



DRAYTON CHRONICLE

VOLUME 49 ISSUE 6

JULY 2026

EDITOR: VICKY BILLINGHAM

CHRONICLE INFORMATION

KEY DATES

The next Drayton Chronicle will be the August issue, edited by Gaston Legris.

editor@draytonchronicle.net

Issue	Advertising deadline	Contribution deadline
August	July 17th	July 20th
September	August 14th	August 17th

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.

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

Note that these inboxes are not monitored constantly; typically the production team works on the next issue during the middle two weeks of each month.

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.

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
Non-Drayton resident	£8	£22	£43

Double-sized adverts (approx. 9cm x 9cm) are charged at twice the above rates. All advertising MUST be paid for in advance.

Requests for advertisements should (preferably) be emailed to the Chronicle advertising manager (advertising@draytonchronicle.net), or placed in the box at Vickery's. We will then contact you.

Help your Drayton Chronicle!

The Chronicle team is a happy band of volunteers looking for some more people:



- **Agents** who deliver the Chronicles (a short walk once a month)
- **Advertising co-ordinators** (a few hours, approx. three times a year, organising the adverts, sending invoices, etc.)
- **One new distributor:**

Our sincerest thanks go to Linda Semmens who, after many years, is stepping down as a distributor.

This role involves taking delivery of the Chronicles from the printer (they deliver to you), sorting them into bags for each agent and then delivering them to each agent. If we have a team of 4 then this works out at 3 times a year.

If you think this is something you can offer then please get in touch. Kay, an experienced distributor, will go through it with you in detail and join you for your first round. The distributor team support each other and it can be a nice way to feel part of the village.

If you'd like to get involved, please email editor@draytonchronicle.net

ST PETER'S CHURCH

Part of the DAMASCUS Parish www.damascusparish.org.uk

Rector: Revd Helen Kendrick
Administrator: Alison Bampton 01235 847179
Curate: Rev Dov Whittle 07586 969985
Email: rector@damascusparish.org.uk or admin@, or curate@

The church remains open daily (Sun-Sat, 10-4pm).

SERVICES INFORMATION: JULY 2026

Thursday 2nd	9:45 am	Holy Communion
Sunday 5th	9:30 am	Holy Communion
Thursday 9th	9:45 am	Celtic Prayer
Sunday 12th	9:30 am	Family Service
Thursday 16th	9:45 am	Holy Communion
Sunday 19th	8:00 am	Holy Communion (BCP) with prayers for healing
	9:30 am	Holy Communion with prayers for healing
Thursday 23rd	9:45 am	Holy Communion
Sunday 26th	9:30 am	Morning Praise Service

REGULAR EVENTS

First Monday	2pm - 4pm	Knit & Natter No need to be a knitter, if you'd just like a natter
Mondays	7:30pm	Bellringing practice
Tuesdays	2:30pm - 4pm	First Tuesday Connections All welcome for a cuppa & chat
Wednesdays (term-time)	10am	Pebbles Baby & Toddler Group For more information contact Katy or Cheryl draytonpebbles@hotmail.com

YOU STAY WE PRAY

28th-4th July Steventon Rd; Kiln Ln; Mott Cottages; Barton Ct
5th-11th Eastway; Eastway MHP
12th-18th Church Ln; Henleys Ln; Caudwell Close; Gravel Ln
19th-25th Abingdon Rd; Oday Hill
26th-1st Aug Binning Close; Haywards Rd



**St. Peter's Church
Drayton**



Children's Society Coffee Morning

Saturday 25th July 10am to 12 noon

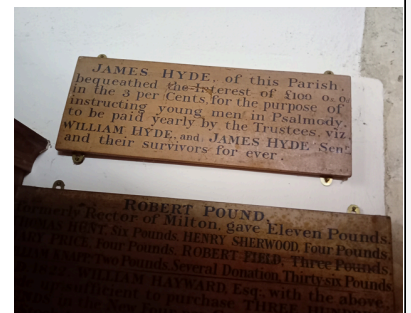
Do come along to **10 Corneville Road, Drayton** and enjoy a chat and a cup of tea or coffee.
Raffle!

Everyone welcome

The Children's Society

I was interested to read the article in the Drayton Chronicle about the Hyde Family. In St Peter's Church, there is a particular bequest made by one James Hyde for boys to be trained to sing psalms in church. Money from that bequest was still coming to the church when I was Vicar of Drayton some years ago. Unfortunately, there is no date on the plaque in the church which is in the Choir Vestry - but the plaque underneath was for the Rev. Frederick Theobald, who was there in the mid-1800s.

