RFCA Armed Forces Briefing at RAF Benson to learn about the relationships between defence and the wider community, and the critical role in our communities and our future defence played by cadet and reservist schemes.

During the summer, I will be undertaking many visits and holding regular surgeries around the constituency. If you would like to come and meet me, please contact [olly.glover.MP@parliament.uk](mailto:olly.glover.MP@parliament.uk) (or leave a voice message at 0207 219 7657). Feel free, as always, to use these contact details for anything else I can help with.

For more regular updates you can follow me on

Bluesky: [@ollyglover.bsky.social](https://bsky.app/profile/ollyglover.bsky.social) and

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/OllivGloverLD/>

Best wishes,

*Olliv*

Olliv Glover MP



## Thames Valley Farmers' Markets

The Thames Valley Farmers' Market visits Abingdon Market Place on the third Friday of each month. This friendly market gives shoppers the opportunity to sample and buy fresh produce from the local area while meeting local farmers, growers and producers. TVFM is a co-operative, run for and by traders who feel passionately about bringing quality local produce to local markets.

Shoppers enjoy the chance to speak to growers and producers at their stalls. All the traders are inspected and accredited (the 'FARMA' scheme), so are guaranteed to be genuine producers; ask them about their products and they will know exactly where and how the food on sale was produced.

The markets are open from 8.30am to 1.30pm, slightly shorter than the town's Monday market which also has fresh produce. Come and enjoy!

Abingdon Farmers' Market Dates for 2025:

18<sup>th</sup> July

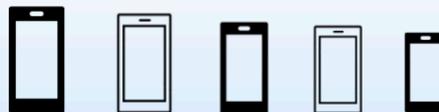
15<sup>th</sup> August

19<sup>th</sup> September

17<sup>th</sup> October

21<sup>st</sup> November

19<sup>th</sup> December



## Photography Competition

Would you like to see a photograph taken by you in the Chronicle?

The criteria are simple:

- portrait format
- subject somehow linked to our village
- quality suitable for printing – if you are not sure about this, please send in anyway, and we will use if possible

Please send via email to:

[editor@draytronchronicle.net](mailto:editor@draytronchronicle.net)



## COUNTY COUNCIL UPDATE



Hello Sunshine!

It is great to see summer in full swing – it feels like people are happier when it is sunnier, and longer days allow more time outside enjoying the fresh air. Fortunately for freshness, there have been fewer complaints this last quarter of bad smells locally, but plenty of noise complaints – local operators assure us they are within their agreed operating limits, so it may be just with more time in the garden with the windows open we spot it more – I don't know.

### Appleford Noise Survey

To help, I have sponsored some budget for Appleford to set up noise monitoring and an independent noise survey which will help pinpoint sources, and provide greater understanding of regular noise levels, ahead of any new developments that might need evidence for mitigations. As well as the new road and bridge over the Thames, there are two new applications for battery energy storage parks nearby – taking advantage of the national transmission grid network connections at Didcot B power station. Whilst a strong supporter of these helping us transition to a clean net zero future, there are concerns with some new technologies so I have called these in to be heard. I have also initiated us into new Local Area Energy Planning to ensure there is joined up thinking rather than random development around the power station.

### Footpaths

Recently, I have also been working closely with FCC who own the landfill sites between our villages to ensure paths are kept open and improved for locals. We had a positive meeting this month with Thames Water who have agreed in principle to a project to improve the dilapidated Hobby Horse Lane from Sutton Courtenay to Appleford, and we have gained support from both FCC and Heidelberg, so fingers crossed, improving that long stand eyesore is starting to move forwards.

Last month, gypsy travellers moved onto the Appleford rec ground worrying locals. Fortunately, there is a hotline and team in the council for especially for helping in these situations. They intervened the very next morning, and professionally helped resolve the situation quickly.

The Post Office has now finished consulting with positive local reaction on moving the post office to a better building with better facilities in Milton Park.

### Steventon

The plans to improve the junction at Steventon with the new developments at Milton Heights for cars, buses and traffic, and also enable safer cycling and walking into Steventon and up to the A34 interchange have also now been approved, and work is due to start this autumn. Highways have agreed to improve the safety of the dangerous Milton Lane exit during this period as traffic will depend on it, but also then leave safety improvements in place afterwards for this junction. I have also escalated about the Steventon Bridge to see if there any better temporary workarounds to get some two-way traffic back while they fix the bridge (which will take a long time as they can only work on it when the line is closed to trains).

### Drayton

In Drayton, fixing the broken speed signs has been frustrating, but I am glad to report design work has begun on a new pedestrian crossing and other safety improvements, including aligning the signs to any new speed limits.

Lastly, now I am Water Champion for the county council, I continue to hold Thames Water to account for improving their strategic plans – which is not just the reservoir but also stopping leaks, and improving recycling and treatment facilities – probably more front of mind now as climate change this year has brought us the hottest driest spring on record. Extreme weather is the new norm, so remember the sunscreen and enjoy the summer,

Best wishes  
Peter Stevens

*Councillor Peter Stevens, Sutton Courtenay & Marcham Division*

## Walking Back from Abingdon: the River Route

In the June issue of the Chronicle, I described one of the cross-country routes from Abingdon. Here is an alternative, full of interest but it will take you at least a couple of hours.

