## YARNTON

## VILLAGE

News

We wish all our readers a happy, healthy and peaceful Christmas festive season

## **DECEMBER 2025**

#### **Editorial Committee:**

Ruth Astall, 19 The Spears, OX5 1NS, tel. 372637 – *Editor* Mary Clarke, Woodbine Villa, 18 Rutten Lane, OX5 1LN, tel. 07947 659788 - *Secretary and Assistant Editor* Sue Brewerton, 150 Rutten Lane, OX5 1LS, tel. 01865 460383 -

Treasurer

Richard Briggs, email: <a href="mailto:r.a.briggs@hotmail.co.uk">r.a.briggs@hotmail.co.uk</a> - Distribution

www.facebook.com/Yarnton Village Community Group

#### **CALENDAR FOR THE MONTH**

Scouts - all open to both boys and girls

Mondays Cubs aged 8–10, 6.30 p.m. – 8 p.m.

Explorers aged 14–18, 8.15 p.m. – 9.15 p.m.

Wednesdays Beavers aged 6–8, 5 p.m. – 6.15 p.m. Fridays Scouts aged 10–14, 7 p.m. – 8.45 p.m.

**Girl Guiding** 

Tuesdays Guides aged 10-14, 6.30 p.m. – 8 p.m. Wednesdays Brownies aged 7-10, 6.30 p.m. – 8 p.m.

Monday 1st Indoor Bowls Club, Village Hall, 10 a.m. (and every Monday)

Monday 1st Community Drop In, Village Hall, 2 p.m. – 4 p.m.

(and every Monday)

Monday 1st Yarnton Band, 7.30 p.m. - 8.45 p.m. (and every Monday, except Bank Holidays)

Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> Yarnton Band Learners and Training Band, 6.45 p.m. - 7.25 p.m.

Senior Band, 7.30 p.m. - 8.45 p.m. (and every Thursday)

Friday 5<sup>th</sup> Copy date January 2026 Village News

Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> Lunch Club Christmas Meal, Village Hall, 1 p.m. Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> Parish Council Meeting, Village Hall, 6.30 p.m.

Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> W.I. Village Hall, 7.30 p.m.

Thursday 18th Gardening Club A.G.M. and Christmas Social, Village Hall, 7.30 p.m. Members only

#### St. Bartholomew's Church

Regular services

Sundays 8 a.m. Holy Communion (Book of Common Prayer)

11 a.m. Parish Communion, with Junior Church, followed by coffee *N.B. Sunday* 9<sup>th</sup> *November, Parish Communion will be at 10 a.m.* 

Wednesdays
9.30 a.m. Holy Communion
Morning Prayer
Monday – Thursday, 8.30 a.m.
Evening Prayer
Monday – Thursday, 5.30 p.m.
Sundays, 9.30 a.m. Sunday Eucharist



#### **Advertising Rates**

One-eighth A4 page: £13 per issue, £117 per year. One-quarter A4 page: £21 per issue, £189 per year.

One-half A4 page: £35 per issue, £315 per year. Whole A4 page: £60 per issue.

Classified Ads: 5p per word. Must include telephone number.

The Editorial Committee in no way accepts responsibility for services supplied by our advertisers.

#### Distributed free of charge at the beginning of each month to every household in Yarnton.

Yarnton Village News is printed by KMS Litho (Litho & Digital Impressions Ltd.), tel. 01608 737640, email: <a href="mailto:enquiries@kmslitho.co.uk">enquiries@kmslitho.co.uk</a>

#### If you contact any of our advertisers, please tell them you found them in the Yarnton Village News.

Donations towards our running costs will be gratefully received at any time. The bank details are: Yarnton Village News, Sort code 09 01 54, Account No. 42646089.

#### Copy Deadline for January 2026 Issue

Material for inclusion in the January 2026 Newsletter should be received by midday on **Friday 5<sup>th</sup> December**. Copy should be e-mailed to: <a href="mailto:ruth@astall.com">ruth@astall.com</a> and <a href="mailto:maryclarke2305@googlemail.com">maryclarke2305@googlemail.com</a> or delivered to Mrs. Ruth Astall, 19 The Spears, tel. 372637.

The Editorial Committee reserves the right to cut, edit, or omit articles, or refuse advertisements for reasons of space limitation, suitability, etc. Their decision is final and no correspondence can be entered into.