**Josie Midwinter,
former vicar
of Drayton**



Follow us on Facebook: scan the QR code or search for St Peter's Church, Drayton, Abingdon



ST PETER'S CHURCH



St. Peter's is hosting a free concert; see below.

Donations towards the upkeep of the church would be greatly appreciated.

Music for a Summer's Evening
An Informal evening concert of delightful music for Flute, Violin, Viola, Clarinet, Piano, Organ and Bagpipes

Sally Adams Flute
Rosie Bruce Violin/Viola
Veronica Barnes Piano/Organ
Joe Moretti Clarinet/Bass Clarinet/Bagpipes

St Peter's Church Drayton 7pm July 24th

Helen's Farewell Service

Come and help us say thank you and goodbye to the **Reverend Canon Helen Kendrick** as she retires from fulltime parish ministry, after over 23 years in Sutton Courtenay with Appleford and the DAMASCUS Parish.

You are invited to **All Saints' Church Sutton Courtenay, 10:30am on Sunday 30th August.** Followed by a Bring & Share Lunch in the River Room.

Everyone is welcome to attend both the celebratory service and the lunch, but to help with catering please **RSVP by 31st July** to: Alison Budd alison@pbudd.me or The DAMASCUS Parish Office, All Saints' Church, Sutton Courtenay, Abingdon, OX14 4AE. 01235 847179.

If you would like to contribute to Helen's leaving gift then donations can be made online:

Account Name: The DAMASCUS PCC
Sort Code: 40-52-40, Account Number: 00031419.
Reference: Helen

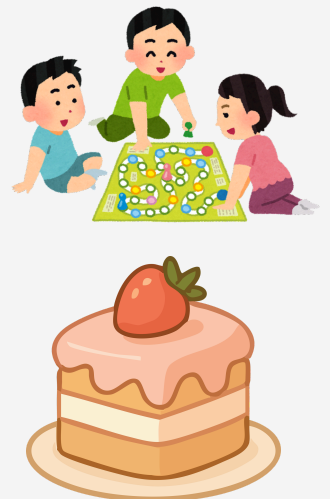
Or in cash, or cheque (payable to The DAMASCUS PCC) via the Parish Office (address above) by 21st August. Thank you.

DAMASCUS Parish Families Afternoon

For families of all ages and sizes
Come and join us for games, chat and cake

Sunday 5th July - 2-4pm
Appleford Village Hall
Main Road, OX14 4PF





☀ Do you run a local group or community project? If you're working to make your neighbourhood safer or more connected, **the Community Fund** could help bring your ideas to life. We support a wide range of initiatives, from youth activities to projects that tackle crime and support vulnerable people. The Fund is open for applications twice a year. Join our mailing list today so you don't miss out: <https://www.thamesvalley-pcc.gov.uk/get-involved/community-fund/>.

Drayton Art Group

The Art Group has now been meeting for over two decades. We meet in the Caudwell Day Centre on Tuesday afternoons starting at 1.45pm.

We are always looking for new members and if you are a beginner or an experienced artist and would like to come for a **free taster session** on July 7, please contact David at sue-and-david-icke@hotmail.co.uk.

There is no set subject for sessions; you can choose your own and we use a wide range of media: watercolours, gouache, acrylic, oil pastels and crayons.



Privet Hawk-Moths

I found these two privet hawk-moths mating on the entrance to the Manor Farm green. They are not rare but are night flyers, so are seldom seen.

Privet hawk-moths are Britain's biggest, with a wingspan of up to 12cm. I thought the photo might interest some readers.



Andrew Bax

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Let's win the match against waste!



With the World Cup excitement already kicked off, many of us will be gathering with friends and family to watch the games. Naturally, more evening viewing means more snacks, takeaways and drinks.

To help ensure things go in the correct bin afterwards, here is a quick "cheat sheet" on how to sort your post-match waste. Thank you for playing your part!

Green bin: empty cans, bottles, plastic, foil takeaway packaging (all rinsed out), clean cardboard.

Black bin: pizza boxes and food wrapping stained with grease, empty crisp packets

Food bin: ALL food waste

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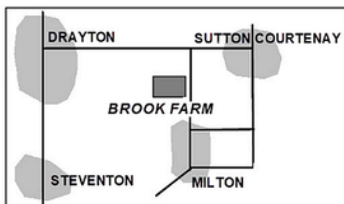
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Nature-Friendly Summer Activities for Kids

As summer kicks off, it's the perfect time for all ages to get outdoors and help out your local wildlife (even on those not-so-sunny days).