Starting from Abingdon's Market Square, head off down Bridge Street and, just past the Nag's Head, turn right onto the Thames path, facing downstream. Then just keep walking, enjoying the variety of life on the river and the different perspective of the fine old town of Abingdon. The path brings you to the old Tollgate Cottage but carry on past it, with the river on your right.

Eventually, after passing through a wooded section, you will come to a humped-back footbridge over the cut to Culham lock. Cross it and take the wide gravel track to the weirs. Points of interest here include a battery of Archimedes screws providing hydroelectric power and, as you continue over the weirs and along the footpath, the 'Endurance', a narrow boat named after Ernest Shackleton's ship in his ill-fated Trans-Antarctic Expedition. Its owner is distantly related to him and from it she sells refreshments to weary walkers during the summer months.

The path joins the main road through Sutton Courtenay at the sharp bend towards Appleford, but you turn right in the direction of Drayton. Unless you need to cross the road for further refreshments at the George and/or the Swan, stay on the right-hand footpath past Hall's Garage and along Brook Street until you come to Ginge Brook. Here you cross the road up a lane, also called Ginge Brook.

At the end of it you come to a cottage that spans the brook. This used to be the home of Percy, head gardener at the Manor House, who I knew when I first came to these parts. It was sometimes Percy's habit to catch his supper by dangling a fishing line out of the window. Pass to the right of Percy's cottage and follow the path through a couple of fields until you come out at a modern, metal style.

The bridleway to your right is the source of our East Way and runs all the way to Steventon Road. After half a mile or so you come to Milton Garden Machinery on your left and a cluster of vehicles (for sale, I believe) among the vegetation on your right, and then Milton Road. Traffic hurtles along here so take care crossing it.

When you come to a footpath sign and kissing gate on your right, take it and follow the path all the way to the bottom of High Street. There are some steep steps down to the road and more care is needed when you cross onto the track ahead. After 50 yards, turn left along the path leading through the parish burial ground, the churchyard and into Church Lane. Here you turn right and then left when you come to the Gravel Lane footpath, bringing you back to the Walnuts at the centre of the village.

## Andrew Bax



  
**Matthew Barber**  
 Your voice in  
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### More than just fly-tipping

Fly-tipping is more than an unsightly mess; it can be big business for criminals.

From rogue traders claiming to be properly licensed, to large scale organised criminal gangs who will use threats and intimidation to illegally dump hundreds of tonnes of waste, the impact on victims and the environment can be huge.

In the last year alone there have been more than 100,000 incidents of fly-tipping across the South East, and it is estimated that the cost to the economy in England is nearly a billion pounds.

Responsibility for waste dumping falls across several agencies. Local authorities are responsible for investigating, clearing and taking appropriate enforcement action in relation to small scale fly-tipping on public land. The Environment Agency is responsible for dealing with large-scale fly-tipping (more than a lorry load), hazardous waste and fly-tipping by organised gangs. Too often responsibility can be passed from one organisation to another.

So, I have joined forces with Police & Crime Commissioners in Hampshire, Surrey, Sussex and Kent, in an attempt to get police forces, specialist police units, the Environment Agency and councils to work together to tackle the problem. We held our first meeting in Kent in early June.

Many people don't realise that often criminals who are involved in waste crime will also be responsible for vehicle thefts, money laundering, drug trafficking and a wide range of other offences.

Victims are often hit twice. Not only will rural and industrial businesses be impacted by having waste dumped illegally on their land or in their buildings, but they often have to pay for the cost of the clean up - or face stiff fines themselves! This needs to change, and I will be working to put pressure on the government to protect victims.

Thames Valley Police's Rural Crime Task Force have had some successes in tackling organised waste gangs by working with councils and the Environment Agency, but there is more to be done.

We can all play our part. If you discover fly tipping (large or small) please report it to Vale of White Horse District Council. They can investigate offenders. If you see someone in the act of illegally dumping waste, **call 999 - it's a crime in progress!**

If you pay someone who is unlicensed to take away your waste, you could be fined £600 if they dump your waste! So, it's always worth checking the Environment Agency's website to see if someone is registered: <https://www.gov.uk/report-flytipping>

**Matthew Barber**  
**Police & Crime Commissioner for Thames Valley**  
[matthewbarber.co.uk](http://matthewbarber.co.uk)

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# DISTRICT COUNCIL REPORT



Hi, all,

## Joint Local Plan

Since last month, the first hearing about the Joint Local Plan has been completed. This document is, as mentioned (to the point of boring you in the past) the key document by which we can influence and exercise some control over the planning process (in the face of the huge thickets of existing legislation and centrally imposed diktats).