Copy date for the February 2026 issue is **Friday 9**th **January 2026.** 

#### **Care Committee**

After 19 years Fred Jones has recently resigned from the Care Committee. We would like to thank Fred for the sterling work that he's done for residents during those years, including as a volunteer driver for hospital visits, lunch club helper, driver and co-ordinator of the fortnightly shopping bus. Before leaving the committee Fred made sure that his roles were covered by securing replacements. Keith Johnston will take over on the committee as Shopping Bus co-ordinator, and Mick Hall now joins the small group of volunteers who drive the shopping bus.

Lynne Whitley, Secretary

#### **Reporting Flooding Incidences**

It is crucial to report any issues with flooding to the relevant authorities, in order that the matter is recorded.

#### ThamesWater.co.uk(Report a Problem):

Please report any issues with foul sewage Overflows near water-courses. FixMyStreet.com:

To report any highway-related matters (e.g. blocked drains, gulleys, water-courses)

#### New bus service to Kidlington

From 30<sup>th</sup> November the Stagecoach 800 bus service, which previously operated from Horspath Road Industrial Estate to Oxford City, has been extended to provide a link to Kidlington, via Begbroke and Oxford Airport, and Oxford Parkway Rail Station. This hourly, 7 days a week, service will be welcome news for residents of Yarnton and Begbroke with Kidlington.

Timetables can be found on the Stagecoach website at <a href="https://www.stagecoachbus.com">https://www.stagecoachbus.com</a> about > oxfordshire.

## How is climate change affecting the flowers in your garden? A village survey.

As our winters are getting milder and wetter, we thought it might be an interesting idea to ask residents of the village to survey their gardens on 1st January 2026 (or the nearest convenient day) and make a list of plants, shrubs and trees which are in flower – even if it's only one lone bloom. We plan to do the same thing each year on 1st January so that we can see how things are changing – or not changing! You can email your list to Ruth or Mary, or drop it in to either of us (details on front page). We look forward to receiving lots of interesting lists.

Editorial Committee



Banbury branch

Call 01869 345333 Email banbury@greenthumb.co.uk



#### Have your say on Yarnton Play Park!

We're planning to improve Yarnton Play Park (Rutten Lane) and want to hear from all residents - whether you visit regularly or not at all. Your views will help shape plans for a park that works for everyone in our community.

Please complete our Community Play Park Surveys online

- Teens/adults survey: https://tinyurl.com/parksurveyTA-VN
- Children's survey (under 12s): https://tinyurl.com/parksurveyVN

Paper copies are available on request - contact us using the details below.

Surveys must be returned by Sunday 7th December 2025.

varntonparkrenewal@gmail.com

**\( 07773 492543** 

Thank you for helping shape Yarnton's new play park. Created by a sub-group of the Yarnton Playing Field Committee (Charity 294537)





St Peter's C.E. Primary School, Cassington OX29 4DN





#### Central Yarnton Bridge Club



#### FRIENDLY BRIDGE GAME

AT

Yarnton Village Hall The Paddocks Yarnton OX5 1TE

#### **Tuesday Mornings**

9.50 am seated FOR 10.00 am (Also a Beginners' section (with help): You do not need a Partner for this!)

> Coffee from 9.40 am Bridge 10.00 am to 12.30 pm

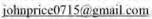
Cost £3.50 Each Session

Large Free Car Park



**Ouestions/Oueries Please contact** Jonathan on 07394 994151







#### **Discarded Dog Faeces**

Dear Residents and Dog Owners,

It has come to the Parish Council's attention that the number of incidents of discarded dog faeces is on the increase, especially within the orchard area of the village. Please could all owners ensure that if your dog poos, it is picked up and disposed of in the dog bins provided around the village or your own waste bin at home.

You are probably aware that it is an offence not to pick up your dogs faeces; also not carrying a dog bag or means to pick up after your dog, can result in a fixed penalty fine of up to £100. If taken to court the owner can incur a fine of up to £1000. It is not pleasant for anyone cutting the grass, is a health hazard to young children playing in the area and vulnerable adults to be covered in dog faeces. We are aware that most dog owners do behave responsibly and it is just the few that spoil it by being so thoughtless to other residents.

Thank you for your co-operation. Mike Groves, Chairman, Yarnton Parish Council

#### **OSTEOPATH**



Anita Watson BSc (Hons) Ost. 4 Exeter Road, Kidlington, OX5 2DY.