1. Make a mammal footprint tunnel.

What you'll need: sand or flour, a ruler, a small and shallow tray, and wet cat food (meat only).

- Prepare the tray: fill the tray with flour or sand and use the ruler to smooth the surface.
- Test the surface: lightly press your finger into the flour or sand – it should leave an indent. If it doesn't, smooth it over again.
- Add bait (optional): place a dish with pet food in the middle of the tray.
- Set the tunnel: place the tunnel outside in a quiet, sheltered spot, such as along a hedge or wall. Leave it out for up to a week, checking the tray daily for tracks.
- Identify the footprints: take photos of the prints with a ruler for scale. Use ID guides to identify your guests.

2. Make seed bombs

Re-wilding in the palm of your hand! You'll need:

- 1 cup natural powdered clay
- 1 cup peat-free compost
- 1–2 packets of native wildflower seeds (pollinator-friendly is best)
- Water (a little at a time)
- Bowl for mixing
- Tray or cardboard for drying

1. Mix the dry ingredients: in a bowl, mix 1 part powdered clay, 1 part compost, and seeds.
2. Add water slowly: add water a little at a time until the mixture sticks together, then shape into golf-ball-sized portions and place on the tray to dry. It shouldn't be too wet.

3. Dry them out: place the seed bombs on a tray or cardboard and dry for 24–48 hours.

4. Throw and grow! Once dry, the seed bombs are ready to be tossed into bare soil areas in gardens or school grounds. Try to plant them before rain is forecast, or water them.

3. Go fungi spotting

Neither animal nor plant, they help break down old leaves, wood, and other natural materials, turning them into soil that supports new life.

Fungi are best found in:

- Nearby woodlands
- Around fallen trees or logs
- On leafy ground and tree stumps
- In damp, shady spots after rain

What you'll need:

- A notebook or spotting sheet
- A fungi ID app (iNaturalist or Shroomify UK)
- A magnifying glass (optional)
- Gloves

The most common fungi in the summer are:

- Waxcaps: Known for their shiny caps, Waxcaps can be red, violet, yellow, green, or pink. They are found in meadows or parks.
- Parasol mushrooms: Tall fungi with a wide, round cap, a brown-to-black scaly top, white gills, and a white or off-white stem. Often found in woods and meadows.
- Chicken of the Woods: Easy to spot thanks to its bright sulphur-yellow colour. It forms thick, soft, fan-shaped shelves and grows high up on the trunks of trees.

Safety tips: (1) Never pick or eat any wild mushrooms, (2) take photos, not samples, (3) wash your hands thoroughly afterwards, (4) stick to public footpaths and (6) avoid damaging natural habitats.



Chicken of the woods
Laetiporus sulphureus

UPDATE ON DRAYTON'S WAR SACRIFICES

Many long-term Drayton residents will recall the excellent war research work carried out by ex-Drayton resident John Roberts who had moved to the village from Portsmouth in September 1940 with his parents. His work covered WW1, WW2 and the sole Korean War casualty from Drayton, Gerald Chapman.

John's research covering WW1 was published in the July 2014 edition of the Chronicle to coincide with the Centenary of the start of WW1 and is still available via the Chronicle archive on the Drayton village website.

There is an excellent article about Drayton's WW1 hero Edward John Mott VC DCM in that edition, which is well worth revisiting. John also created a short guide to the village's history, including St Peter's Church and an article about the Sutton Wick Air Crash in 1957. All of this material was collated into a book previously stored in St Peter's Church and also the Wheatsheaf Inn before it closed.

Although I moved away from Drayton in the mid 1980's, I was fortunate to cross John's path while he was carrying out some war research and we have cooperated on a number of war history research projects, mainly WW1, for various people. John has always been dogged in his research, even when the odds have been apparently stacked against him, with a number of research avenues being exhausted.

As many war historians will be aware, July 1st 2026 represents the 110th anniversary of the Battle of the Somme, which was the bloodiest day in the history of the British Army and one of the most infamous days of World War One. On that date the British forces suffered 57,470 casualties, including 19,240 fatalities. They gained just three square miles of territory.