From reports, the hearings appear to have gone fairly well. Key takeaways for me have been:

- Unsurprisingly, Oxford City Council and many developers have tried their luck in complaining that we haven't taken enough housing on board from Oxford itself and other sites (despite providing a bunch of sites). This doesn't seem to have got that much traction with the Inspectors, at least from first impressions.
- The Inspectors went into the housing numbers in depth (considering demographic projections, housing and jobs, and the changing legislative framework). The biggest takeaway of all (in my eyes) was that the examination process made it clear that we are operating under the transitional arrangements and that the calculations given by the earlier 2023 framework do apply. This means that the increased numbers provided in the latest framework issued last year do not affect us. At least, not at this time.
- The Inspectors suggested that the JLP be extended by one year to cover out until 2042, as it's unlikely that we'll proceed quickly enough for full adoption by March 2026.

Stage Two hearings should proceed at some point during the autumn. My personal impressions was that this seems to have gone about as well for us as we could have hoped, thanks to a lot of work done by the Council Officers.

## Local Government Reorganisation

Firstly, a reminder that this reorganisation, to get rid of the two-tier structure for simplicity and create Unitary councils (whilst adding a second tier again at a higher level of clumping Unitaries together) is being imposed upon all of us by Central Government and isn't down to any of the Councils deciding to just do this. This does also mean that none of us get to vote on which choice is made – either by Councillors voting in their various Councils, or by all of us in a public vote. However, we're all assuming that the Government will take public feedback (and Council feedback) into account. Hopefully, anyway.

The guidelines given were that the Unitary Councils should be logical units and have a minimum of about 500,000 residents (although with indications given that the lower bound isn't solid, and down to about 400,000 would likely be fine).

In any case, the three options have now been properly put forwards.

- One Council, called "One Oxfordshire," where Oxfordshire County Council simply absorbs all of the Districts and the City. This has a population of 750,000 (growing rapidly) and is the preferred option of Oxfordshire County Council.
- Two Councils, called "Ridgeway" and "Oxford and Shires." Ridgeway Council will be formed by merging South Oxfordshire, Vale of White Horse, and West Berkshire to create a population of about 460,000 (growing rapidly), based on a shared history and intertwined geography. Oxford and the Shires would

consist of Cherwell, Oxford City, and West Oxfordshire, with a population of about 450,000. This option is supported by Vale of White Horse, South Oxfordshire, West Berkshire, Cherwell, and West Oxfordshire.

- Three Councils, on the "Greater Oxford" proposal from Oxford City Council. This would be created by Oxford City annexing two complete wards and part of a third from Cherwell, two complete wards and associated parts of four others from South Oxfordshire, and two complete wards plus parts of three others from us in Vale of White Horse. This would grow their population to about 240,000. It would leave Cherwell and West Oxfordshire with about 265,000 (with them expected to form a "North Oxfordshire" Council), and as long as West Berkshire still join with us and South Oxfordshire, a remnant Ridgeway Council of about 430,000 (this would be down to about 270,000 if West Berkshire throw their hands up at this and go elsewhere). This is the preferred option of Oxford City Council.

My preferred option is, as mentioned before, the Two Councils option, which looks to be a good balance between big enough to be viable and small enough to be more responsive. More details for our proposal are available at [ridgewaycouncil.org](http://ridgewaycouncil.org)

We're after public feedback over the next six weeks (which should be from that site or an intended site to be called [twocouncils.org](http://twocouncils.org), which we'll use to further inform our proposal (regardless of the decision being made at Central Government level, we'd like the maximum public engagement possible to be made).

## SESRO (Reservoir)

Having become sick of us always getting the bland brush-off whenever we try writing to the Secretary of State (with answers not far off "as you know, water is important" that then ignore whatever we raised), I had the idea of trying to get "upstream" of the Secretary of State to try to influence the advice received. The Chief Executive of the Council managed to get me a meeting with the Regional Chair of the Environment Agency, which I had on the 11<sup>th</sup> of June (accompanied by a senior Council Officer to support me).

It was much more supportive, but I got the impression that the EA were nearly as frustrated as I was, for similar reasons. At least they listened properly (and I'll admit I can go on a bit...); they seemed to think that the DCO (Development Consent Order) process, due next year, will be a genuine opportunity to influence the decision, and that was our best shot.

Further to this, and to get some detailed information out there, I've written a short series of in-depth articles on the reservoir and submitted them to the Oxford Clarion (who are an online local newspaper at <https://oxfordclarion.uk/>). The articles are too long and in-depth for any paper-based newspapers (who usually limit you to either a one- or two-line soundbite, or, at best, 250-300 words. Each article is around 4,000 words (a full in-depth article), so almost has to be online. These should be published imminently (hopefully by the time you're reading this) and I can use them to point other journalists, commentators, and interested parties towards. The three articles are on: the overall water issue, need, and feasible solutions; the specific issues with the unparalleled megareservoir in this location; and the cost and time issues of this as a megaproject and the better alternatives.

Cont'd

continued from previous page.....

(I was gratified that when I ran the last article past one of the world's top experts on megaproject risks, costs, and delays, Professor Flyvbjerg at Oxford University, he thought it was great).