Member of the GOC (General Osteopathic Council)

Osteopathy can help with the relief of:

- · Lower back pain/Sciatica
- Neck and shoulder tension/headaches
- Arthritic pain
- · Sports injuries and RSI
- · Hip/Knee/Ankle pain
- · Frozen shoulder/Tennis elbow
- Stress/Anxiety/Fatigue



#### YOGA CLASSES

Member of the IYA (Iyengar Yoga Association)

One-to-one or small group classes available (4 max.)

- · Improves mobility, strength and balance
- · Improves posture and alignment
- · Promotes well being, increased energy and relaxation
- · Use of breathing and resting poses soothes the nerves and calms the mind.

07970 527733 anitawatson111@hotmail.co.uk www.anitawatson.co.uk



With kindness at the heart of

our care for over 150 years. 21 High Street, Eynsham OX29 4HE

01865 880837 32 Corn Street, Witney OX28 6BL 01993 776486

mail@greensfunerals.co.uk www.greensfunerals.co.uk





## REEVES MEMORIALS

Independent Family Business Established over 75 years

TOP QUALITY MEMORIALS

FREE COLOUR BROCHURE

FREE ESTIMATES

COMPETITIVE PRICES

REMOVAL OF MEMORIALS FOR BURIALS

ADDED INSCRIPTIONS

RENOVATIONS AND REPAIRS



FOR A HELPFUL AND FRIENDLY SERVICE PLEASE CALL **01865 251231** 

Or EMAIL **info@reevesmemorials.co.uk**OR VISIT OUR OFFICE AND SHOWROOM AT
147a MAGDALEN ROAD, OXFORD, OX4 1RL

www.reevesmemorials.co.uk

## Mobile Hairdresser

Salon Service In The Comfort Of Your Own Home

CHILDREN	Cut (under 10yrs)	28.00
GENTS	Cut	£10.00
LADIES	Wet Cut	\$18.00
	Wash & Blow Dry	£17.00
>	Shampoo & Set	£17.00
	Cut & Blow Dry	£30.00
	Perm Including Cut & Blow Dry	£55.00
		V

For more details and to book an appointment

Contact Anita Tel: 01865 430597

or Mobile: 07986556015



Our u3a branch is centred in Woodstock and welcomes members from the surrounding area including Yarnton. Are you recently retired and looking for local social activity around an interest that you already have, or seeking something new. Interest groups develop when someone is willing to run them - maybe you have something you can offer. Our newest groups of Table Tennis and Photography have very successfully established themselves this year. Singing for joy – how does that sound? Our group meets at the Scout and Guide Hut in Union Street on 3rd Wednesday at 2 p.m. - relaxed singing, purely for fun. Or Historic Churches with planned visits/tours to the many and varied beautiful churches in our area - meeting once a month on 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday. Our website offers up to date information and contact points www.woodstocku3a.uk - do take a look.

Monthly members' speaker meetings are held at St. Hugh's Centre, Hensington Road, Woodstock OX20 1JL (easy to reach on the S3 bus or parking available). The November speaker, Jessica Bouwer from Wild Oxfordshire, deepened our knowledge and appreciation of hedgerows and their 'ideal' care and benefits to the countryside, to gardens and importantly, ourselves.

Our next speaker meeting is on Thursday  $4^{th}$  December at St. Hugh's, 1.45 p.m. for 2 p.m., when we return to history with author and historian, Anna Beer, talking on 'Bess – The Life of Lady Raleigh – Wife to Sir Walter'. The talk is a whistle-stop tour of the remarkable and long life of Bess Throckmorton. As we focus on figures like Bess we can gain fresh insight into the past. For example, the court of Queen Elizabeth I begins to be seen as a very special political economy in which women mattered, and widowhood became a time of opportunity as much as desolation.

All welcome - visitors £3 to include tea and biscuits. *Sue Blackshaw, Chair* 

#### WINDOW DESIGN INTERIORS

#### **CURTAINS AND BLINDS**



- Made to Measure blinds and curtains
- Fabrics and Accessories
- Call to book home consultations
- Book online for appointments to the showroom in Chipping Norton

01993 870606

WWW.WINDOWDESIGNINTERIORS.CO.UK

COMPLETE SERVICE FROM MEASUREMENT THROUGH TO FITTING



# Tet Bartholomews Yarnton

#### Contact details:

Rev'd Oliver Petter

Rector, Benefice of Yarnton with Begbroke and

Shipton on Cherwell

Address: 26 Church Lane, Yarnton, OX5 1PY

Email: vicar@ybsbenefice.org.uk

Tel: 01865 372714

Associate Vicar: Rev'd. Sue Spankie

Tel: 07868 855435

Email: revsue@ybsbenefice.org.uk Website: www.ybsbenefice.org.uk Facebook: @varntonchurch

### Merry Christmas from all at St Bartholomew's Yarnton!

We warmly welcome you to all our Advent and Christmas events. May the Joy and Peace of the Christ child be with you and your loved ones.