The Thiepval Memorial in France commemorates over 72,000 British and South African servicemen who died in the Battles of the Somme during the First World War and have no known grave. We have now been able to complete the Drayton WW1 history record, thanks to a mixture of Ancestry Pension Records from WW1, use of an AI tool and some good old-fashioned reading, including Regimental War Diaries. Although the names of the Drayton Fallen were recorded on the memorial plaque over the lychgate at St Peter's Church, John's research had often detailed where they lived in Drayton, when and where they died and where they were buried (if known). However, more detail about three more of Drayton's fallen had proved very hard to identify.

Here are the updated details:

Private James William Biles – Service No: 32754, Ox & Bucks Light Infantry 6th Battalion. Killed In Action 6th October 1916, age 24, at the Battle of the Somme. Son of Henry T and Mary Biles, High Street, Drayton, Berks

Commemorated on the Thiepval Memorial: Pier and Face 10 A and 10 D (no known grave).

Corporal Richard Albert Watts – Service No: 26708, Machine Gun Corps 113th (Infantry) Company. Killed In Action 8th July 1916 at the Battle of the Somme. Son of William Albert Watts, Abingdon Road, Drayton, Berks

Commemorated on the Thiepval Memorial: Pier and Face 5 C and 12 C (no known grave).

Rifleman Reginald Carpenter – Service No: 44927, Royal Irish Rifles 15th Battalion (Secondary Unit: formerly London Regiment (Queen's Westminster Rifles))
Killed In Action: 7th June 1917 at the Battle of Messines Ridge. Son of Mrs Kate Carpenter, Drayton, Berks
Commemorated on the Ypres (Menin Gate) Memorial Addenda Panel 58 (no known grave)

The addition of these three names to John's research completes his quest to document the ultimate sacrifice made by those residents of Drayton who answered the country's call in WW1. On behalf of Drayton village, thank you John for the immense time and effort you invested in your research which has left a lasting legacy for future generations to learn more about our village's brave ancestors. Incidentally, John is now living in Southsea, but keeps in regular contact with matters related to Drayton.

Adrian Smith, ex-resident of Drayton



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DISTRICT COUNCIL REPORT



Hi, all,

Joint Local Plan

I do apologise for always banging on about this, but it will be the fundamental basis of all planning applications across both Vale and South Oxfordshire going forwards.

The current JLP under submission ("JLP 2041") is being examined, with the second stage of the Inspectors' hearing sessions on 7-9 July. The setback last September was covered here in depth, but it is now back on track following the Government removing the issue on which the Inspectors raised their issues ("Duty to Co-operate").

The Government have thrown more work into the process and have decreed that we need to start working on the next Local Plan already (this decree applies to all Planning Authorities in the country). At the time of writing, we're consulting on whether it would be useful to work again with South Oxfordshire on another Joint Local Plan - I suspect we will.

Appeal against refusal of permission for further building behind Halls Close

Last year, a speculative application for a further 31 houses behind Halls Close was rejected by the Vale's Planning Department. The key reason for refusal was that it is an unallocated site beyond the built-up limits of the village and therefore contrary to the previous Local Plan (the one still in force until the new JLP is adopted. Not to be confused with the next Local Plan mentioned above. If you're confused, consider how we feel...).

This underlines the importance of the Local Plans. Concerns over the potential effects of the nearby Drayton Sewage Works were also raised, but that was effectively a side point.

Developers have managed to force through new developments outside of the Local Plan allocations and outside of village boundaries before, but needed to rely on the Vale lacking a "Five Year Land Supply," which meant that the rate of house building in the Vale had fallen below the levels expected by the Government (that the pipeline ...

...of building houses did not meet the expected rate over the next five years) and therefore a "tilted balance" applied to support extra development.

However, as of right now, we have 5.81 years of development in the pipeline across the Vale and the argument of "tilted balance" should not apply. More recently, we've seen attempts by developers to force these through on appeal get rejected by Planning Inspectors (the developers have usually tried to argue that we actually lack a five-year land supply after all, from whatever alternative reasoning they can come up with). We'll see what happens with this one.

The appeal will sit from the 7th of July for four days at the Great Hall, Cholsey, Wallingford.

Support for EV charging for residents without private parking

Over the next two years, Oxfordshire residents will benefit from the installation of 1500 public electric vehicle (EV) charging points - doubling the number currently available in the county. Public EV charger deployment will be prioritised in areas where a high proportion of residents lack off-street parking.

