



DRAYTON CHRONICLE



VOLUME 48 ISSUE 10
EDITOR: VICKY BILLINGHAM

NOVEMBER 2025
PHOTO: WILD OXFORDSHIRE

CHRONICLE INFORMATION

KEY DATES

The next Drayton Chronicle will be the December issue, edited by Bridget Pyne.
editor@draytonchronicle.net

Issue	Advertising deadline	Contribution deadline
December	Nov 14th	Nov 17th
Jan/Feb	Jan 16th	Jan 19th

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 always 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

Advertisement requests should be sent to:
advertising@draytonchronicle.net

If email is impossible, please place your contribution, 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.

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.

ADVERTISING

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**), or placed in the box at Vickery's. If you wish to discuss your requirements, please phone Stephen on **01235 531347**.



Calling anyone interested in getting involved with the Drayton Chronicle!

We are a happy band of volunteers looking for some more people who are interested in getting more involved in the Drayton village community. We're looking for help with editing and/or managing the advertising.



No special skills are needed, just some basic IT and a fair amount of enthusiasm. All roles can be shared to suit.

There is no truth in the rumour that our quarterly meetings are alcohol-assisted. 😊



If you'd like to get involved, email editor@draytonchronicle.net and we'll have a chat.



To all Chronicle Agents & Distributors

Please join us on Sunday 30th November at the Village Hall from 3pm till 5pm for our

Chronicle Christmas Gathering

to show our appreciation for all of your hard work in making sure that the Chronicle reaches everyone every month!

RSVP to editor



ST PETER'S CHURCH

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Curate: Rev Dov Whittle 07586 969985
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 admin@, or curate@



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The church remains open daily (Sun–Sat, 10–3pm).

SERVICES INFORMATION: NOVEMBER

Sunday 2nd	9:30 am	Holy Communion for All Saints Day
	3:00 pm	All Souls' Service
Thursday 6th	9:45 am	Holy Communion
Sunday 9th	9:30 am	Family Service
	10:45 am	Remembrance Service
Thursday 13th	9:45 am	Celtic Prayer
Sunday 16th	8:00 am	Holy Communion (BCP) with prayers for healing
	9:30 am	Holy Communion with prayers for healing
Thursday 20th	9:45 am	Holy Communion
Sunday 23rd	9:30 am	Praise Service with the Worship Band
Thursday 27th	9:45 am	Celtic Prayer
Sunday 30th	10:30 am	DAMASCUS Parish Holy Communion at Milton St. Blaise. No service at St Peter's.

REGULAR EVENTS

First Monday	14:00 - 16:00	Knit & Natter No need to be a knitter, if you'd just like a natter
Mondays	19:30	Bellringing practice
Tuesdays	14:30 - 16:00	First Tuesday Connections All welcome for a cuppa & chat
Wednesdays	10:00	Pebbles Baby & Toddler For more information contact Katy or Cheryl draytonpebbles@hotmail.com



FOLLOW US ON FACEBOOK
 for online updates about services and events.
 Search: St Peter's Church, Drayton, Abingdon or scan the QR code.



YOU STAY WE PRAY

2nd - 8th: Corneville Rd, Crabtree Ln, Lesparre Cl
9th - 15th: Drayton Rd, Milton Rd, New Cut Mill, Fisher Close, Marcham Rd, Meads Close, Rippington Court, Stone Hill
16th - 22nd: Steventon Rd, Kiln Lane, Motts Cottages, Barton Court
23rd - 29th: East Way, East Way MHP
30th - 6th Dec: Church Lane, Henleys Lane, Caudwell Close, Gravel Lane

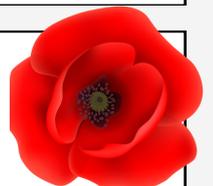
All Souls' Service



This will take place on Sunday 2nd November at 3:00 pm.

A time to remember loved ones who are no longer with us and light a candle in remembrance of them.
 If you would like a loved one's name to be read out at this service, there is a sheet on the welcome desk in Church to add their details.

Remembrance Service



This will take place on Sunday 9th November at 10:45 am.

This will include the reading of names and placing of poppies and the two minutes' silence at 11.00 a.m. All are welcome to join us as we remember those who laid down their lives for us.

ST PETER'S LETTER

FROM THE DAMASCUS MINISTRY TEAM

November marks the end of the Church calendar year and is a month with many occasions to look back and remember. First in the month is All Saints Day, previously known as All-Hallows, meaning holy. The festival of All Saints is when Christians celebrate those who have been an inspiration in their life of faith.