### **Early opening days announced for Abbey Meadow Pool ahead of June heatwave**

In better water-related news, the Abbey Meadow outdoor pool in Abingdon opened unexpectedly early this season. Although this information will come a bit too late for the initial opening (which was brought forwards from the planned 19<sup>th</sup> July to 19<sup>th</sup> June, due to the June heatwave), the decision has been made for the pool to be open at weekends and even during the week whenever the weather and staffing allow, before the official opening itself on 19<sup>th</sup> July (for summer holidays).

Decisions as to this will be taken four days prior to opening and advertised on the pool's Facebook page with booking available on the **Better** website and the **Better UK** App.

### **Community Hub – support**

Tel: 01235 422600

Website: [whitehorsedc.gov.uk/costofliving](http://whitehorsedc.gov.uk/costofliving)

Email: [communitysupport@southandvale.gov.uk](mailto:communitysupport@southandvale.gov.uk)

Office hours are 8.30am-5pm Monday to Thursday, 4.30pm Fridays

All the best, Andy

**Councillor Andy Cooke**



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# PARISH COUNCIL REPORT



The Parish Council last met on 9th June

## The Abingdon Bridge

Gary Hibbins, CEO of TAB attended the June meeting. TAB are currently supporting a number of young people from Drayton. They offer one to one counselling and a range of drop-ins and groups to support those aged 11 to 25 in Abingdon and the surrounding villages.

## Walnut Meadows

Both the Multi Use Games Areas (MUGAs) and the sports pitches are now under construction (after many years of delays!). These were facilities promised to the village as part of the planning conditions for the housing on Walnut Meadows. The hold up has been due to the way that Miller Homes left the site. Even at this late stage we have found more buried waste which has had to be removed at extra cost to prevent the contractors damaging their equipment. The PC has written to Miller Homes to ask them to take responsibility for the cost of removing this.

More positively, we have been approached by Abingdon sports teams who are very interested in using the sports facilities once they are completed.

## Manor Farm

To our knowledge there has been no further spraying of the site. Cala have told us that wild flower seed has been sown in areas behind the Heras fencing. We can see that seed has been sown but germination is poor so this will need to be looked at again. The land currently remains the responsibility of Cala Homes. Once the PC and VOWH are satisfied that the land is fit for handover, there will be a 12-month maintenance period before the PC takes it over.

## The Dovecote

Nigel Billingham has sent a useful summary of issues on the Dovecote.

Residents are currently considering how to use funds for the Dovecote arts project, a labyrinth is planned, with other projects yet to be finalized.

There is a considerable snagging list for the development. Residents are primarily concerned about the quality of the paths and the lack of a significant hedge on the eastern boundary. When the PC last looked at this hedge it was either dead or dying through lack of maintenance by Bloor Homes. Another inspection of the site by the District Council is due in June/July.

## Footpaths

We are waiting to hear from the District Council when work on Bridleway 29 can proceed. We want to refurbish the part that joins between the path running down by the old scapyard and the newly refurbished path on Gypsy Lane.

The PC is aware that the footpath between Drayton and Milton has been blocked for a long time. We tried to start negotiations to get this opened some time ago without success, however we are writing again to the owners of Milton Manor, who own some of the land, to see if we can restart negotiations.

## Traffic Calming

Progress is painfully slow with preliminary designs for the crossings on Abingdon Road and High Street still not signed off. We asked our County Councillor to intervene to hurry things along, and also to get a budget position. The PC is concerned about the amount of money being spent by OCC on meetings and consultations, meanwhile the costs of the work continue to rise. The PC is doing its best to get this sorted.

We are also in negotiations with OCC for the replacement/upgrade of the 3 Vehicle Activated Signs. It is totally appalling that we have been requesting replacement for the broken VAS on the High Street for many years, meanwhile other villages seem to have new, bright, shiny warnings.

## The Village Hall

The Village Hall Committee are desperate for new blood to help with the running of the hall. Whilst the village hall building is owned by the Parish Council, responsibility for the running of the hall lies with the Drayton Hall and Recreation Ground charity which is managed by Trustees. If anyone is interested in contributing, please contact Pervin Shahin on [pervin.shahin@draytonpc.org](mailto:pervin.shahin@draytonpc.org)

Please contact us with any points or issues via [clerk@draytonpc.org](mailto:clerk@draytonpc.org)

**The next Meeting will be on July 7th (the first Monday of the month) at 7.00 pm at the Caudwell Day Centre, Gravel Lane.**

Elaine Wade

## **For further Parish Council info.....**

.....please see [www.DraytonVillage.co.uk](http://www.DraytonVillage.co.uk) for Agendas, Minutes and Papers for the Parish Council, as well as details of current PC Committees and Working Groups.