#### Regular Services and Events

#### Sundays:

8.00am Holy Communion (Book of Common Prayer)

9.30am Benefice Online Service (St. Bartholomew's Facebook page)
 11.00am Parish Sung Communion with Junior Church, followed by coffee

5.00pm Yarnton Evening Worship (once a month, will continue 11th Ian 2026)

#### Wednesdays:

9.30am Holy Communion 10.30am Little Sheep (term time)

for under 5s and their parents/grandparents/carers

- crafts, songs and a story -



"But the angel said to them,
"Do not be afraid. I bring you
good news that will cause
great joy for all the people.
Today in the town of David a
Saviour has been born to you;
his is the Messiah, the Lord."
(Luke 2.10-11)

### Christmas Event Registration

If, your child would like to attend one of the following events, we would be grateful if you could register your interest by scanning the QR code below and completing the form.

This helps us make sure we have enough resources for these sessions!

- Children's Advent Craft & Story Morning
  - Little Sheep Christingle
    - Christingle Service
- Crib Service (if children want a speaking part only)



Many thanks!



Join us for an

### **Advent Carol Service**

Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> November At 5pm



Join us for our

For children and their families

Chrismas Crafts Stortfelling Prayer Activities

Join us for our

The Children's Society

JOY

Little Sheep Christingle

Come and explore the Joy of Christmas!

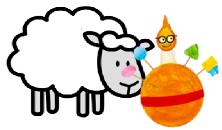
Advent Activity & Story

Morning

Saturday 6th December

At 10.30am-12

Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> December At 10.30am



A festive edition of our usual Little Sheep group, for under 5s and their families

Christingle craft - sing carols - mini nativity

JOY

A traditional service of readings & carels accompanied by Yaraton Band
Followed by hospitality in Yaraton Wasse



## Village Carol Service

Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> December At 5pm

Join us for a

The Children's Society

Christingle Service

Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> December At 3pm



For school children and their families

Make your own Christingle & sing some favourite carols!

Join us....

**JOY** 

And celebrate the joy of the Jesus' birth!

Crib Service

Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> December

At 3pm

Accompanied by Yarnton Band



Our annual Crib Service is for all ages!

Children who would like to take a speaking part in the story are invited to the 'rehearsal' on 20th December.

All children are very welcome to come to the service dressed as an angel, a shepherd or wise man/woman, and join in!



Gift vouchers available for Reflexology and Indian head massage treatments

Benefits of reflexology and Indian head massage include

- Aids sleep
- Releases tension & reduces stress
- Improves mood
- Promotes wellbeing
- Relaxation & improved circulation
- Alleviation of headaches & migraines
- Boost of hair & scalp health (IHM)





www.zonesofserenity.co.uk



All aspects of roofing and guttering work undertaken

Slates • Tiles • Flat Roofs Chimneys • Valleys • Leadwork Moss Clearance General Repointing uPVC Fascias . Soffits . Gutters

Advice and estimates free

Freephone:

Mobile:

0800 955 5063 07817 792194

#### **KEY MEDICAL PRACTICE**

(Yarnton Surgery)

163 Rutten Lane, Yarnton OX5 1LT

Telephone 01865 379345

www.keymedicalpractice.co.uk

#### Gone with the Wind: Autumn and Winter's **Blustery Garden Shenanigans**

As the leaves turn golden and the air gets that suspicious chill, Autumn and Winter winds begin their annual rampage through gardens across the land. These gusty hooligans don't knock politely - they barge in like they own the place, rearranging your flower beds, flinging your garden gnome into the neighbour's pond, and turning your compost bin into a confetti cannon.

Where do these winds come from? Meteorologists will say things like 'pressure systems' and 'Arctic fronts', but we all know the truth: they're summoned by ancient forces who hate patio furniture. One minute your garden is a tranquil haven, the next it's a scene from Twister, starring your wheelbarrow in a dramatic airborne role.