Community Hub - support

As always, if you need help, do not hesitate to contact the Community Hub for support:

Tel: 01235 422600

Email:

communitysupport@southandvale.gov.uk

Website: whitehorsedc.gov.uk/costofliving

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

All the best,

Andy Cooke

Cllr Andy Cooke, Drayton Ward, VoWHDC

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LOCAL GROUPS

DRAYTON WIVES



Our speaker this month was **Robert Brewer**, who spoke on the role of a TV and film extra.

Robert is originally from Greenford, Essex. He joined the army as a junior soldier and then went on to join the Queen's Regiment. After that, he joined the Thames Valley Police in the protection department, looking after high-profile people including the Queen Mother and many politicians. He then left the police, walked the Inca Trail, and wrote a book about his life called *One Head, Many Hats*, before becoming a supporting artist!

He then had what he called a "sliding doors" moment (or what I call a "light bulb" moment) when he saw an advertisement in the Milton Keynes library. It was looking for extras in a Hollywood blockbuster and asked for an up-to-date head-and-shoulders photo. Soon after, an invitation arrived for a photoshoot. There, the conversations around him consisted entirely of which stars the other attendees had already worked with.

The production team liked his photo, and he was invited to Pinewood Studios to work on a film with the code name *Big Ears*. This turned out to be the remake of *Dumbo*, which was half-animated and half-action. Robert's day started at 6 am, and his hair and makeup took two hours. Since then, he has worked on Hollywood films such as *Doctor Strange* and *The Batman*, as well as TV soaps, including *EastEnders* and *Holby City*.

One of his most memorable experiences was playing a Spectre agent in the Bond film *No Time to Die*. He had to supply his own tuxedo, though the one he bought from a known shop turned out to be unsuitable! He has thoroughly enjoyed his work as an extra. He noted that anyone can apply through an agency, which you can easily find on Google! When you get the call, the phrase "That's a wrap!" just might be the start of your career!

Lisa Lammiman

DRAYTON TABLE TENNIS CLUB



32nd Club Senior Championship held on 17th May at Thameside School

-Format: 16 players competed in handicapped matches to balance different skill levels.

Singles Championship

-Format: The top two players from each group advanced to the main knockout stage.

-Semifinals: Stuart Pringle defeated Peter Wiblin; Bastian Skjelsted defeated Kevin Davies.

-Final: Bastian Skjelsted defeated Stuart Pringle (43-40) to become the 2026 Club Champion before moving overseas; Stuart's second consecutive year as runner-up.

Plate Competition

-Final: Chris Blencowe defeated Matthew Davies (44-41).

Doubles Championship

-Semifinals: Chris Blencowe & Lishuang Cao defeated Rob Hudson & Alec Winton (2-0); Fred Marlin & Adam Zwolinsky defeated Bastian Skjelsted & Michael Russell (2-1).

-Final: Fred Marlin & Adam Zwolinsky won the championship, defeating Chris and Lishuang in two close games (12-10, 11-9).

The event went very smoothly, thanks to the club secretary Matt Harding. The match results were updated regularly on a screen.

John Gould, Chairman

The **Abingdon Quilters Exhibition Group**

would like to thank the Village Hall Committee for hiring out Drayton Hall to us for the weekend 17th-19th of April, and the work involved.

We had a very successful event and were able to donate £2,500 to each of our nominated charities, namely Thames Valley Air Ambulance and Flexicare.

Grateful thanks to all our raffle prize donors, and everyone who came!

We'll be back in 2028, hope to see you then!

PARISH COUNCIL REPORT



The Council last met on 8th June.

Walnut Meadows

The MUGAs are now ready for use. If you are a group or club who would like to book the MUGA for a free trial month, please contact Jon Fowler on Jon.fowler@draytonparish.gov.uk. We are also looking to offer some open sessions for community use.

The Council has approved a quote for installation of a new gate /height barrier at the entrance to sports facilities. The sports pitch contractor will be back on site to complete the perimeter track, install the secondary drainage and regrade the ditch to the north of the site.

Manor Farm

At the time of writing the wildflower meadow is in spectacular bloom and is full of birds and insects. This has required reseeding twice to reinstate the meadow. Have a walk along the path to the north of the site... good for the soul.

Burial Ground

The parish burial site is for use by current residents or in exceptional circumstances, those with close strong links to the parish. We will produce some guidance as to the meaning of a close, strong link. Whilst it is not possible to be completely prescriptive, it would cover individuals who have lived in the village for a significant period until recently, or where there are very strong living family links in the parish.