Here you will also find archives of The Drayton Chronicle, History of Drayton, Village Information, photographs and more. This site now contains a link to the new website: [draytonparish.gov.uk](http://draytonparish.gov.uk)

## **Chronicle News**

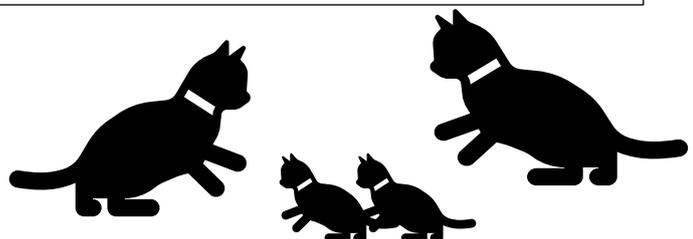
**Thanks to ALL of our delivery AGENTS, who bring your copy to your letterbox! BUT – we need your help!**

If you have a spare copy or two, thank you for returning them to Vickery's, with that delivery bag, but can you **PLEASE let us know** how many spares you have?!

A few of you have done just that (thanks!) but we hear extra copies are still coming back to the shop? We're trying to get **the most accurate count we can**, to order the correct amount from the printer, and avoid needless waste. **Can you please tell us** of any amended tally?

AND >> belated congrats to our editor **Bridget**, who's now a mum times two (!), she should be back at a hot keyboard later this year, unless 2 small distractions is one too many?! (I find just the cat breaks a train of thought!)

**Tony Holmes**



## LOCAL GROUPS and CLUBS

### Drayton Wives

Our latest meeting was a talk by Hilary Beale a Food Bank Organiser from the community food services at Abingdon. Hilary is a retired social worker who decided to have a new challenge and help with the local food bank. She wanted to make sure that people don't go hungry but also wanted to help them find a way out of poverty.

The local food banks are Christchurch in Northcourt Rd, Abingdon, the community centre in Preston Rd and Trinity church. They have a community fridge at Hadland road which is open occasionally.

Food banks were started in Bristol by a lady who had worked abroad and saw a lot of poverty and wanted to make a change here. Nationally it's the Trussell Trust which give food and try to get the government to end poverty.

A requirement to be able to visit a food bank is a voucher from an agency such as a doctor or Citizens Advice but they have to be referred via either a written, phone or email request. They usually have a 3-month voucher to get them started unless there are other circumstances.

The food bank offers varied food but a parcel can be made up to suit requirements. There is also a clothes bank at Christchurch in Abingdon. In the winter they can offer blankets and hot water bottles to keep the cold at bay. They also offer talks to schools and work with AGE UK and carers.

They do rely on donations and you can often see donation points at various shops. Hilary gave us an insight into another side of poverty so, if at any time you are shopping, just put a can into the donation point. I am sure they would be very grateful.

Lisa Lammiman



### St. Peter's Church

### Church and Churchyard Tidy Up

Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> July  
10.00 a.m. to 12 noon.

Do come along and help;  
many hands make light  
work!

If anyone can spare just half an hour,  
it would be much appreciated!

**Refreshments provided.**

**Tea, coffee and cake.**

### Drayton WI Report

Again we welcomed Karen and Brett - this time we were shown slides with a commentary. We started with pre-second world war glamour and the fashions available to ladies with a moderate income. The fashions reflected the new money after the first world war and the slump that followed. Glamour was the order of the day and the dresses reflected this. Colour was the thing, full skirts and accessories to match. Then came the second world war and austerity was the order. Make do and mend, transformations and how to alter a Little Black Dress with simple additions of a lace collar or a silk-type flower or anything to hand to change your outfit's appearance. During the war, the men had gone and women stepped into many types of work. Then came the problem that arose - dresses were not practical so the ladies commandeered trousers, men's trousers, but being a different shape these were not practical, so slacks were designed and they were gradually accepted into the wardrobe. Over the next years clothes were adapted, altered, made bigger and smaller to fit whoever needed clothes at the time. Finally, it was over and a little more freedom was allowed, as long as you had the coupons to use. Brought back memories to a few older people.

Next month we have 'Surprises in Researching my Family Tree', given by an old friend of ours and the village as well, Josie Midwinter. Come along and listen and learn and share a cup of tea with us. Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> July at 7.30 pm in the Caudwell Day Centre, Gravel Lane.

Now for something a little more sad. We collect Pennies for Friendship every month, just small change to be donated to a charity decided by the National Federation. The jar is clearly marked Pennies for Friendship and was getting quite full. Last month it was stowed in our allocated cupboard in the hall, well hidden in the back corner. When we went to get it out this month it had gone! We were all feeling very disappointed that someone felt the need to rifle through a cupboard that wasn't filled with anything they needed, let alone help themselves to money clearly marked for charity. The jar was found in another cupboard minus 95% of its contents. I hope your need was greater than the people that money was going to. Your pockets must have been very heavy as you left and I hope each coin burnt your fingers when you spent it!!! And your conscience bit you with every penny you spent!!!

Ann Webb



### CICELY WILLIS-DIXON, BETTER KNOWN AS DIXIE

I would like to thank the Rev. Rosie Bruce for conducting such a beautiful burial service on 24/04/25 for Dixie. Also my heartfelt thanks to all her family and friends who attended and their kind messages of condolence. Several friends were unable to attend, I would also like to thank them for their kind thoughts.

