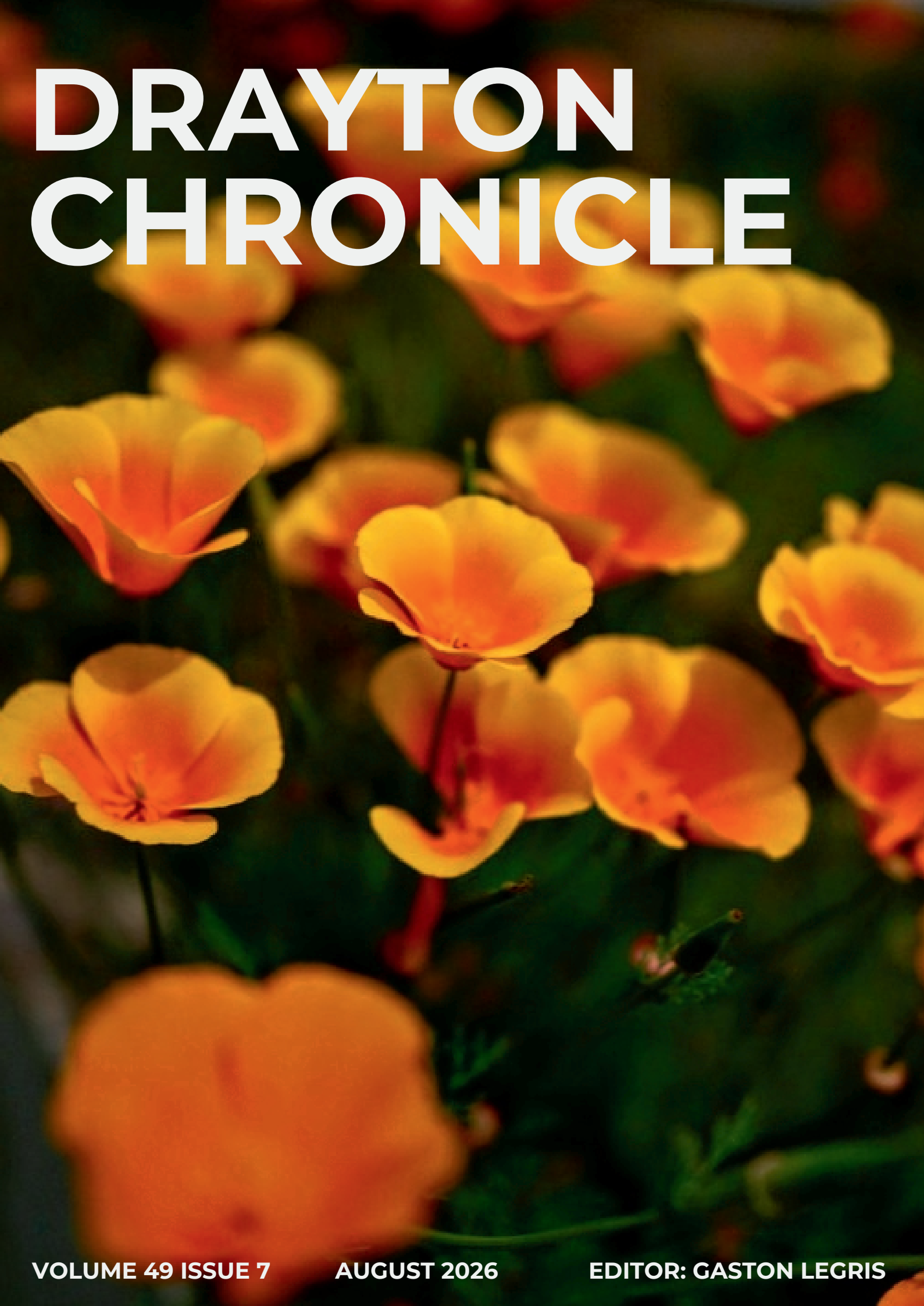




DRAYTON CHRONICLE

VOLUME 49 ISSUE 7

AUGUST 2026

EDITOR: GASTON LEGRIS

CHRONICLE INFORMATION

KEY DATES

The next Drayton Chronicle will be the September issue, edited by Margaret Inger
editor@draytonchronicle.net

Issue	Advertising deadline	Contribution deadline
September	August 14th	August 17th
October	September 18th	September 21st

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.

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.

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 *one more 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

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.