All Saints is followed by All Souls. This is a special service to many who share in the loss of loved ones. It is a time to remember with thanksgiving before God, those whom we have known more directly: those who gave us life and love, encouragement or who nurtured us in faith. Guy Fawkes Night reminds us to:

**Remember, remember, the fifth of November
Gunpowder, treason, and plot;
I see no reason why gunpowder treason
Should ever be forgot.**

"Lest we forget" (Rudyard Kipling) is often to be found inscribed on our War Memorials. It is also recited, along with "their name liveth forever more" in Remembrance Day services. Their traditional use dates back to 1919 and was meant to encapsulate a national obligation to remember the sacrifices made, rather than to glorify in victory. The third verse of the poem "For the Fallen" by Lawrence Binyon, (written 1914) has influenced the way in which the nation has responded in times of crisis and tragedies.

Silences have increasingly become the standard response to terror attacks and disasters, whether of nature or of human making. Some observers say that we are having more of them, because we want to be seen to care; it demonstrates to the people involved, they are not alone. Not only do I care, WE care. The impact of a football stadium crowd or busy shopping centre suddenly falling silent is an impressive and impactful gesture.

The lighting of candles, the laying of flowers and wreaths are more lasting, visual signs of remembering. Rituals such as these are important for the wellbeing of individuals and communities. Our churches are here in good times and in bad, offering peace throughout the year and a place for remembering.

**They shall not grow old, as we that are left
grow old:
Age shall not weary them, nor the years
condemn.
At the going down of the sun and in the
morning,
We will remember them.**

("For the Fallen", 1914, by Lawrence Binyon)

Reverend Rosie Bruce

The Abingdon DAMASCUS Youth Project
Registered Charity 1098966



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Drayton Youth Club

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lisaharold@adyp.onmicrosoft.com 

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Bees in Winter

Heading into the cold winter months, we need to be even more considerate to our local bees than usual. In winter, honeybee queens remain in their hives, with the exception of particularly sunny days. Bumblebee queens may also emerge from hibernation if prompted to by mild weather. Solitary bees will leave their nests once ready to mate.

When bees do emerge during winter, they need to have access to nectar, or they risk dying of starvation. In order to help these pollinators survive the winter, we recommend you plant winter bloomers in your garden. These include single-flowered Hellebores (the open face gives great access to pollen and nectar!), Crocuses (make sure to plant them in an area with lots of light so they fully open), Snowdrops and Aconites. Ivy also works well as a late nectar source as well as shelter from any harsh conditions.

If gardening isn't your thing, you can make natural spaces bee friendly by creating twig and leaf piles (which can be as easy as not raking your garden when fallen leaves drop!) and caring for wayward queen bumblebees by either carefully relocating them to flowers or offering them a 1:1 sugar and water solution.

The Yellow Wagtail Partnership

The Yellow Wagtail is not a species one would think about at this time of year, as by now they will be back in the wintering grounds in sunny West Africa.

Wild Oxfordshire have partnered with Earth Trust, Church Farm Partnership and Lower Farm to collectively manage four miles of wet grassland along the River Thames from Clifton Hampden to Shillingford. The aim of the project is to sustainably manage these grasslands for the benefit of wildlife, including the Yellow Wagtail, in a way that is beneficial for the partnering businesses.

However, this project is not just about the Yellow Wagtail; we want to increase the plant and insect diversity and abundance. In turn, this will increase the amount of food available for many species of bird, including House Martins, Swifts, Snipe and Lapwings.

wildoxfordshire.org.uk/action/yellow-wagtail.

Tips for looking after wildlife this winter:

- Always **move your burn piles** before you light them! The best habitat piles are usually created on nature reserves and these look a lot like burn piles. Wildlife thinks so too, and so many creatures use burn piles to sleep in, including hedgehogs, frogs, voles and lizards. To avoid burning wildlife, you must move burn piles before lighting them.
- **Crack ice** on your bird baths, water dishes and ponds so that wildlife can still drink. Who knows what you might see enjoying a sip?
- **Leave area(s) of your garden undisturbed** to allow hibernating wildlife to sleep in peace and unharmed. Some invertebrates hibernate in hollow stems of grassland and scrub species such as cow parsley and other umbellifers. Avoid cutting these as they might be home to sleeping beetles, bees, spiders or ladybirds.
- **Log piles** are well sought after for both people and wildlife at this time of year. Leave a pile outside untouched to allow hedgehogs and other wildlife to hibernate over winter.
- If you find a **sick or injured hedgehog** or other wild animal, please call Tiggywinkles Wildlife Hospital on [01844 292292](tel:01844292292).