Sincerely, Shirley Thomas

Editor's note: apologies for the delay in printing this message – unfortunately we suffered an email glitch



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## LETTERS

Hi,  
On page nine of last month's Chronicle you printed an old picture of the Drayton pond. As an old Draytonian, I am pretty sure the picture is of the old pond, which was just outside the old school. It was taken looking down the High Street towards Sutton Courtenay. I wonder if any older residents remember this.

Best Regards  
Richard Talbot  
31 Lockway



### RE. Postcard Picture on page 7 of June issue

The person in the picture was my mother Winifred Grace holding her young brother Cyril. She watched the man take the photo. She was 14 years old so it was 1919. They lived in the High Street and in later years she was Mrs W Thomas of 11 Henley's Lane.  
I am Mrs Joan Hughes 29 Binning close Drayton.



It's that time of year again when Lawrence Vickery kindly finances the planting of flowers on the village green. Most of you will have noticed our lovely blooms, which give a lot of pleasure to many. But they don't appear out of nowhere.

Apart from financing the plants, Lawrence waters and feeds them, so that we can enjoy them in all seasons. He has helped the village so much through the years, as did his father before him, and his shop has always been the focal point for village communication. Some may not know that the white post box that sits outside his shop is the Chronicle box, which he takes in every night, and brings out every morning so that those residents without computers can still make their voices heard.

His is a traditional village shop in every sense, and his willingness to help the community is exemplary.

**Pervin Shahin**  
Drayton PC

## The Abbot and the Ditch

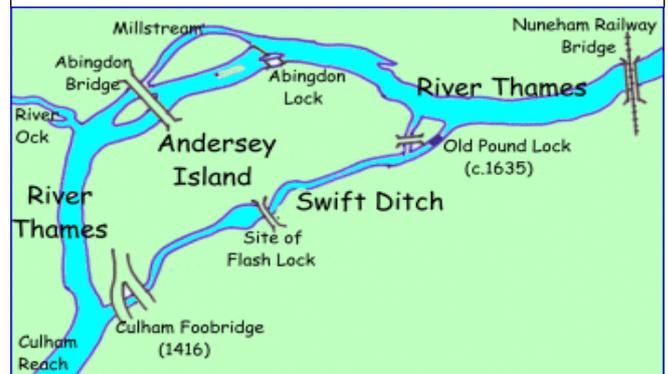
Mike Johnson

Before railway and road networks, Europe used a network of waterways which were essential for trade and distribution of goods.

In the 11<sup>th</sup> century, Abingdon, where the rivers Ock and Stert both come into the Thames, was a trade and transport hub. There was a problem for the vital transport of goods by boat past Abingdon due to sand bars which slowed down river traffic considerably. A monk, named Ordric, was elected Abbot of Abingdon monastery in 1052. He sought to resolve the problem caused by the sand bars. To this end he had "Swift Ditch" built, some 2.2 miles in length and creating an island out of what had been Andersey meadow.

Also, the Old Culham Bridge was built in 1416 and finished in 1422 to span the mouth of Swift Ditch at its outlet to the Thames. This replaced an ancient ford called Culham Hythe. In May 1644 Royalists and Parliamentarians battled over Culham Bridge with the parliamentarians winning after killing Royalist Sir Henry Cage with a bullet.

A wooden bridge now also exists known as the Donkey Bridge as part of the Thames footpath also spanning the outlet of Swift Ditch. Why is it called the Donkey Bridge? Well, that's another tale for another day.....



## New quishing alert: £3.5 million lost last year due to fraudulent QR codes



A new alert has been issued by Action Fraud, warning about quishing, a form of phishing where a fraudulent QR code is scanned, designed to steal personal and financial information. The warning encourages people to stay vigilant and double check QR codes to see if they are malicious, or have been tampered with, before scanning them online or in public spaces.

Claire Webb, Acting Director of Action Fraud, said:

"QR codes are becoming increasingly common in everyday life, whether it's scanning one to pay for parking, or receiving an email asking to verify an online account. However, reporting shows cyber criminals are increasingly using quishing as a way to trick the public out of their personal and financial information.

"We're urging people to stop and check before scanning QR codes, to avoid becoming a victim of quishing. Look out for QR codes that may have been tampered with in open spaces, or emails and texts that might include rogue codes. If you're in doubt, contact the organisation directly. You can follow our advice on quishing, on our website at [www.actionfraud.police.uk](http://www.actionfraud.police.uk) to help protect yourself."

Action Fraud can reveal that quishing happens most frequently in car parks, with criminals using stickers to tamper with QR codes on parking machines. Quishing also occurred on online shopping platforms, where sellers received a QR code via email to either verify accounts or to receive payment for sold items.

Reports also showed phishing attacks were taking place impersonating HMRC, or other UK government schemes, targeting people with QR codes designed to steal personal and financial details.

### What can you do avoid being a victim of quishing?

QR codes used in pubs or restaurants are usually safe to scan. Scanning QR codes in open spaces (like stations and car parks) might pose a greater risk. Check for signs that codes may have been tampered with (usually by a sticker placed over the legitimate QR code). If in doubt, do not scan them: use a search engine to find the official website or app for the organisation you need to make a payment to.