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@damascusparish.org.uk,
or curate@damascusparish.org.uk

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

SERVICES INFORMATION: AUGUST 2026

Sunday 2nd	9:30 am	Holy Communion
Thursday 6th	9:45 am	Holy Communion
Sunday 9th	9:30 am	Family Service
Thursday 13th	9:45 am	Celtic Prayer
Sunday 16th	8.00 a.m	Holy Communion (BCP) with prayers for healing
	9:45 am	Holy Communion with prayers for healing
Thursday 20th	9:45 am	Holy Communion
Sunday 23rd	9:45 am	Morning Praise
Thursday 27th	9:30 am	Holy Communion

REGULAR EVENTS

Mondays	2pm - 4pm	Knit & Natter No need to be a knitter, if you'd just like a natter
	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

26th-1st Aug Binning Close; Haywards Rd
2nd-8th Sutton Wick Lane ; Greenacres; Newman Lane; Conifer Drive
9th – 15th Hilliat Fields; Lyford Close
16th – 22nd Manor Close; The Green
23rd – 29th High St; Chiers Drive; Cheers Farm; Halls Close
30th Aug – 5th Sept Friars Mews ; Monk Close; Prior Drive; Abbot Crescent



The
DAMASCUS
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You are Invited to
Helen's Farewell Service.
All Saints' Church
Sutton Courtenay 10:30am,
Sunday 30th August 2026
Followed by a Bring and Share
Lunch in the River Room.



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

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 on line:

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

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



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



ST PETER'S CHURCH

From the DAMASCUS Ministry Team

The story is told of porters who were hired to carry a group's possessions on a jungle safari. The pace increased until the head porter called a halt: 'We've come so far, so fast, we need to take a break and allow our souls to catch up with our bodies!'

How often do we feel like this? August is a month when many of us take time off – whether by going away on holiday or simply spending some time at home, giving ourselves a break from the pressures of everyday life.

Jesus and His disciples often made 'strategic withdrawals' from the crowds: because so many people were coming and going that they did not even have a chance to eat, Jesus said to them, "Come with Me by yourselves to a quiet place and get some rest." (Mark 6:31–32). Jesus saw how tired and stressed His disciples were and wanted to give them a break in their busy lives. He loved them and cared about their well-being. He longs to do the same for us, so that we can restore the balance of work, rest and play in our lives.

Going on holiday gives us the opportunity to take time off, to let go of the burdens that we carry every day and receive again His rest for our souls: 'Come to Me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.' (Matthew 11:28).

The story is also told of the aged Apostle John playing with doves. A passing hunter expressed surprise at what a man as pious as John was doing. John pointed to the bow in the hunter's hand and asked him why he carried it with a loosened string. The hunter replied, 'It loses its strength unless it is given the chance to unbend.' John replied, 'Why are you surprised that a servant of Christ should relax to keep himself stronger for his work?'

With love and prayers,

Helen

The Reverend Helen Kendrick, Rector of the DAMASCUS Parish



This is taking place on **Saturday 12th September.**

If you would like to take part and raise funds for St Peter's—either by getting sponsorship to cycle or walk to churches in Oxfordshire, or by acting as a welcomer—please contact:

the Damascus Parish Office on 01235 847179 or at admin@damascusparish.org.uk.

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Dragons, fairies and folklore await

Step into the enchanting world of Oxfordshire's folklore at The Oxfordshire Museum, where local legends, mysterious customs and age-old tales come alive in their summer exhibition, Timeless Tales.

Wander through a magical woodland, discover fascinating artefacts and meet a dragon along the way! Little ones can also enjoy a special fairy door trail in the museum garden.

There's also a brilliant line-up of folkloric fun to get involved in, with activities and events running over the summer.

Timeless Tales, which opens to the public on 18 July and runs until 6 September at the Oxfordshire County Council-run museum in Woodstock, explores the county's rich folklore through tales of superstition, traditions and mythology.

For more information search for timeless tales at:
<https://news.oxfordshire.gov.uk>

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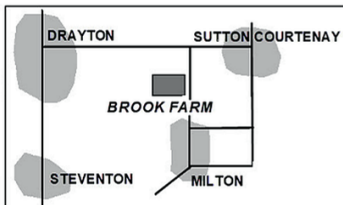
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Farewell to an Old Friend



Watching my old oak finally come down was deeply saddening. Having lived in this house since 1985, I always looked forward to seeing it standing proudly in the paddock. It had stood for centuries before I arrived, and I always felt privileged to be its custodian—a small part of Britain's living history.

The paddock has given our family many happy memories over the years. A few times each year, I enjoyed climbing onto the mower and cutting the grass, taking in the view of the old oak as I made my way around. When the children were growing up, the paddock was their playground. They raced their go-karts around the field for hours and built camps in the elderberry bushes that line the northern boundary. I also used to enjoy picking the elderberries to make wine. The oak watched over it all, becoming as much a part of our family's story as the landscape itself.

The tree had become something of a local landmark. A few years ago, when the Dovecote Estate was built around my land, a developer approached me about buying the plot. Their interest quickly faded when they discovered the oak was protected by a Tree Preservation Order because of its veteran status. I was rather pleased that such an important old tree had been recognised and protected.

Its end came as something of a mystery. We believe it may have been struck by lightning, as it came down in two separate stages rather than all at once. When the tree surgeon examined it, he found that although it had looked magnificent from the outside, the heart of the tree was completely dead. It was a reminder that even the strongest and oldest among us can hide unseen frailties. Although it is sad to see it gone, I am grateful to have shared my land with such a remarkable tree for over 40 years.