To find out more about wildlife-friendly gardening, check out the guidance on www.wildoxfordshire.org.uk.



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Royal British Legion poppy appeal



The RBL poppy appeal kicks off this year on 20th October. As in other years, our local shops, pub, church and golf club have kindly said they will have poppies, pins, crosses, etc. on display if you wish to donate. Drayton Primary School will also have age-appropriate items such as the ever-popular snap bands. We will also have a table at the entrance of the Antique Fair on 2nd November at the Village Hall (thank you Neil).

Last year Drayton raised a brilliant £1,868.76. Hopefully we can match this (or even better last year's total).

Sue & Harry Ash

Royal British Legion Curry Lunch Sunday 9 November 2025



The traditional Curry Lunch on Remembrance Sunday will be held in Steventon Village Hall at 1pm. All are welcome.

Two courses. Cost £20 for adults, children under 16 free. Donations for drinks.

Queries and applications should be sent to nickandmaryt@hotmail.com or 27 Stocks Lane, Steventon OX13 6SS with cheque or cash.

Nick Thompson

Hon Chairman Steventon & District Branch

MacMillan Coffee Morning



Thank you to everybody who came and supported our Macmillan Coffee Morning held recently, or made a donation. The amount raised was £1,100 and that does not take into account donations that were gift aided.

Special thanks to Miriam, Jenny and Jo; we could not have done it without your help.

Liz Kidd & Brenda Malin

Post Office security cameras



I would like to give a shout out to the owner of the Post Office, Rajaratnam Sasikaran.

You may be aware that there have been a number of incidents on the green over the last few months including the theft of a walnut, damage to the explanatory plaque and vandalism to the bus shelter.

In view of the above. I asked Sasi (as he is known) if I could put up a CCTV camera outside his shop, to survey the area in question, to prevent further vandalism. He was most obliging, and said it would cost £185.00, like the one he had already installed to survey the other side of the Green, and offered to share his monitoring system and access to his data if necessary.

I was thinking about this, but when I went back to the Post Office, I discovered that he had already put up a second camera at a personal cost to him, of £500!!!

This new camera is an upgrade to the original one, and is able to read number plates and other images in more detail.

In the light of Sasi's community spirit, I want to thank him personally, for his outstanding contribution to the security of our village.

Pervin Shahin



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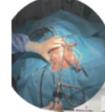
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MICKEY'S PHOTOGRAPHY

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DISTRICT COUNCIL REPORT



Hi, all,

Local Plan

From my rambling on about planning legislation, you may recall that the Local Plan is one of the most fundamental documents. For our latest update, we created a Joint Local Plan with our neighbours in South Oxfordshire. This should lock in the housing numbers previously agreed and also allow for the much-needed infrastructure to catch up, as well as allocate more affordable housing and incorporate measures to improve energy efficiency and nature recovery.

Unfortunately, during the (lengthy and exhaustive) Inspection phase, and completely out of the blue, the Inspectors suddenly recommended that we withdraw it. They stated that the grounds were that they didn't feel we'd met our requirement to co-operate with neighbours, specifically Oxford City, who'd come up with their own unique definition of housing numbers, which they wanted us (and South Oxfordshire) to build for them. When we tried to discuss it with Oxford City, they refused to engage with us, so we used the Government's standard method for housing numbers and incorporated the expected proportion of Oxford City's housing needs (from this method) into our Plan.

As it happens, it wasn't just us who disagreed with Oxford City's self-created numbers – they were required by their own Inspector to withdraw their Local Plan on the basis that their housing numbers were insupportable. However, as we hadn't used their numbers, this was used as the grounds for the Inspectors to ask us to withdraw our Plan.

We've also noticed that, for some reason, lots of Local Plans that were put in just before the recent Government deadline are suddenly finding this stage very difficult and being asked to be withdrawn, despite each authority having been given legal guidance beforehand. This does seem somewhat strange.

Given that we still believe our process was legally sound, we responded by sending the Inspectors a letter (which is diplomatically termed "robustly") stating where we think they've gone wrong. While we wait for their response to that, we're preparing to formally request they reconsider their judgement. Even if they refuse to reconsider, there's a possibility of fighting it further.

Fortunately, it's been established that regardless of what happens to the Local Plan, we in VoWH still have a 5-year land supply (which is crucial in avoiding developers having more leeway to force acceptance of speculative developments).

Local Government Reorganisation

We've had a detailed briefing on our Local Government Reorganisation proposal – the "two council" option of Ridgeway Council (ourselves, South Oxfordshire and West Berkshire) and Oxford and Shires Council (Cherwell, West Oxfordshire and Oxford City). We still feel this provides the best balance between democratic accountability and responsiveness, and financially, our proposal is remarkably robust. It should also be financially better than a single large Oxfordshire Unitary, and considerably better than the 3-council version.