Planning

The appeal against the refusal of planning permission for 31 houses on land to the West of Little Smiths Farm will be held in Cholsey on July 7th and is set to last for 4 days. The Council's objections are clearly set out on the Vale of White Horse Planning Portal.

Clerk

Chris Price is now our clerk, replacing Anita James. Chris has been Deputy Clerk for several years, he lives in Drayton and we are really happy that he has agreed to take on this role.

Please contact the Council with any queries. You're welcome to attend our next meeting on July 13th in the Caudwell Day Centre at 7pm.

Elaine Wade

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The **Annual General Meeting** of GARD will be held on Friday 3rd July at 8pm in the Millenium Room, Steventon Village Hall. All are welcome but only members may vote. You may become a GARD member at the door.

Remember: Thames Water do not have planning permission for any reservoir. They plan to apply for this in November 2026 at the earliest. See the GARD website for details of the planning (DCO) process.

Please help us fund the expert legal help we'll need to fight the DCO by donating to GARD via the website.

Leaflets: all households in Steventon, Milton, Drayton, Marcham, East and West Hanney, East Hendred and Rowstock should have received a leaflet either through the door or in the local news. South Abingdon has also been extensively leafletted. GARD is very grateful to the volunteers who have assisted this delivery, and to the news publications that allowed us to slip the leaflet into their June issue.

Millets and Q Gardens: GARD has held four Action Days, two in each place (great thanks to Millets Farm and to Q Gardens). We obtained 300 signatures for the Petition, which now has over 7,000 signatures. We gave out more leaflets and had many good conversations about the proposed reservoir. Again, thanks to the volunteers for this.

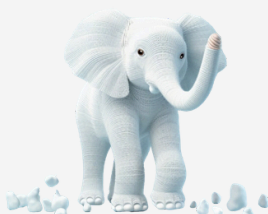
Abingdon, Grove, Wantage: an awareness campaign in these three centres is planned for July, at the request of residents there.

Please get in touch with the secretary gard.secretary@gmail.com if you have any ideas or would like to help.

Please sign up to GARD's mailing list, donate to our funds and join GARD. All these actions can be done through our website or by contacting gard.secretary@gmail.com.

Deborah Bennett

groupagainstreservoirdevelopment.org



A Rule 6 Party's View of the Little Smiths Farm Appeal

This article relates to the planning appeal referred to in the District Council and Parish Council reports.

Residents of The Dovecote, supported by Residents First C.I.C., have been granted Rule 6 status in this appeal. Nigel Billingham is acting on behalf of the Rule 6 Party.

The Rule 6 Party is allowed to participate formally in the planning inquiry alongside the Appellant and the District Council. This includes the ability to submit evidence, question witnesses and contribute directly to the inquiry process.

The Rule 6 Party has made clear throughout that its focus is on ensuring that any development which does proceed is delivered in a way that is safe, functions effectively in practice, integrates appropriately with neighbouring communities and remains sustainable over the long term.

While the principal issues in the appeal are expected to focus on planning policy matters, including the location of the site outside the settlement boundary and housing land supply, the Inspector has also identified a number of matters raised by the Rule 6 Party for consideration. These include highway safety, boundary arrangements, long-term stewardship and management of shared spaces, and the practical operation of planning conditions and legal agreements.

The Rule 6 Party has sought to work constructively with both the Appellant and the Council throughout the appeal process. A number of areas of agreement have already been identified through Statements of Common Ground, helping to narrow the issues that will need to be considered at the Inquiry. The public inquiry is scheduled to open on 7 July 2026.

Nigel Billingham

Rule 6 Party Representative

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DRAYTON HALL NEWS

Firstly, apologies to anyone who wanted to try the new class I mentioned last month (**Art for Beginners**), as it sadly didn't run – the famous unforeseen circumstances! And as yet I've not heard if she can reschedule.

Second, a shout out for Donna, who's taken over what she's renamed **Little Tots** (Thursday mornings), look out for the latest news of sessions on the village Facebook. Grateful thanks to Tracey, who's handed over that leader role after a long stint, time for a well-earned lie-down?

Next, I mentioned last time that the Hall now has **CCTV** installed, and we've already seen the excellent clarity of the pictures (no grainy old Crimewatch film!).

The Hall AGM returned all officers to their positions, but we'd love to hear from anyone who can help with day-to-day running, or in the imminent future with the schedule of planned improvements? **Could you please help?** See the back page for contact details.