Autumn winds are the pranksters of the bunch. They sneak in with a sly rustle, pretending to be gentle breezes, then BAM - your rake is halfway up a tree and your scarecrow's hat is in orbit. They specialise in leaf redistribution, which is a polite way of saying they dump every leaf in the county onto your freshly swept path. It's like nature's version of glitter: impossible to clean and somehow always multiplying.

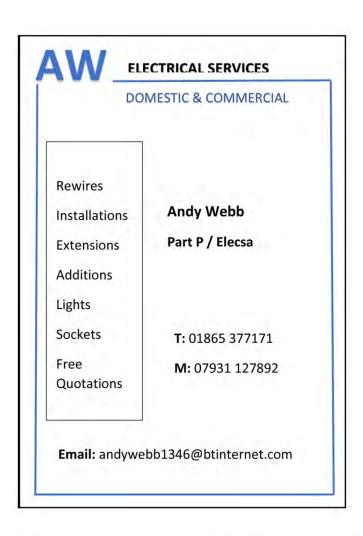
Winter winds, on the other hand, are less mischievous and more malevolent. They arrive with icy breath and a vendetta against anything vertical. They don't just knock over your potted plants - they interrogate them first. 'You think you're hardy? Let's see how you handle minus five and sideways snow!' They howl through fences, rattle windows, and occasionally carry off small pets. If your garden shed isn't bolted down, congratulations - it's now a mobile unit.

And where do these winds go? Nobody knows. Some say they retreat to the North Pole to plot next year's chaos. Others believe they slip into the jet stream and hitch a ride to torment gardens in Australia. What's certain is they leave behind a trail of overturned pots, traumatised tulips, and one very confused squirrel.

So next time you hear that ominous whistle through the trees, brace yourself. Tie down your topiary, hug your hosepipe, and say a prayer for your pergola. Because Autumn and Winter winds are coming -and they've got unfinished business with your begonias.

Happy Gardening.

Stuart Mabbutt, Wildlife Gardening Specialist, www.wildmaninspires.co.uk, tel.01865 747243







#### More Questions than Answers in 2025

I would love to head this piece as a fantastic or amazing year 2025. In the new parlance though this year has been 'challenging' (the new watch word for difficult). In 2024 we unearthed an amazing artefact now called The Kirkham Cross – found on land belonging to the Kirkham family. Our members have contacted many professional historians and archaeologists to confirm or deny our thought that the date of this object was from the Anglo Saxon (800 -1200 BCE) period of history, all to no avail. We are still in the dark as to its age or use. One would think that living 5 miles from the most learned University of Oxford would mean identification of this small cross would be done with the ease of a visit to a world famous museum, the Ashmolean. After one attempt taking in the cross failed, due to staff holidays, and despite emails and pictures there was no response. We tried through a different route (via a friendly archaeologist) but still no answers. So this project will be going forward into 2026.



Photo by Tony Clithero

Finding the Kirkham Cross last year has overshadowed our plans for this year, as we had hoped to spread Archaeology in Action to a neighbouring location. In May we had another go in the field where the cross was found the ground was very dry and hard to work. During this dig a friend of the group volunteered to do a Geophysical survey over the land we were working on, and a piece of land adjacent. The results seem to show interesting features in the field and we are currently exploring these. Hopefully more news on our findings next year, when we have assessed the finds (washed and sorted and dated). Even if nothing else is found - that is also a positive, we have searched and found nothing to enhance our knowledge of the past.

So onto our plan for 2026! We would like to move Archaeology in Action to another location, perhaps Begbroke, Thrupp or Yarnton. More next year. *Christine Turley, Cherwell Community Archaeology* 



## Don't let winter slow you down.

Think you're 'too unfit to start'? You're not. I've helped complete beginners find their strength, energy and confidence. This winter, I'll guide you, make the first step and reach out.



Improve posture



Increase energy



Ease joint pain



Walk more comfortably

1-1 sessions. Private studio. Worton Park.

**esmé** Strength

& Wellbeing

- @ info@esmewellbeing.com
- © 07952 263103
- esmewellbeing.com
- Worton Park, OX29 4SU

## Gas Heating & Service

Specialise in:

- Commercial and Domestic Boiler Service, Maintenance and Repair
- •Boiler/Warm air/Water heater/Gas proving

For a free and friendly quote contact: Joe McEneaney

Mobile: 07808 608 970 Email: ghsoxford@gmail.com

Gas Safe No: 532113



532113

#### Fun and sheer joy - Yarnton Band



Not 76 Trombones but three of them, see below!