A Joint Publication date is targeted for 29th October for all three proposals. The proposals should be submitted on 27th November, with Ministerial decision to be made in Summer 2026, elections to "shadow authority" May 2027, and whatever proposal is chosen to go live April 2028.

SESRO (Southeast Strategic Reservoir Option)

We'll be submitting a motion on SESRO in the Full Council meeting on 22nd October. We'll be citing the recent insane cost tripling and asking that the Council Leader writes to the Secretary of State with two requests - firstly, to reopen the Thames Water "Water Resources Management Plan" (WRMP) that was approved last November with highly inaccurate forecasts (and which Thames Water are using as justification for SESRO), and secondly, to bring the "RAPID Gate 3" dates of SESRO and STT (Severn Thames Transfer) together so that realistic comparisons can be made, and to undertake that at any DCO (Development Consent Order), an evaluation of the better choice between SESRO and STT can be made.

The idea is that as the WRMP had such hugely faulty information in it (despite Thames Water's assurances), either it has to be redone accurately and be used to determine whether SESRO could be justifiable, or if the Plan still stands, then the change in figures should mean that the financial justification within it for SESRO has obviously been blown apart and the alternative option of the Severn-Thames-Transfer (the explicit alternative) should be seen as a real option in the proposed DCO process. This is a joint motion between the administration and opposition, which means we're all united on it.

Food and Warmth Grant Scheme

The Vale and South Oxfordshire have launched a joint Food and Warmth Grant Scheme to help local organisations who are directly supporting residents struggling with the rising cost of living. This will distribute grants to any local not-for-profit organisations improving access to food and helping people heat their homes. This can include any Community Interest Companies, preschools, food banks, community fridges, etc. Grants are up to £2000 (if "un-constituted," and up to £5000 if "constituted"). It's open until 6th November. Details here: www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/food-and-warmth-grant-scheme-2025-2026-now-open/

Community Hub – support

Community Hub: Tel: 01235 422600

Email: communitysupport@southandvale.gov.uk

Website: whitehorsedc.gov.uk/costofliving

Office hours: 8.30am-5pm M-Th, 8.30am-4.30pm Fridays

All the best, **Andy Cooke**

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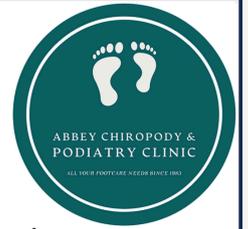
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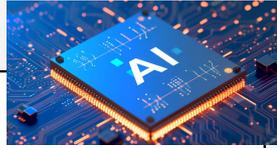
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W.I.



For our October meeting we had a talk called "What on Earth is AI?" by Darren Martin. We learnt all about the definition of AI and how it is used every day helping us deal with tasks but also providing creative tools for pictures, video and music.

Darren told us that although advances in AI are moving fast, we shouldn't be worried that it will take over. Humans still need to provide the data and input for the process of machine learning.

The evening was topped off with a demonstration using AI to create an original Drayton WI swing song.

We always welcome visitors. So do come along and see us if you can; our meetings are usually the 2nd Thursday of each month, at 7.30pm in the Caudwell Day Centre in Gravel Lane.

For our November meeting we will be having a practical craft night, doing some block printing!

DON'T FORGET to save the date of our Christmas Craft Fair, November 29th (11am – 3pm in the Village Hall).

Georgina Arnold

DRAYTON TABLE TENNIS CLUB



The new season is well underway and our teams have played their early matches. The two Division 1 teams are faring well. The division will be very competitive, with some top county players and England-ranked players turning out. Artisans lie 5th and Buzzards 8th, having played one less match.

We have three teams in Division 2. Eagles suffered a heavy derby defeat to our Dingos but hopefully it was just a blip! Corinthians are 4th; a solid start under new captain Peter Wiblin.

In division 3 both the Flamingos and Galahs have a good mix of youngsters supported by dads and grandads.

Coaching and practice continues every Monday at Thameside School from 7pm – 10 pm, with some new faces and many regulars.

John Gould Chairman

DRAYTON WIVES



This month our meeting was called Doing their Bit; the story of what the Brownies and Guides did to help the war effort in the second world war.

Our storytellers were Karen and Bret Wiles who had lived in the Cotswolds but now live on a Dutch Barge called Edith. They are 1940s historians and reenactors giving talks on what women and children did for the Home Front. Our talk concentrated on Brownies and Guides, who were considered to be part of National Service as they helped in canteens, rest centres, collecting firewood, growing vegetables etc.