Alex Taylor

Group Against Reservoir Development Update

GARD Update – August 2026

“Did you hear about the water company that wanted to build a massive reservoir in Oxfordshire? Its argument didn't hold water.”
“If Thames Water does build this reservoir, at least we'll finally know where all our money went!”

Joking aside, Thames Water has no planning permission yet – it intends to submit its application (called a “Development Consent Order”, or DCO) in November 2026. However, the company is facing serious financial problems. The project is not certain to go ahead, and Thames Water's plan for the Severn–Thames Transfer is only a year behind the reservoir plan. GARD is working with the Vale of White Horse and Oxfordshire County Council to make sure key concerns are answered before Thames Water applies for its DCO. These concerns include flood risk, dam breach plans, and emergency drawdown designs, which Thames Water has not yet shared.

GARD is also encouraging parish councils to write to the Planning Inspectorate and will submit its own objections. This will help ensure local concerns are formally recorded during the DCO process.

You can also help by registering as an interested party to receive updates on the progress of the DCO process: Planning Inspectorate Project :

national-infrastructure-consenting.planninginspectorate.gov.uk - in search box type White Horse Reservoir
You will then be notified when the Planning Inspectorate publishes the DCO and will have a chance to register your objections.
GARD will need technical and legal experts to help make strong objections to the DCO.

To pay for this, we plan to launch a crowdfunding campaign in early September – details to follow..
GARD's AGM on 3rd July brought together about 50 local residents from Steventon, East Hendred, Drayton, Marcham, Hanney, Grove, and Abingdon. People asked about how to object to the DCO, the rising cost of the reservoir, and how Thames Water compares it with alternatives such as the Severn–Thames Transfer.

Environmental Impact

The land at risk is a rich and connected landscape. It includes ancient hedgerows, wet grassland, ditches, wildlife corridors, high-quality farmland, and habitats for bats, owls, amphibians, and farmland birds, many of which are on the red list of endangered species. Environmental expert Dr Julian Parfitt recently showed local councillors and others why the proposed reservoir site is environmentally important and how it would permanently damage valuable countryside..

Thames Water's own biodiversity figures show a major net loss that cannot easily be replaced. Dr Parfitt also noted that Thames Water's method of counting ancient trees does not follow Woodland Trust guidance. Dr Parfitt has compared Thames Water's assessment with his own findings on ancient and veteran trees. Thames Water identified one ancient tree, whereas Dr Parfitt has identified more than 20 ancient trees and over 200 veteran trees on site.

The Campaign Continues

GARD has been holding campaign days at Millets Farm, Q Gardens, Abingdon Market Place, and Peach Croft Farm across May, June, and July. Thanks to all these venues for hosting us. We have raised awareness of the proposed reservoir, emphasising that Thames Water does not yet have planning consent and that there are better, quicker ways to bring new water to the South East. **We will be at Wantage Market Place on August 1st – do come and support us!**

The petition asking the Secretary of State to examine the proposals properly is now at roughly 7,230 signatures. GARD welcomes more volunteers for these campaign days and other tasks. If you would like to help, please contact gard.secretary@gmail.com



DISTRICT COUNCIL REPORT

Local Government Reorganisation

We've heard that the Government have made their decision on the Unitary Authorities that will replace the County Council, six District Councils, and Oxford City Council.

My cynical view that the "Greater Oxford Corporation" being established a couple of months ago signalled this early: they've gone for the three Council option (supported by Oxford City Council only). The one that isn't compliant with the population figures, leaves the Northern UA very financially exposed, and creates huge cross-boundary concerns and duplication of effort.

I'm rather disappointed (and won't say my cynical thoughts about the decision). We have to make it work as best we can, however, I will strive to do so.

Land Charges rollout and delays

I mentioned a few months ago that Vale and South were moving to a new IT system for planning and Land Charges, due to the old systems being no longer supported. As happens with too many complex IT system changes these days, there were considerable migration issues (migrating several existing interconnected systems, can often have "cross-boundary" issues), exposed during testing.

This has caused significant disruption to users of the system (especially for property transactions, which are prolonged enough at the best of times). It's finally working properly. The Leaders of both Vale and South Oxfordshire have asked their Councillors to pass on their sincere apologies for the disruption caused and will be looking at how the problems arose and what could be done about them in future projects.

Due to the downtime, there is a backlog of searches to process; extra resources have been put in place to work through them as quickly as possible. If you've already submitted a search request, please don't resubmit through the new portal; existing ones are being processed. Anyone wishing to use the new system will need to register for an account, with details available on: whitehorsedc.gov.uk and search for important-changes to planning and land charging-services.

Local Plan Hearings

The Local Plan inspection resumed this month, with sittings on 7th, 8th, and 9th of July. We'll get feedback on how it went, but I do know that the major clash caused before (the argument with Oxford City Council) has been recognised as largely resolved by a signed Memorandum of Understanding between us.