Although we were not prize winners at the Oxfordshire & District Entertainment contest, we did have success with our Eb Bass player James Pye being awarded the best soloist cup in our section and Guy James being named as best conductor; he also conducted Witney Band.

Here are some comments from the adjudicator Leigh Baker on the contest.

Overall. 'I was particularly taken by the quality of young performers in the morning session. This included an incredible 11-year-old tubist playing *Bass in the Ballroom* and some excellent trombone playing from three very good teenage (just!) soloists. This was alongside bands featuring very young players in their ranks alongside supportive adult musicians. Bravo! And bravo to the bands encouraging this flourishing of young talent and the Association for championing it!' In his comments on our performance he wrote of *Seventy-six trombones:* 'trombones work well as a team – well led by a great section leader'.

Bass in the Ballroom: 'Fabulous style from the soloist James Pye, Wow, band swaying too, cadenza is spot on.'

Yes, we have no bananas: 'It's great fun....well done lads, Thomas Stroud and William Pye.'

Close every door: 'Nice sustained sounds by all, it flows well. Lovely shapes.'

Baggy Trousers: 'Lots to impress and you clearly enjoy this. So much energy and enthusiasm, thank you.'

Finally, Leigh wrote of the band: 'What banding is all about – fun and sheer joy'.

On Monday 8th December we hope to be putting on a concert in Witney; please see the band's website <a href="https://yarnton-band.org.uk/engagements/">https://yarnton-band.org.uk/engagements/</a> for final details. You can hear us at the Yarnton Carol Service in St. Bartholomew's on 14th at 5 p.m., and also at 3 p.m. for the Yarnton Crib service with the Training Band plus some adults.

Peter Hewis



## Chris Lord

## Building & Property Maintenance



#### ⊠clord07795@gmail.com



- Bricklaving
- Plastering
- Painting
- Decking
- Digger driving
- Patios
- Landscaping

- Log sheds
- Raised flower beds
- Driveways
- General property maintenance
- General builder
- Small extensions
- And much more





#### The 7-Year Rule: why you can't just give it all away

Ah, the 7-year rule. Sounds like something out of a relationship advice column, doesn't it? 'Give your cash away, survive seven years, and you're golden!' But no, this one's far less romantic. It's about money, taxes, and the government's relentless quest to snatch a chunk of your hard-earned cash.

You probably thought you'd just gift everything to your kids, nieces, or your favourite cat rescue centre and avoid paying inheritance tax altogether. Genius, right? Just give it all away and avoid the taxman completely. Well, slow down, Robin Hood. There's a little thing called the 7-year rule that's going to make sure that doesn't work quite as smoothly as you'd hoped. Here's the basic idea: you can give away as much as you like in your lifetime, and if you survive for another 7 years after handing over that cash, congrats! No inheritance tax. Your kids get to keep it all, and the taxman gets nothing. Sounds perfect, doesn't it? But - and this is a massive but - if you pop off before the 7 years are up, HMRC is coming for their share. And they're coming fast.

Now, don't think for a second that the government would make this simple. Of course not. It's Britain. We love a good bit of paperwork and a confusing set of rules. So, here's how it works: if you die within 3 years of making that gift, it's treated just like any other part of your estate - bang, full inheritance tax at 40%. Yes, 40% - nearly half of what you thought you'd generously passed on is now lining the government's pockets.

If you manage to last a bit longer, say between 3 and 7 years, you get what's called 'taper relief', which sounds nice, but is really just a way of making you feel better about still having to pay tax. The rate reduces a bit, year by year, until you finally hit 7 years and your gift becomes tax-free. The closer you get to that magic 7-year mark, the less your heirs will have to fork out, but until then, it's a game of financial Russian roulette. But here's the kicker: this taper only applies to a gift that becomes taxable. It's a taper on the tax itself, not on the gift. So unless you're planning to hand over vast sums of money - enough to actually breach the inheritance tax threshold - you're not going to see a penny of benefit. In other words, for most people, taper relief is about as useful as a chocolate teapot.

Now, before you start thinking about gifting everything to everyone you know and hoping for the best, let's be clear: you can't just give away your house, your savings, or your priceless collection of antique toasters and still live comfortably, expecting to skate through inheritance tax duty. Oh no. The taxman has thought of that, too. In addition to the 7-year rule, there's something called a 'gift with reservation of benefit', which, in plain English, means if you're still using or benefiting from what you've given away - like gifting your house to your kids but continuing to live in it rent-free - it still counts as part of your estate. So much for outsmarting the system.