Our Friday exercise classes continue, **Keep Fit with Faye**, (11am for an hour - seated if you prefer!). And mustn't forget **Pilates** (Tuesday mornings, Alex, she's been with us for ages), contact info on the back page. Other groups include (seniors) **Badminton** (Weds PM), & the **Bowls** Club (see back-page diary for sessions).

It's another **Antiques Fair**, Sunday July 5th, 9am to about 3pm, and a few new stalls apparently, that's plus Kathy running her great value cafe for one of her good causes (lovely breakfast!). Another one on August 2nd.

Kathy is also running **Coffee Mornings** in Hall on Wednesday mornings (10 to midday), all for good causes, not just tea, coffee and cake, but a well-filled bacon sarnie if you like!

Thanks to all those who brought clothes (and/or shoes) for the **charity bin** (in aid of the Child's Air Ambulance, a very good cause). But – partly due to the OCC's much-criticised policy at recycling centres, we saw many bags dumped when the bin is full – and that's officially fly tipping!

That bin has now been removed, due to that unsightly problem. **Other clothing** bins are in the village, at the Red Lion and the Danes/Mace shop, the local Tesco stores have them, and also the Gainsborough Green shops. You can also put non-reusable textiles (reusable clothes should go to charity shops) out in a carrier bag, by your green recycling bin.



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LETTER FROM WESTMINSTER



Update from Olly Glover MP

As summer approaches, I have been busy pushing the central Government for further support for businesses and continuing local visits across the constituency.

I was pleased to host Alistair Carmichael MP, who chairs the cross-party Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (EFRA) Select Committee, and Charlie Maynard MP, Member of Parliament for Witney, on a tour of Ed and David Clayton's farm in West Hendred. We spent the afternoon with farmers and representatives from both the National Farmers' Union and the Country Land and Business Association, listening to concerns about rising fuel and fertiliser costs and sustainable farming. Despite global instability, the Government does not yet have a long-term strategy to support farming, make supply chains fairer, and ultimately ensure people in the UK have access to enough affordable food. We will continue to push the Government to recognise the importance of investing in British food production and to support those who provide the food we consume.

In addition, I questioned the Secretary of State for Business and Trade on what support is available for local high streets, such as Broadway in Didcot, which are struggling amid overwhelming operating costs. The Minister claimed that delivering a 'fast-growing economy' is the solution, but many small and independent businesses have yet to benefit from this. I also led a backbench Westminster Hall debate on government support for high streets and raised a wide range of concerns on behalf of local businesses and town councils.

It was a pleasure to visit Stanford in the Vale Pre-school, where I met with staff and children and discussed SEND support, transport services, and other local challenges. I also participated in the Kingsgrove ground-breaking ceremony, marking the start of construction on the community hub, which will become a valuable venue for the new estate. I visited Clifton Hampden Primary School after they contacted me about long-standing repairs needed to their roof, which have prevented children from using one of the classrooms. I will continue to facilitate discussions between Oxfordshire County Council and the school to ensure repairs are completed promptly and effectively. Finally, senior staff at Harwell Campus gave me a tour of their new CO:LABS facility, which



will provide local jobs in innovative scientific research.

At Prime Minister's Questions, I expressed both my own frustration and that of many constituents regarding widespread dissatisfaction with the political system. In his response, Keir Starmer said he has full confidence in First Past the Post to provide stable government, but cross-party momentum is building in favour of a more proportional voting system, where the number of votes a party receives more closely reflects the number of seats it holds. I will continue to make the case for a fairer voting system for elections to Westminster and local councils when the Representation of the People Bill returns to the House of Commons.

Other matters I will be working on in the coming weeks include debating improvements to the Railways Bill, visiting more local schools and businesses, and responding to individuals across the constituency in need of help and support.

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,

Olly Glover, MP for Didcot and Wantage

To receive my email updates for residents please sign up at oxonld.uk/ollynewsletter

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DOVECOTE RESIDENTS TAKE CONTROL



Residents of The Dovecote reached an important milestone at our recent EGM. Members voted to appoint five resident directors to the Board of the Management Company, marking the first time that residents have secured direct representation within the company responsible for the future stewardship of the estate's communal areas.

The Management Company was established to own and manage the estate's communal assets, including public open space, landscaping, balancing ponds, footpaths, play facilities and shared infrastructure.