In the 1940s the uniform was very like today; a brown dress, yellow tie, hat or beret, white socks and well-polished shoes! Brownies were age 7-10, Guides 11-16 until 1942 and 11-14 from 1942 onwards.

Life on the home front was hard for children as they had to carry gas marks everywhere, although gas was never used in WWII. Children were evacuated away from cities to the country. 3.5 million people were evacuated.

Brownies flourished in the country, creating new Brownie packs and helping where they could. There were very few indoor bathroom and toilets were outside so everyone had a guzunder.

In 1940 food rationing began, the Dig for Victory campaign started and animals were kept for food. School lessons were 'the 3 Rs' and knitting. School finished at lunchtime and children had to help out at home. Girls were not allowed to wear shorts or trousers. Underwear was simple, with the liberty bodice created to keep warm.

Brownies were encouraged to 'pass' tasks to help collect badges such as wash, make tea, iron, plait their own hair, do a good turn, smile and salute and uphold the Brownie promise.

In 1995 it was released that Brownies also helped to collect 43,000 cotton reels, which carried secret messages.

The Brownies and Guides were known as the forgotten army but have since been recognised for their war effort. Quite rightly...

Lisa Lammiman

Chairman 07949 275641

PARISH COUNCIL REPORT



The Council last met on 13th October.

Walnut Meadows

Work is now progressing well. Miller Homes have agreed to reimburse the Council for removal of the recent, and hopefully last, amount of buried rubble. The area for the football pitch is now level and has been seeded. Work has also begun on the perimeter running path.

We have taken delivery of a large storage container which is to be used for equipment during and after the next phase of the development. It is an on-trend shade of dark green and not pink, as some of us wanted and others feared!

The Parish Council will be meeting with the FA to explore any support that they can offer.

The MUGAs are finished but awaiting lighting to be connected.

Manor Farm

Whilst the hemlock appears to have been eradicated, the site is now overrun by mallow. As gardeners will know, this has deep roots and is hard to remove. We will be talking to Cala Homes about whether the plans to reseed with wildflower seeds, planned for this month, are worthwhile, given the present ground cover. Further news on this to follow.

Planning matters

In 2022/23, planning was granted for eight homes to be built on land behind Kiln Lane and Marcham Road. The Parish Council objected to this, however the development was allowed, despite not being in the Neighbourhood Development Plan.

Helix Construction has now applied for planning permission to build 15 homes on this site, instead of the original eight. Whilst the new proposals allow for more two-bedroom houses, the parking allows for 30 vehicle spaces plus three for visitors. The Parish Council think that this is over-development of the site and that the increase in housing will lead to further traffic problems in the village. We will therefore be objecting to the new plan.

Traffic Calming

The lack of progress has been raised with Peter Stevens, our County Councillor. We are assured that the plans are in detailed design stage, however these have not been shared with the PC. This is being chased.

Damascus and The Abingdon Bridge

Both charities sent representatives to the PC meeting to outline the work they are doing to support Drayton youth and their families. We thank both charities for the fantastic support they are offering. Both charities rely on grants and donations to survive.

Garden waste

We have received a report of garden waste being left in public areas. Please, please dispose of this waste appropriately either through composting yourself, taking advantage of the extra brown bin collection between 27 October and 7 November (for permit holders) or taking it to the green waste bin at the recycling centre. Sadly, a small amount of waste seems to attract more waste so please consider the village and also the workload of our hard-pressed caretaker who is invariably called upon to pick it up!

Reserved plots and the burial ground

Our current policy does not allow for burial reservations, however the Council have decided to allow reservations of adjacent plots in exceptional circumstances. This is clearly a sensitive topic. Many Councils do not permit this, others do. Whilst we understand the importance of this to many families, the reality is that we currently have a number of plots that were reserved many years ago but have not been used. There may, of course, be good reasons for this, but we are going to try and follow up some of the older arrangements as sensitively as we can to check if the plots are still wanted. The Council is bound by a legal agreement that determines how we manage the allocation of burial plots and any decisions will be made in accordance with this.

The next Parish Council meeting will be held on November 10th at the Caudwell Day Centre at 7pm.

Elaine Wade



Matthew Barber

Your voice in
Thames Valley

Planning for Safer Communities

My work as Police & Crime Commissioner is not just about working alongside the police. There is collaboration with other blue light emergency services; each county has a body called a Combating Drugs Partnership which is a collection of police, NHS and public health and a huge overlap into the world of local councils, such as the work of Youth Offending Teams who will become involved when children are arrested by the police.