The housing requirement, from all I have heard, seemed to be viewed as robust, implying that our Five Year Land Supply (protecting us from speculative development) should be safe going forwards.

The Inspectors might invite written comments from other participants and potentially reconvene for a further hearing day later on once they've received any such written representations. They'll then send a Post-Hearing Letter with their interim findings and give as an idea of timings for future Stage 3 Hearings.

It does all seem very laborious to me, but the Government didn't consult me on this (for some reason!)

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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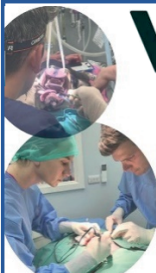
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LOCAL GROUPS



DRAYTON WI

Our June Junk Journaling craft evening was a great success, with members enjoying an inspiring introduction to the creative art of junk journaling.

Chloe, one of our members who is both enthusiastic and knowledgeable about this craft, brought along several of the beautiful journals she has made herself. She shared plenty of ideas, inspiration and practical tips, encouraging everyone to have a go and explore their own creativity.

We had an excellent turnout, and everyone thoroughly enjoyed the evening. It was lovely to see so much enthusiasm, and members left with plenty of ideas for future projects. Our July meeting featured a talk by Lesley, an ambassador for Sobell House Hospice, who told us about the work of the hospice and the wide range of care and support it provides. She explained that, although Sobell House receives a small amount of public funding, it costs around £25,000 a day to run, with most of this being raised through fundraising. Members were pleased to make donations during the evening in support of this wonderful charity.

We are now looking forward to our August meeting, which will be a fun beetle drive. We will also be discussing our forthcoming events, **including the Drayton WI Christmas Craft & Gift Fair, to be held on Saturday 7 November, from 11.00am to 3.00pm.**

We are always delighted to welcome visitors, so if you would like to come along and see what we do, you would be very welcome. Our meetings are usually held on the second Thursday of each month at 7.30pm at the Caudwell Day Centre, Gravel Lane.

Georgina Arnold
Secretary,
Drayton WI

DRAYTON PRIMARY SCHOOL

Could You Help Shape the Future of Our Primary School?

The Governing Board at Drayton Community Primary School is looking for a **new co-opted governor** to join our team. This voluntary role is a fantastic opportunity to help shape the strategic direction of the school and support the education of children in our community. Unlike parent governors, who are elected by parents, co-opted governors are appointed by the governing board to bring a broad range of skills, experience and perspectives. You don't need a background in education or to have children at the school. We're looking for people who are committed to the local community, we offer support and work as part of a dedicated team. Training is provided.

Our outgoing co-opted governor Will described the role as "a brilliant experience" that was both "eye-opening" and deeply rewarding. He valued being able to use skills from his day job to support the school, while also developing new skills and stepping outside his comfort zone. Although the role requires a commitment of time and effort, he say he "thoroughly enjoyed" his four years and would encourage anyone looking for a new challenge and consider becoming a governor at Drayton.

If you'd like an informal chat about the role, please **contact us at:**

governors@drayton-pri.oxon.sch.uk

Sobell House Hospice 50 for 50 Challenge

Tom and Bunty Knight wish to thank all our very dear friends and neighbours in and around Church Lane for their enormous support in helping Tom achieve his 50 for 50 Challenge when he donated his paintings for sale in aid of Sobell House at a recent very sunny and happy Saturday afternoon Garden Party. The final total as accredited by Sobell House was a staggering £1188.30. Thank you everyone.

A **VERY** BIG THANK YOU!



Last week we said goodbye and thank you to three stalwarts of the Chronicle production team. Much champagne and most of a custom-made cake were consumed in celebration and gratitude.

Each of them has received some lovely messages from the village readership and so please excuse this indulgence as we provide a potted history of each of them and their contributions to the Chronicle over the years.

Tony Holmes - 35 years of Drayton Chronicles

In the latter part of 1990, Harry Bisby, founder and mainstay of the Drayton Chronicle, advertised for more editors to help him produce the Chronicle. Tony, together with Geoff Long, answered the call. After 'training', the first edition Tony edited was April 1991. In those far off pre-email days, editing the Chronicle was not as simple as it is today. All articles were printed, chopped up and pasted onto A3 sheets which were couriered to a printer.

Adverts were provided by Harry, pre-printed with no option to change the size. Most of the text was handwritten and had to be collected from the box outside Vickery's. One of the joys of being an editor was to decipher these texts – who knew so many villagers were fluent in hieroglyphics? Many of the texts were tackled by volunteer typists who worked together with the editors. Pasted-up pages were taken on a Sunday evening to Andrew Chapman who took them to the printer in Oxford, and he brought back the printed Chronicles on the following Friday evening.

There was no flexibility in deadlines and what went to the printer had to be correct, as there was no chance to view a printer's draft copy as there is today. During the first 15 years he was editing, Tony worked a long way from home and was providing out of hours IT support for a Bracknell-based company as well. His Saturdays were spent refereeing or running the line at Hellenic League football matches. So it was sometimes a struggle to meet deadlines, but he usually made it.