But wait, there's more! You've probably heard that you can give small gifts each year without them being hit by inheritance tax. That's true. You can give away £3,000 a year tax-free, and that's on top of the 7-year rule. You can also give away £250 to as many different people as you like each year, which might cover a couple of nice dinners, but it's hardly going to fund anyone's mortgage.

And if you're really feeling generous, you can even give away up to £5,000 to your child and £2,500 to your grandchild as a wedding gift without worrying about inheritance tax. Because nothing says 'congratulations on your marriage' like a tax loophole.

The 7-year rule is a clever way to reduce your inheritance tax bill, but it's not the silver bullet people think it is. You've got to plan it out properly, make sure you actually live those 7 years, and most importantly, not fall into the trap of thinking you can dodge the taxman just by handing over your assets.

So, the moral of the story? Start early. Plan properly. Speak to a solicitor. And for the love of all things sensible, don't saunter into the world of inheritance tax with a last-minute plan that involves gifting your way out like you're the David Blaine of finances. Because HMRC has seen it all - and they won't fall for it.

Anna Boucher, Solicitor at The Burnside Partnership, tel. 01865 987781



#### Yarnton W.I.

Hello neighbours. I hope you're feeling upbeat about the upcoming festive season.

Gaynor, our Vice President, was honoured to lay our wreath at the village memorial this Remembrance Day. The original knitted one is on display at the church. I am sure many of you will have been there.

We are looking forward to our annual seasonal craft event and party at or December meeting. We have excellent creative ideas this year, thanks to Lou. We will enjoy seasonal food and drink to a background of celebration music.

Our new post box topper is in progress and will be quite special. Look out for it in December.

We have a great deal to look forward to as the year ends and into the new year. We hope you will pay us a visit in 2026. You will find it worthwhile!

Wishing you all a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. *Judy Blake, President* 





**Emergency Call Outs** 

**Boiler Services and Repairs** 

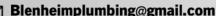
**Boiler Upgrades** 

Full Bathroom & Kitchen Installations

**All General Plumbing** 

**Hot Water and Heating Repairs** 

C 07535256953 Gas Safe No: 651296







## Specialist Private Client Lawyers & Tax professionals

Trusted advisors to individuals and their families

We are based in Combe, Oxfordshire, but also have offices in London and the Thames Valley.

We provide specialist advice on Wills, inheritance tax planning, probates, powers of attorney and generally protecting your assets. Our tax specialists are also here to help with your personal tax compliance.



We are always happy to offer a free initial chat.

For more information, please call our Combe office on 01865 987781, visit www.theburnsidepartnership.com or email anna.boucher@theburnsidepartnership.com





"The team is superbly put together, showing professionalism and personality in equal measure" Legal 500, 2024

#### Having the Builders in Part 1. How to find a reliable builder

So you have obtained the relevant planning permission, had the construction drawings done and a schedule of works prepared that specifies materials, finishes, and performance requirements and obtained a Building Regulations Conditional Approval for the construction drawings, and it's now time to get quotes for the building work and appoint a builder. At the design stage of the job, I always recommend getting a budget cost estimate prepared before submitting the planning application. This will give you a benchmark against which to compare the tender prices and haggle with the builder. Start by creating a shortlist of potential builders through recommendations from friends, family and neighbours who have had similar work done. Look for contractors who are experienced in similar projects, such as extensions and alterations, and are familiar with UK Building Regulations. Verify recommendations using trusted sources such as the Federation of Master Builders (FMB) and the NHBC and also Companies House to check that the business is officially registered and active, is in good financial health and has a solid trading history. Sites like Checkatrade, Rated People, MyBuilder and others can be useful starting points, but they should be treated with caution and used as part of a wider vetting process. Their background checks tend to be minimal and they don't assess financial health nor technical quality. I have always had doubts about the reliability of reviews. While many reviews are genuine, some can be fake or selectively filtered. Search online reviews using their name plus terms like 'complaints', 'court case', or 'scam'.

Aim to invite at least five or six contractors to tender - typically only about about half will submit a quote. The tender documents should include the Conditionally Approved construction drawings, the Schedule of Works and a covering letter. Supply identical copies to ensure like-for-like pricing. In the covering letter ask for a fixed-price quote as well as details of relevant trade association memberships, valid Public Liability and Employers' Liability Insurance and Health and Safety policies. Set a clear deadline for the return of tenders, allowing a period of 4 to 6 weeks. Ensure builders can access the site, and when they visit make a note of who came and when.