Although not a statutory consultee, there is a particular involvement in the planning process that many people are not aware of. Thames Valley Police employ Crime Prevention Advisors who are consulted on planning applications and major developments. Small changes, such as making sure parking areas are overlooked by neighbouring properties or that alleyways are well lit can help to both reduce crime and make people feel safer.

Sometimes this involves commenting on major projects such as the safety plans at the long-awaited new stadium for Oxford United, or seeking to secure funding for policing when significant new housing developments add to local infrastructure needs.

Ultimately these planning decisions are for local councils to make, but it is important that local people have their say and that safety concerns and issues raised by the police are taken into account. This is why I have recently raised the potential risks of turning off many of the county's street lights. In a large number of our smaller villages, including mine, we do not have street lights, and no-one is arguing to introduce them, but even those of us who are happy without lighting in more rural locations will want to see well-lit streets in our more urban areas. It was a significant win to ensure that parish and town councils will now have to agree to any proposals to turn off street lights as a result of public pressure.

Matthew Barber
Police and Crime Commissioner for Thames Valley

Keeping your pets calm during fireworks



Many animals find fireworks very scary; here are some tips to help them to stay more calm:

- (for dog owners) Walk your dog during daylight hours to avoid firework times.
- Create a safe haven in your home, with their favourite toys and blankets in a safe place they can access at any time. When fireworks go off, they may choose to go there as they know it's safe.
- Close windows and curtains to muffle the sound of fireworks. Blackout your pet's safe haven, so they can't see any flashes.
- Put on some music to mask the firework sounds. Try Classic FM; each year they play calming classical music for pets.
- Ignore the firework noises yourself.
- Use pheromone diffusers, which disperse calming chemicals into the room.
- Make a 'hidey' box where they can feel extra safe: www.cats.org.uk/cats-blog/how-to-make-a-cat-tent. All you need is an old t-shirt and a box!



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Dear residents,

Following last month's revelation about the skyrocketing tripling of costs for the new **local banded reservoir** (which will be passed on to our bills for many years to come), I am taking a motion to council to request the Secretary of State to direct Thames Water to re-evaluate the options for their Water Resource Management Plan against other options such as the Severn-Thames Transfer Pipe, which probably now make better sense, against a range of measures, and save us against another national infrastructure white elephant like HS2. Public consultation by Thames Water opens on 28th October and runs to 13th January, and I encourage everyone to take an interest. I will provide more details next month.

The new **HIFI road** from the A34 Didcot/Milton Interchange past Appleford, across the Thames to Culham and on past Clifton Hampden is moving along swiftly through detailed design and eight new detailed planning applications have been submitted this month, which I am working through carefully with local parish councils.

For **Appleford**, we have been pushing for improvements for the train station and services. However, to make the station usable, it needs to be much more accessible, and we are redeveloping plans in line with HIFI to open a safe path over the bridge next to the platform exits and onto joining the safe cycling and walking network enabled by HIFI. The latest piece in the puzzle is FCC have agreed to provide land for a new car park for the station which will enable users from Sutton Courtenay and elsewhere to benefit from the station and help drive demand, reinforcing the need for more trains stopping there. Fingers crossed.

Linked to this, I am now chair of the **Abingdon Localities group**, which looks at council developments and plan across the area to get relevant councillors input and join them up into cohesive plans. HIFI presents an excellent opportunity for improvements beyond Appleford too.

Work continues to improve the Hobby Horse Lane byway across to Sutton Courtenay, and the route to Europa is being considered, with

...improvements at the Tollgate Road A415 crossing in design stage and funded for completion. The new cycle and foot path linking Abingdon from Peep-O-Day Lane through to Milton Park and onto Steventon is also resourced, and the feasibility study for it starts this autumn. The main sticking point will probably be agreeing with local landowners to give up a strip of land to enable it to be built. I hope this is straightforward.

At the same time, there will be a feasibility study and local consultation for what to do with the **Steventon bridge**. Remedial work finished in the summer to repair it, but it remains restricted to one-way traffic because of safety concerns. There are lots of options, and I favour a solution like going under a narrow rail bridge – two-way car traffic is possible but big vehicles have to use the centre of the road, forcing others to give way.

The last thing to report is that the Planning Committee threw out the application to extend the **Waste Transfer Facility at Sutton Courtenay** from 2030 to 2050. This reinforces the overall plan for restoring the overall landfill site from 2030, rather than letting it go on indefinitely. Although restoration is likely to include clean energy developments, this is much better than a dirty waste site. I will work with landowners and the council to ensure plans meet our needs as well as theirs and strategic energy infrastructure needs.