The appointment of resident directors represents an important step towards ensuring that future decisions affecting the estate are informed by those who live here. The new Board's immediate priorities are expected to include understanding the current status of the estate's communal assets, reviewing maintenance arrangements, improving transparency, and preparing for the eventual long-term stewardship of the open spaces and infrastructure.

The estate's open spaces were designed to provide an attractive and safe environment for residents, while also supporting biodiversity through the retention and creation of trees, hedgerows, wildflower meadows, wetland habitats and recreational facilities. The Management Company's role is to ensure these assets continue to be maintained for the benefit of both current and future residents.



The new resident directors would like to thank everyone who participated in the meeting and supported the process. The strong level of engagement demonstrated by residents reflects a shared commitment to protecting and enhancing the community for years to come.

We will keep residents informed (via our website and Facebook page) of significant developments relating to the Management Company and the future management of the estate.

Nigel Billingham

Chair, The Dovecote Residents' Association

THAMES VALLEY POLICE UPDATE



Last month, in collaboration with Thames Valley Police, I launched a new Vehicle Crime Strategy which aims to reduce cut crime - particularly theft of, and theft from vehicles.

Having your vehicle stolen, or something stolen from it, isn't a trivial crime – it can result in substantial financial loss, emotional stress and, depending on where the theft took place, security and community safety concerns.

Whilst we have seen a reduction in vehicle crime across Thames Valley, with almost 2,000 fewer incidents of theft from or theft of a motor vehicle in 2025 compared with 2024, there is more to do. We launched the plan at the latest of a series of free tool marking events.

Tradespeople are significantly more likely to experience vehicle crime because their tools are seen as high-reward, low-risk targets for thieves. According to statistics from Wickes, 4 in 10 tradespeople across the UK have experienced tool theft.

Tool marking is one of the simplest ways tradespeople can protect themselves from tool theft. Since March, my office has distributed over 500 SelectaDNA tool marking kits to electricians, plumbers, carpenters and other traders across the Thames Valley, increasing the number of tools marked, making them less desirable to thieves and protecting more tradespeople's tools and livelihoods.

There is more information about future vehicle marking sessions and how to get hold of a kit directly if you can't attend one of the sessions on my website: thamesvalley-pcc.gov.uk/vehiclecrime.

Matthew Barber

Police & Crime Commissioner - Thames Valley



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DRAYTON DIARIES

(MOSTLY) HALL DIARY FOR JULY

All events held in Drayton Hall unless otherwise stated. To book the Hall email **bookings@draytonvh.co.uk** or call **01235 531180**. Website: **www.draytonvh.co.uk**
To book the Caudwell DC contact **Vicky Malin, malinfamily27@gmail.com** or **07525 462630**.
Or, for small meetings, the Church Hall may be okay; see the St Peter's page in this edition.

Wed 1st	10:00 am	Coffee Morning (weekly, to noon)
Fri 3rd	8:00 pm	GARD AGM, Millenium Room, Steventon Village Hall
Sat 4th	9:30 am	Private Function (child's party)
Sun 5th	9:00 am	Antiques Fair (to 3pm)
Sun 12th	10:00 am	Private Function
Mon 13th	7:00 pm	Parish Council Meeting (Caudwell DC)
Sat 18th		Private Function
Sat 25th		Private Function (all day)
Sun 26th	1:00 pm	Private Function

REGULAR EVENTS

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

MONDAYS	
10:00am	Coffee Morning (Wives - 2 nd Monday) <i>Caudwell DC</i>
2:00pm	Short Mat Bowling Club Session
	(Damascus Youth are taking a break; see their Facebook group for updates)
7:15pm	Badminton (seeking new members)
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, till 4 pm (<i>Caudwell DC</i>)
2:30pm	Tuesday Connect - 1st Tues (<i>Church</i>)
6:30pm	Karate/'Dojang X' (Sabrina 07938 537310)

WEDNESDAYS	
10:00am	Pebbles Baby & Toddler Group (<i>Church</i>)
10:00am	Coffee Morning (for good causes, till noon)
1:30pm	Whist Drive (<i>Caudwell DC</i>)
1:45pm	U3A Science/Tech, 1st Wednesday (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 (seeking new members)
THURSDAYS	
9:30am	Little Tots (Donna, 07584 900040)
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 531107)
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
4:45pm	Karate/'Dojang X' (07938 537310)
SUNDAYS (see page 3 for all church services)	
6:00pm	Evening Service <i>Baptist Church</i>

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