Over the years Tony has seen quite a few changes to the Chronicle. In 1991, just over 1,000 issues were printed - now it's over 1,400 issues, and that number is rising all the time; a clear indication of how much the village has grown! Originally, it was printed only in black and white, the Christmas edition was printed with a small amount of colour just on the front page and now we have full colour. Some things, however, recur, and a front-page article from a Chronicle Tony edited in October 1993 features an article on the Reservoir.

One of the features of Tony's editions in more recent years has been to look back on what was happening X years ago and there is at least one person in the village who will miss this!

Although he is giving up editing, he will still be retaining his roles of distribution assistant and as an agent for part of Whitehorns Way.

Linda Semmens

Stephen Fearnley - 20 years in the Advertising Seat

The year was 2007. Local tradesmen and business people were soon to be accosted by the Drayton Chronicle's new advertising manager... Stephen had retired from his day job as principal lecturer in Psychology at Oxford Brookes University and, whilst it could never be said that he was at a loose end, he was happy to take up the new role of advertising manager. Keen, even. At the time the Chronicle relied entirely on the advertising revenue for its existence, thus there was a certain pressure to recruit new businesses. Enter Stephen, who never missed an opportunity to bend the ear or twist the arm of any business representatives he encountered - in the nicest possible way of course. The result - many happy advertisers and editors, the latter sometimes suggesting he might stop twisting arms for a while since the Chronicle had run out of space for advertisements!

More recently the emphasis on recruitment of advertisers has eased, thanks to the Parish Council, who have stepped in with very welcome grants. Although always aware that the income from advertising was important, Stephen understood that he was also providing a service to the people who were keeping the Chronicle afloat and this was the hallmark of his tenure. No request was too irksome or time consuming. He designed adverts, altered adverts, made useful comments about submissions, stretched deadlines, sent tactful reminders, sent or delivered copies of adverts so that people could see if their money was well spent, walked to the Chronicle box to pick up late payments and walked back again to find that the advertiser had kindly dropped it in through our front door.

In short, he did a good job. I hope he will be remembered not only for the length of his service to the Chronicle but for the conscientiousness, with a capital C, of that service.

Ruth Fearnley

Bridget Pyne – bringing us into the 21st century

Bridget has lived in the village for nearly six years and for the past three of those she's enjoyed volunteering as an editor for the Chronicle, helping to share the stories that make our community so special (while occasionally reminding people that deadlines really do exist!). Outside of the Chronicle, she works full-time in marketing, and when she's not at her desk, you'll usually see her running around the village or trying to keep up with her two young daughters. While she's stepping back from her role with the Chronicle to focus on her career and family, she's looking forward...

...to remaining part of village life, just with a little more time on her hands and fewer deadlines in her inbox.

Bridget's DTP (desk-top publishing) expertise came in very handy as she was able to modernise the look and feel of the Chronicle using a DTP tool called Canva, which also saves us editors time pulling all the content together.



How the Chronicle works

Some of our readership have been asking what goes on in the background to enable the Chronicle to land on their doormat each month.

Early in each month, one of the advertising team (we have a rota) starts to organise the list of adverts for the next issue, which means contacting those advertisers whose renewal is due and then invoicing them, and doing the same for any new advertisers (which may include designing their advert).

Meanwhile the editor (again, there is a rota) has started work on editing the next issue; reserving space for the regular contributors and deciding which of the other contributions we receive should be used. There's a lot of work formatting the text and checking for typos and grammar.

The advertising co-ordinator sends over the list of adverts to be included, based on those that have renewed and paid, and those that still have some issues left before renewal. The editor ensures that the adverts are all in the draft and then uses up the unused space on (hopefully) useful and interesting items, finds an attractive picture for the front cover and tidies it all up.

One week before the Chronicle is due to be delivered through letterboxes, the editor sends the draft out to the rest of the team for review, and then once all comments have been addressed, it's ready to be sent to the printers. Our printer delivers the 1,420 (currently) issues to a distributor (yet another rota!) who organises the issues into bags for each road in the village. The distributor takes the bags to the agent for each road, who then deliver to our doorsteps.

So the Chronicle takes about 4 weeks to produce and involves about 50 volunteers. I think it's fair to say that all volunteers enjoy participating in this process and giving some of their time to the community. If anyone is interested in helping out with any of these roles then do let us know!

PARISH COUNCIL REPORT



Resignation of Andy Cooke

The Council thanked Andy for all the work he has done for the Parish Council. Andy remains a District Councillor for the rest of his term, but has relocated and left the Parish Council. He will return to provide us with his District reports. We wish him and his family all the very best.

Planning matters

A representative from the PC attended the appeal brought by potential developers of the land to the west of Little Smiths Farm. We remain resolutely opposed to this development and feel it adds nothing to the people or village of Drayton. We await the outcome from the Planning Inspector.