If you receive an email with a QR code in it, and you're asked to scan it, you should be cautious due to an increase in these types of 'quishing' attacks.

Finally, we recommend that you use the QR-scanner that comes with your phone, rather than using an app downloaded from an app store.

If you receive a suspicious email, report it by forwarding it to [phishing@report.gov.uk](mailto:phishing@report.gov.uk)

Find out how to protect yourself from fraud: <https://stopthinkfraud.campaign.gov.uk>

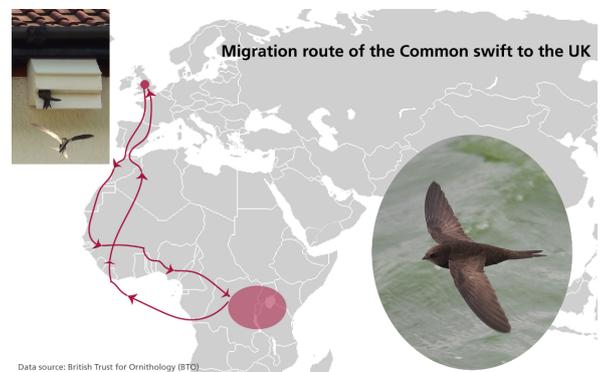
If you've been a victim of fraud, report it at [www.actionfraud.police.uk](http://www.actionfraud.police.uk) or by calling 0300 123 2040. In Scotland, contact Police Scotland on 101.

## July News - Swifts

### Happy Swift Awareness Week!

These birds are the TopGun "Mavericks" of the bird world as they can do almost everything in the air! Swifts' feet and legs aren't designed for sitting on the ground or a perch. They can perch vertically but they can't sit like a Robin or Pigeon, for example, as their wings are far too long. They are perfectly designed for flight and this means they do everything whilst flying - drinking, eating and even mating! True acrobatic flyers.

Swifts have one of the longest migration journeys in the world. Our Swifts migrate approximately **14,000 miles** to return to our Swift boxes in Oxfordshire every year. What a journey - really makes us think of 'Home sweet home'.



The Swifts we see in our towns and villages have overwintered in Africa and come back each summer to nest and raise their chicks. Once the chick(s) leave the nest, they're off - they will never return to the family nest again.

Sadly, Swifts are endangered and need swift boxes on buildings to nest. Find out more about how you can help them on the Cherwell Swift Project website <http://www.cherwell-swifts.org/>

### Gardening in July

Heading into the hottest months of the year, we need to be looking out for our local wildlife that could be harmed by the heat. Fortunately, there are lots of easy ways to lend a helping hand.

Even the most heat-loving species can suffer without enough to drink so **consider providing a shallow bath of water in your garden. Add some stones around the dish so that bees and butterflies can climb out if they fall in.**

**It's also important to provide some shade in your garden. A small pile of logs can be a great hiding place for insects from the sun.**

Make sure you're also helping your grass and flowers survive the heat as grass can reduce surface temperatures by 10°C compared to concrete and flowers are a vital wildlife food source in the hot weather.

### World Conservation Day – 28<sup>th</sup> July

Annual World Conservation Day is a great reason to join your local nature group and see how you could help create space for nature in your area. Check out our map to find the group closest to you:

<https://www.wildoxfordshire.org.uk/guidance/community-groups>

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## Sutton Courtenay Craft and Produce Show 2025!



A reminder from the Committee about:

The Sutton Courtenay Craft & Produce Show on

Saturday September 6<sup>th</sup> 2025

in Sutton Courtenay Village Hall

- Entry drop-off 09:45-11:00. Late entries will not be accepted & cannot have been previously exhibited. Show open for viewing at 13:30pm
- Same entry price as 2024, so no inflation there! (20p per entry)
- Please call into Vickery's for the full list of 58 entries we would love to see, and an Entry Form, including categories for children aged 0-6 and 7-11. Something for everyone!

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Sunday Best



## DRAYTON VILLAGE HALL NEWS



**APOLOGIES to anyone who got unduly confused last month by Pervin's spirited appeal for more help on the Hall Committee.** We've had several new names come forward (THANK YOU!), we'll know more after the next committee meeting.

But there were some strange responses! I was told by one group leader that they'd been assured in a phone call that the Hall "was closing on Friday" (that would have been early June, just after the issue appeared).

"Really" I said – "where does it say THAT"? (it didn't!!). There WAS a reference to a particular class not running, one Friday, but the diary entry for that group said "Hols that week!" – clear enough you'd think?!

I gather on the local Facebook someone had said, "oh, the Hall's been going down for a while, and they don't have dog shows any more"? In fact, **the Hall has NEVER HAD SO MANY regular groups and classes**, so is hardly failing! As for dog shows, well, just 5 or 6 per year these days, not quite all gone?! It's sadly typical of the kind of '2+2=75' twaddle that Facebook spreads so quickly?!