Peter Stevens



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CURLEWS AT MARCHAM



Many local residents use the fields on the far side of the A34 to walk their dogs and take exercise themselves, but few will be aware that a nationally rare bird (the Curlew) has been found nesting close to Marcham Mill.

Since retiring several years ago, I've spent much of my time volunteering for nature conservation organisations in Oxfordshire; RSPB Otmoor, Natural England and the Freshwater Habitats Trust. The latter organisation is looking at whether Curlews actually nest along the Ock or just use the fields to feed, I've spent many hours surveying the fields along the river.

In May I was lucky enough to locate a nest with four eggs which were on the verge of hatching. Looking at the picture it's clear that a couple of the eggs are starting to hatch – this is called 'pipping'.

Further observation over the next few weeks established that young birds were very likely to be with the adult birds; it's difficult to see small chicks in tall grass! Unfortunately, no young birds were seen to fledge. It's highly likely that the fledglings were predated by ground or aerial predators. The current threat to these lovely birds is, of course, the reservoir.

This local work is part of wider effort covering lowland Britain. If you'd like to know more, look for 'Curlew River' on YouTube or search Google for 'Wild Oxfordshire curlew recovery'.

www.wildoxfordshire.org.uk/projects/curlew

Darryl Campling

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DRAYTON HALL NEWS

Do look out for local ads, nearer the time, of the **Bob Cutting Big Band** (very popular) who will be doing a show here on Dec 20th.

It's another **ANTIQUES Fair**, Sunday Nov 2nd, 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 Dec 7th too! And the day before, 6th, Kathy is running her good-cause **XMAS CRAFT FAIR** - with Santa!

Oh, and before that, Lee is having another **Jewellery Valuation** session, best prices paid, Wednesday for a change (Nov 5th), and THIS time he's coming early, 9am start (to midday). He usually does a leaflet drop just before his session, but he's looking for all manner of precious metals, even broken items, watches (working or not), chains, rings, brooches, or old coins if they're pre-1947, etc. Plus that same morning, Kathy is running her 'good-cause' **Coffee Morning**, and she's intending to make them WEEKLY from now on (10 to noon - see local signs and Facebook notices). So, come along for coffee and cake (or a naughty bacon sarnie too?), & perhaps get a Xmas bonus from an old brooch, chain, ring, coins or broken watch?!

Our Friday exercise classes continue, **KEEP FIT with FAYE**, (11am for an hour, SITTING if you need), then **YOGA**, run by Diane ('Bliss' Yoga), at 1.30 . . .BUT . . .please do check with Diane (p20) if you fancy the yoga, as she has occasional other commitments at present.

Our **Bowls & Badminton** groups are also happy to welcome new members at present, and Sabrina (**Karate**, Tues & Fridays) tells me she has space for a couple more members (free trial session too).

Sat 29th Nov, it's the **W.I. Craft Fair**, so come along and check them out for that special gift?

PARENTS, please take NOTE! Due to the persistent **vandalism**, with kids accessing the roof and ripping off guttering, it's been decided to apply anti-climb paint. So, if one of yours comes home one day with self and/or clothing adorned with sticky black gunk, please don't complain to the committee.

A small group of trespassers, early teens I hear, were caught on the roof in mid-Oct and started mouthing off at the person concerned. That turned out to be an off-duty police officer, walking their dog on the rec, so the relevant parents may have already had a uniformed visit?

GRATEFUL THANKS to all those who bring clothes items to support the **Child Air Ambulance charity bin** - BUT --- if you find the bin is FULL, then PLEASE call the charity and TELL THEM it's full?!

Tony Holmes



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LETTER FROM WESTMINSTER



A Message from Your MP

The past month has been particularly busy and productive, marked by the Liberal Democrat Conference, ongoing parliamentary work and a range of constituency engagements. Most notably, I'm honoured to have been appointed as the Liberal Democrats' Transport Spokesperson, and my team and I are currently coordinating the transition to this new role.

At the Liberal Democrat Conference in Bournemouth, it was a pleasure to meet so many people and discuss the needs of residents and communities in Didcot and Wantage with national charities and organisations. I was especially pleased to contribute to policy discussions and outline key local issues. Particular highlights included interviews with ITV and LBC, taking part in a Q&A on men's and boys' mental health and wellbeing, and proposing a new policy to protect the UK's space sector - citing the vital role of Culham and Harwell in supporting our national economy.