Walnut Meadows

Our Programme Manager, Jon Fowler, has provided the following update. The PC has been approached by a group of residents who wish to build three padel courts. Padel is a cross between tennis and squash, and like a lot of things, originated in the USA before 'paddling' its way across the pond. It is a very popular sport and one of the fastest-growing in the UK.

The proposal is to build three 20m courts alongside the MUGA and pavilion. The venture is privately funded with no cost to the PC or Drayton residents.

We are going to be submitting a pre-planning advice request to the Local Planning Authority for their view on any issues with locating the Padel courts at Walnut Meadows. If the pre-app advice is favourable, a full planning application would follow.

The MUGAs are currently open each Wednesday and Friday from 4pm to 8pm for free ad-hoc use by residents. We are in the process of implementing booking software for the MUGAs (it will also be used to book the sports pitches and Pavilion) to allow paid-for sessions to be booked. We hope to have this in place within the next month.

The football pitch will be ready for use in October, so we are pressing ahead with preparing the parking facility so that teams can book and use the pitch.

Plea for Parish Councillors

With Andy's resignation, we are down to six Parish Councillors. We should have 11. We are working really hard to deliver the sports facilities and attend to all our business, but would welcome more help. If you would like to consider becoming a Councillor, please do get in touch with the Clerk, or with one of the Councillors. Contact us via clerk@draytonparish.gov.uk.

Have a great, sunny summer!

The next Parish Council meeting will be on Mon 10 Aug at 7pm at the Caudwell Day Centre. <https://www.draytonparishcouncil.gov.uk>

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THAMES WATER HOSEPIPE BAN IN OXFORDSHIRE

THAMES WATER - TEMPORARY HOSEPIPE BAN

A hosepipe ban affecting 10.1 million Thames Water customers has come into force.

The restrictions mean hosepipes should not be used for watering gardens, cleaning cars, filling paddling pools or swimming pools, or cleaning windows.

The water company said its region had seen 40% of the usual average rainfall at this time of year, and most days at or above 34C since records began.

Nevil Muncaster, director of strategic water resources, said a lack of rainfall coupled with higher customer demand means the utility provider must protect water for essential use.

Hosepipes and pressure washers should not be used to:

- water gardens, lawns, or allotments (this includes the use of sprinklers)
- fill paddling pools, swimming pools, or hot tubs
- clean vehicles, patios, paths, driveways, walls, windows, or any outdoor areas

Some exemptions may include:

- Wastewater only customers
- Health and safety needs
- Animal welfare, including pets, livestock, and fish
- Watering food crops and certain newly planted trees
- Customers who cannot reasonably adjust their water use because of a disability or medical condition

Garden care tips

Plants and gardens can be watered with a watering can said James Alexander Sinclair, an Oxfordshire based garden designer. He reassured water consumers that the gardens will come back when the rain returns. He advised gardeners to pick their most precious plants and put a lot of water at the root and then cover it in compost so that the water does not escape.

What you can do

During the hosepipe ban, you can still:

- help by reducing your water usage by following our [water saving tips](#). You can [earn rewards](#) by reducing your water usage
- [check your water usage](#) and how much you can save
- keep plants and gardens watered with a watering can
- make use of water collected in a water butt
- wash your car using a bucket

collect and reuse water from your home, such as water left over from cooking vegetables or rinsing fruit and vegetables, to water plants

Check if you're exempt

Some customers, activities and businesses may be exempt from the hosepipe ban, including:

- Thames Water wastewater only customers
- health and safety needs
- animal welfare, including pets, livestock, and fish
- some business services and activities
- watering food crops and certain newly planted trees
- Priority Services customers who cannot reasonably adjust their water use because of a disability or medical condition

What happens next

We'll continue to monitor water levels and conditions across the region. This page will be updated whenever restrictions change. We'll lift the hosepipe ban as soon as conditions allow.

Thank you to everyone who has already reduced their water use. Your support is helping protect water supplies for communities and the environment during this period of dry hot weather.





BEAT THE HEAT



BEAT THE HEAT: STAYING SAFE IN HOT WEATHER

This guidance provides advice for everyone on how to stay safe during hot weather (UK Health and Security Agency, Centre for Climate and Health Security).

Anyone can become unwell if they get too hot. However, some people are at higher risk of becoming seriously unwell.

It is important to follow this guidance so that you are prepared for hot weather and can take action to cool yourself and your home.