Oh, AND, that issue had – **in this column** – made one of the regular appeals for several groups, eg **Badminton, Yoga, Bowls, and the Sequence Dancers**. Not much point trying to get new members for a Hall that's "closing on Friday"?! Some folk!!

It's another **ANTIQUES Fair, Sunday July 6th**, 9am to about 3pm, and a few new stalls apparently, that's plus Kathy Head running her excellent value cafe for one of her good causes (lovely breakfast, or perhaps just a bacon sarnie!). Another one on August 3rd too.

We STILL MIGHT be gaining a **dog-training course** in a month or two, we're in discussion now about finding a slot, and that might be on **Sunday evenings, 6pm start** – if it happens, more next time.

And Lee is back for another **JEWELLERY VALUATION** day, **Tuesday July 15th**, 1pm for that one (until 4pm). You may have seen some leaflets for rival firms, running sessions in Didcot, Abingdon, or Steventon, I gather they offer lower prices, as they have to pay the Post Office £zillions for thousands of those leaflets to be delivered!

Tony Holmes



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### (Mostly) Hall Diary for July

All events held in Drayton Hall **unless otherwise stated**  
To book :- [bookings@draytonvh.co.uk](mailto:bookings@draytonvh.co.uk) or call Tony Holmes on  
**(01235) 531180**; see the website :- [www.draytonvh.co.uk](http://www.draytonvh.co.uk)  
**(for other regular events, see that diary column)**

Sun	6	9.00am	ANTIQUES FAIR (to 3pm)
Sat	12	11.00am	Private Function (child's party)
Sun	13	12.30pm	Private Function (child's party)
Mon	14	7.00pm	Parish Council Meeting (Caudwell DC) NB – New date, now <b>2nd Mondays!</b>
Tues	15	1.00pm	Jewellery Valuation (to 4pm)
Sat	19	9.00am	Private Function (all day)
Mon	21	5.00pm	Chronicle Deadline (Ads = Fri 18th) (NB – see page 2 for Chronicle Info)
Sat	26	9.00am	Private Function (all day)
Sun	27	10.00am	Private Function (child's party)
Wed	30	1.30pm	Drayton Wives

### REGULARLY OCCURRING EVENTS

Weekly in Drayton Hall unless stated otherwise

**NB PLEASE** – if an entry is wrong – **tell an editor** (p 2)

#### MONDAYS [## = Small Hall in Village Hall]

2.00 pm	Short Mat Bowling Club Session
6.00 pm	Damascus Youth ## (NB – check their F'book!)
7.15 pm	Badminton (Looking for NEW Members!!)
7.45 pm	Bell-ringing (for 1½ hours) <span style="float: right;"><i>St Peter's</i></span>

#### TUESDAYS

9.30 am	Pilates (via Alexandra Merson 07788 248925)
1.45 pm	Drayton Art Group (until 4 pm) <span style="float: right;"><i>Caudwell Day Centre</i></span>
2.30 pm	Tuesday Connect (back to 1st Tuesday!) <span style="float: right;"><i>Church</i></span>
6.30 pm	Karate/'Dojang X' session (Sabrina 07938 537310)

#### WEDNESDAYS

10.00 am	Pebbles (Baby, Toddler, Carer group) <span style="float: right;"><i>Church</i></span>
1.30 pm	Whist Drive <span style="float: right;"><i>Caudwell DC</i></span>
1.45 pm	U3A Science/Tech, 1st Weds (07890 385931) ##
2.00 pm	Drayton Wives (Last Wednesday, most months) ##
2.00 pm	Badminton
6.30 pm	Brownies (term-time / Laura 07916 459435) ##
6.45 pm	Short Mat Bowling Club (seeking NEW members!)

#### THURSDAYS

9.30 am	Parent & Toddler Group
9.45 am	Holy Communion (**) <span style="float: right;"><i>St Peter's Lady Chapel</i></span>
11.00 am	Baptist Café (to 1pm) <span style="float: right;">NOW IN &gt;&gt; <i>Caudwell DC</i></span>
2.00 pm	Short Mat Bowling Club Session
2.00 pm	Crafts Group (2nd Thursday – run by U3A, but it's simple to join. Call Kate for info 01235 550486) ##
5.30 pm	Rainbows (girls 5 to 7 yrs) ##
7.30 pm	Sequence Dancing (Brian - 01235 531701)
7.30 pm	Women's Institute Meeting (2nd Thurs) <span style="float: right;"><i>Caudwell DC</i></span>
7.30 pm	Drayton Community Choir (2nd/4th Thurs) -- Call Kay for info 01235 204187 <span style="float: right;"><i>Church Room</i></span>

#### FRIDAYS

11.00 am	Keep Fit with FAYE (07815 583591)
12.30 pm	YOGA class (Bliss Yoga, Diane, 07469 767500)
4.15 pm	Karate/'Dojang X' sessions (07938 537310)

#### SUNDAYS

(\*\*) For all the latest info re their Services (Thursday communion, & especially Sundays), **PLEASE see our St Peter's Church page**  
6.00 pm Evening Service *Baptist Church*

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