In Parliament, I attended an event focused on the future of the UK Space Strategy, spoke at the High-Speed Rail Group's Political Engagement Network meeting, and met with Wave Optics, a manufacturing site based in the constituency. I attended the launch of the new PlaceShapers report exploring the potential of housing associations and continued my ongoing work as a member of the Transport Committee.

Back in the constituency, I met with the new parking regulators and the Orchard Centre in Didcot along with the Centre's manager, where I pressed them on the new parking payment method, antisocial behaviour, Christmas lights this year, and traffic issues – I will be meeting with them again and reporting back. I also enjoyed meeting young people from Youth Challenge, and attended a climate event in Oxford with constituents. I have also recently released a health survey, which hundreds have already responded to:
<https://oxonlibdems.typeform.com/25healthsurvey>.

Outside of work, I managed to take a short cycling trip across Europe - a great reminder of the potential for improving cycling infrastructure here at home. There is so much we can learn from our European partners about safe, accessible, and sustainable travel. As always, if there is anything you feel I can help you with please do not hesitate to contact me and my team at olly.glover.mp@parliament.uk, or by leaving a voice message on 0207 219 7657.

Best wishes,

Ollly Glover

MP for Didcot and Wantage Constituency

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DRAYTON DIARIES

(MOSTLY) HALL DIARY

All events held in Drayton Hall unless otherwise stated. To book the Hall email bookings@draytonvh.co.uk or call on **(01235) 531180**. See the website: www.draytonvh.co.uk
To book the Caudwell DC contact **Vicky Malin**, malinfamily27@gmail.com or **07525 462630**.

Sat 1st	9:00 am	Dog Show (private club)
Sun 2nd	9:00 am	Antiques Fair (to 3pm)
Wed 5th	9:00 am	Jewellery Valuation (to noon)
	10:00 am	Coffee Morning (to be weekly)
Sat 8th	12 noon	Private Function (child's party)
	5:00 pm	Private Function
Sun 9th	1:00 pm	Private Function
Mon 10th	7:00 pm	Parish Council Meeting (Caudwell DC)
Sat 15th		Private Function (all day)
Sun 16th		Private Function (all day)
Sat 22nd	9:00 am	Hamster show
Sat 29th	11:00 am	WI Craft Fair (to 3pm)
Sun 30th	10:00 am	Private Function (child's party)

REGULAR EVENTS

Weekly in Drayton Hall unless stated otherwise. [## = Small Hall in Village Hall]

If an entry is incorrect, please contact an editor.

MONDAYS

2:00pm	Short Mat Bowling Club Session
4:00pm	Damascus Youth ## (to 5pm for yr 6+)
7:15pm	Badminton
7:45pm	Bell-ringing for 1.5 hours (<i>St Peter's</i>)

TUESDAYS

9:30am	Pilates (Alexandra Merson 07788 248925)
1:45pm	Drayton Art Group until 4 pm (<i>Caudwell DC</i>)

TUESDAYS (continued)

2:30pm	Tuesday Connect - 1st Tues (<i>Church</i>)
6:30pm	Karate/'Dojang X' (Sabrina 07938 537310)

WEDNESDAYS

10:00am	Pebbles Baby Group (<i>Church</i>)
1:30pm	Whist Drive (<i>Caudwell DC</i>)
1:45pm	U3A Science/Tech, 1st Weds (07890 385931) ##
2:00pm	Drayton Wives (last Wednesday, most months) ##
2:00pm	Badminton
6:00pm	Brownies (term-time) Laura 07916 459435 ##
6:45pm	Short Mat Bowling Club

THURSDAYS

9:30am	Parent & Toddler Group
9:45am	Holy Communion (<i>St Peter's Lady Chapel</i>)
11:00am	Baptist Café (to 1pm) (<i>Caudwell DC</i>)
2:00pm	Short Mat Bowling Club Session
2:00pm	Crafts Group (2nd Thursday – run by U3A Kate 01235 550486) ##
5:30pm	Rainbows (girls 5 to 7 yrs) ##
7:30pm	Sequence Dancing (01235 531701)
7:30pm	WI meeting (2nd Thurs) <i>Caudwell DC</i>
7:30pm	Drayton Community Choir (2nd/4th Thurs) Kay 01235 204187 <i>Church Room</i>

FRIDAYS

11:00am	Keep Fit with Faye 07815 583591
1:30pm	Bliss Yoga: Diane 07469 767500)
4:15pm	Karate/'Dojang X' (07938 537310)

SUNDAYS

(**)	For all the latest info on their Services (Thursday communion, & especially Sundays), see <i>St Peter's Church</i> page
6:00pm	Evening Service (<i>Baptist Church</i>)