Actions you can take to stay safe in hot weather

While many people enjoy warmer summer weather, hot weather can cause some people to become **unwell through overheating (becoming uncomfortably hot), dehydration, heat exhaustion and heatstroke.**

-if you are going to do a **physical activity** (for example exercise or walking the dog), plan to do these during times of the day when it is cooler such as the early morning or the evening

-**keep your home cool** by closing windows and curtains in rooms that face the sun

-drink plenty of **fluids** and limit your alcohol intake

-**check on family, friends and neighbours who may be at higher risk** of becoming unwell, and if you are at higher risk, ask them to do the same for you

-know the symptoms of **heat exhaustion and heatstroke** and what to do if you or someone else has them

-Try to avoid direct sunlight, especially between 11am and 3pm

-**If you are going out during this time, cover up with suitable clothing**, wear a wide-brimmed hat and sunglasses, seek shade and apply sunscreen liberally and re-apply frequently

Anyone can become unwell when the weather is hot. People who are at higher risk of becoming seriously unwell include:

- **older people aged 65 years and over** (note change from previous guidance of 75 years of age and above)

- **babies and young children aged 5 years and under**
- **people with underlying health conditions** particularly heart problems, breathing problems, dementia, diabetes, kidney disease, Parkinson's disease, or mobility problems
- **pregnant women**
- **people on certain medications**
- **people with serious mental health problems**
- **people who are already ill and dehydrated** (for example from diarrhoea and vomiting)
- **people who experience alcohol or drug dependence**
- **people who are physically active** and spend a lot of time outside such as runners, cyclists and walkers
- people who work in **jobs that require manual labour or extensive time outside**
- **people experiencing homelessness**, including rough sleepers and those who are unable to make adaptations to their living accommodation such as sofa **surfers** or **living in hostels.**
- **people who live alone** and may be unable to care for themselves

Common symptoms of heat exhaustion include:

tiredness ; weakness; feeling faint; headache; muscle cramps; feeling or being sick; heavy sweating; intense thirst

Common symptoms of heatstroke include:

confusion; lack of co-ordination; fast heartbeat; fast breathing or shortness of breath; hot skin that is not sweating; seizures

How to cool down:

move to a cooler place such as a room with air conditioning or somewhere in the shade, avoid direct sunlight; **remove all unnecessary clothing** like a jacket or socks
drink cool water, a sports or rehydration drink, or eat cold and water rich foods like ice-lollies;
apply cool water by spray or sponge to exposed skin, and the neck can also help.

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OBITUARIES



Derek Pooley

Derek Pooley, who was an editor of the Chronicle for twenty years, died unexpectedly on 14th June.

A service of commemoration and thanksgiving was held on Tuesday 7th July at All Saints Church, Appleford Drive, Abingdon.

Jenny Pooley

Connie Harrington

It is with sadness that we announce the peaceful passing of our beloved Mum, Connie Harrington, at home on Saturday 4th July, aged 101 years.

A funeral service to celebrate Connie's life will be held at **St Peter's Church** at **12 noon on Monday 10th August**. All who knew and loved Connie are warmly invited to attend and join us in remembering her.

Paula Fiorentini-Carter and Sarah-Jane Harrington



Richard John Webber

I am the son of Richard Webber, who used to be the local county and district councillor for Drayton, and a regular contributor to the Drayton Chronicle.

Very sadly, he passed away on 28th June after a long fight against cancer. The funeral was on 17th July and so unfortunately the timing didn't work out to get a note in the Chronicle to flag to local residents who might have been interested in attending.

Edward Webber

Ancestor Query

My great aunt, Iris Helen Torrens, lives or used to live in Drayton; I have found reference to her in the Drayton Chronicles of 2017 and 2018, where she was the winner of the Triples Rose Bowl at the Bowling Club. She was born in 1929.

I am compiling my family history from the 1670's onwards, and Iris's husband Ken is the son of my grandfather's sister, who emigrated to Croydon from Northern Ireland in the early 1900's.

My question is, does anyone have any information?

Les King

[Ed's note: Iris has been located :)]
If anyone has any more information, please email editor@draytonchronicle.net and we will pass this to Les.]

Share your views on the Government's proposal to merge police forces across England and Wales.

Matthew Barber (Police and Crime Commissioner) has sent a letter to the Home Secretary, setting out his concerns on the Police Reform White Paper, which can be viewed on our website: <https://www.thamesvalley-pcc.gov.uk/news/police-reform-plans/>

The government is currently carrying out an Independent Review of Police Force Structures, having confirmed its intention to merge the current 43 forces across England and Wales into larger regional forces as part of reforms. We don't yet know what this means for Thames Valley Police as it will be dependent on the outcome of the review. However, if forces are reduced to 12 regional forces Thames Valley could become part of a larger regional South East force.

Please take a few minutes to complete our survey and share your views.

👉 Have your say: [_thamesvalley-pcc.gov.uk](https://thamesvalley-pcc.gov.uk), click on 'get involved', then 'police force mergers' .



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You may think nature only thrives in big reserves. But it also squeezes into the cracks and corners of our urban environments.

So, whether that's a garden, a balcony, a windowsill, or just the wall of your home, there's always room for a splash of green amongst the urban landscapes.

Mini habitats - what's in the name? In ecology, a "microhabitat" is a small area with its own unique environment that differs from the surrounding habitat. But you may know them by a different name.

Mini ponds, bee hotels, and even bird boxes, each creating a quiet refuge for the creatures sharing our built landscape (just remember that bird feeders in warmer months increase the risk of disease in birds). These small sanctuaries carry real ecological weight.



Never underestimate the power of cumulative effect: each species, no matter how small, has a part to play in all ecosystems.

The key benefits of micro habitats include:

- Attracting insects that play a role in pollination.
- Storing moisture and regulating temperature
- Breaking down organic matter

Walls Urban walls can host a surprising range of ecological functions.

Living walls are particularly beneficial to local wildlife. These vertical green sites, formed of flowering climbers and wall mounted planters, can attract bees, hoverflies and other pollinators.

Micro planters and crevice habitats, which are small pockets of soil, stacked tiles, logs with holes, stone crevices or even swift bricks attached or built into walls, create nesting and overwintering sites for solitary bees and beetles.

Water

Water sources such as ponds or streams with natural features are ideal, but rare in highly urban areas. But artificial water sources such as birdbaths or rainwater pools/ponds can still support amphibians, insects, birds, and mammals while contributing to local microclimate regulation.

For example, a recent study in the Journal of Urban Ecology found that urbanised aquatic microhabitats, such as water-filled tree holes and other small standing waters in cities, create "unique but inconspicuous" breeding habitats for a range of insects.

Gardens

Gardens are probably the first green space that comes to mind when discussing microhabitats. And that's because even small spaces can support many microhabitats due to the varying environments and features which can be created within them. Gardens are a mosaic of interconnected micro-ecosystems in one space.

You don't need a large rural garden to support nature – urban gardens are becoming ever increasingly vital passages in our increasingly fragmented country.

These small patches of green can become a wildlife sanctuary: try growing as many different types of plants as you can, including native species, and provide natural food sources.

Gardening tips for August: Put up bat boxes
See the guidance on the [Bat Conservation website](#).

Leave food and water for hedgehogs.
Continue to leave out dishes of water and meat-based (not fish!) dog or cat or hedgehogs, before they go into hibernation in early Autumn.



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Getting mobile phones out of the classroom

Back in April I wrote about the benefits of making school properly phone free during the school day. Now I am giving £255,000 taken from criminals to help schools make it happen.

More than 60% of schools in Thames Valley simply ask that pupils just have to keep them out of sight, and we know it does not work. This approach leads to disruption, confiscation and distraction. I announced the new funding for headteachers at an event at Aureus School in Didcot. Schools can decide how to use the cash on options including secure storage such as lockable pouches, lockers or boxes, that still allow students access to their phones when travelling to and from school. The money to support the project is being taken from criminals, through the seizure of stolen goods and forfeiture orders by the courts.

Smartphones have clear benefits, but we're also increasingly aware of the potential harms they can cause. Schools and the police see firsthand the safeguarding issues brought about by mobile phone use such as online bullying, peer pressure and exposure to harmful content as well as vulnerability to exploitation. Schools like Aureus, that have already introduced lockable phone pouches have seen huge improvements in discipline and academic performance. I have also just published my annual report that highlights some of the work over the last year to improve neighbourhood policing, support victims and cut crime.

Matthew Barber
Listening. Serving.
Taking Action.

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JOIN MY WHATSAPP COMMUNITY

Powered by Matthew Barber of DWCA, Barton House, Grove Business Park, Oxeney Road, Weybridge, GU24 9FF

Latest crime stats

Some of the key updates over the last 12 months include:

6.2% reduction in neighbourhood crime
800 young people received interventions through Op Deter Youth

Vehicle theft offences have reduced by 9%
with **further 12% reduction in knife crime**
9% reduction in shoplifting offences with over 900 new sign-ups to DISC (retail crime reporting platform)

Year-on-year **reduction in rural crime by 34%**
Over 350 active Community Speedwatch schemes have observed and recorded over **146,000 speeding vehicles since 2020**

, up from 92.6% last year

Don't pay the ransom: Warning to organisations to protect themselves from ransomware

How does it work?

A ransomware attack happens when cybercriminals, find a vulnerability in a company's network to gain access, establish control, and plant malware to prevent a person or business from accessing a device and the data stored on it.

If you are a small or medium-sized enterprise currently experiencing a ransomware attack, you should report it immediately by calling Action Fraud on 0300 123 2040. Action Fraud has a 24/7 phone line dedicated to businesses, charities, or organisations currently under a cyberattack.

Do not pay the ransom. The National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC) and UK law enforcement do not encourage, endorse, or condone the payment of ransom demands. There is no guarantee that access to the data will be regained, and devices could still remain infected.

Protecting your organisation - **seek advice at National Cyber Security Centre:**
nscs.gov.uk/ransomware.

DRAYTON DIARIES

(MOSTLY) HALL DIARY FOR AUGUST

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.

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	First Tuesday Connections (<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
Three sessions from 4:45pm	Karate/'Dojang X' (07938 537310) 4.45pm -5.15pm Little Ninjas for 3-6yr olds 5.15pm-6pm Kids Karate (7-12yrs) 6pm Family Class (6yrs+, teens and adults)

SUNDAYS (see page 3 for all church services)

6:00pm	Evening Service <i>Baptist Church</i>
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