Once the tenders come in, assess them critically. Don't just focus on price - consider construction duration and availability too. Disregard any tenders from contractors who didn't visit the site. It is likely that you will end up with a shortlist of two or three builders, so ask questions of each of them to do with things like their approach to site management, waste disposal, and neighbour considerations. Conduct financial checks on the contractors to ensure they are solvent and capable of completing the project, and ask for copies of certificates and check expiry dates for their Public Liability and Employers' Liability Insurance and Contractor's All-Risk Insurance. Clarify the payment schedule and terms and ask for details of their experience on similar projects and request references. If possible, visit previous projects they have completed and speak to the clients about workmanship, communication, punctuality, and problem-solving.

When you have settled on a contractor for the job, you should give some consideration to a contract and agreement. In my experience most people are happy to go with the tender drawings and the schedule of works as the basis of the agreement plus anything that they have agreed with the contractor in terms of contract duration and payment schedules. However, you can also use a formal building contract, such as the JCT Homeowner Contract or one from the Federation of Master Builders. With the contract in place and the builder appointed you are good to go. In my next article I will discuss how to handle having the builders on site.

Jan Liberadzki BA Arch (Hons), MSc.





#### **Yarnton Village Hall**

The hall comprises a large Main Hall with enclosed garden and a smaller Back Room with use of kitchenette. The hall is fully accessible - facilities include stage, kitchen, toilets with disabled facilities and car park. The hall is available for hire for meetings, training events, shows, lunches, clubs, sales, parties, etc.

The charges for hiring the **Main Hall** or **Back Room** are, per hour unless stated:

Village residents: £11.00 Non Village residents: £13.00 **Kitchen**: £8.00 - per session

A separate deposit of £100 is required when booking

the hall

For further information or to book the hall please

contact Booking Secretary

varntonvillagehall@gmail.com or 07948 722633



#### **Yarnton Gardening Club**

This month we are holding our A.G.M. and Christmas Social on 18<sup>th</sup> December at **7 p.m.** If you haven't put your name down to attend and let us know what food you will be bringing, then please contact Jill Rowbotham as soon as possible on 377623. The A.G.M is for members only.

Many thanks to those of you who were at the October and November meetings and completed the form offering help with setting up and clearing away both at the Christmas and other meetings. When the work is spread among more people then it doesn't become a chore for the committee. If you weren't at the meetings and can offer help, then please let Jill or any other committee member know.

For those of you who offered to come early to the December meeting to help set up, we shall be at the Village Hall from 5.50 p.m. and look forward to seeing you. If you offered to remain afterwards to help clear up, that will also be much appreciated. Our committee currently consists of only seven people, and several of those who have served for a good many years only continue because they don't want to let the club down. We would welcome new committee members for their fresh ideas and to allow others to take a well-earned rest. Do please consider joining the committee if you can. Many thanks. The speaker at our January meeting will be Chris Day from Buckingham Nurseries whose appropriate talk for the beginning of the year is entitled 'Twelve Months of Colour'. Subscriptions will be due at the meeting so please remember to bring your money with you. If you'd prefer to pay by bacs then the bank details are on your programme card. *Ruth Astall* 





#### **Gosford Hill School December events**

## Friday 5<sup>th</sup> - Christmas Afternoon Tea for local elderly residents, 1.30 p.m. to 3.30 p.m.

We're delighted to once again host our Festive Afternoon Tea for elderly residents in our local community on Friday 5<sup>th</sup> December. Guests can enjoy tea, coffee, and a delicious selection of cakes and sandwiches, along with a fun game of bingo and a festive quiz! If you know someone who would enjoy joining us for this special occasion, please contact Mr. Bateman via the school office email by Monday 1<sup>st</sup> December: office@gosfordhillschool.org.

Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> - Christmas Fair, 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. Join us for our traditional Christmas Fair, a joyful afternoon filled with festive fun for all ages! Enjoy a wonderful variety of stalls, games, live music, and seasonal treats to get you into the holiday spirit. We'd love to see you there as we come together to celebrate this special time of year! Once again, we're inviting local small craft businesses to host a stall at the fair. Stalls cost £10 each, with all proceeds going to support the school. If you – or someone you know – would like to take part, please contact the school office for more details.

### Thursday $11^{th}$ Christmas Carol Concert – 7 p.m. to 8 p.m.

You're warmly invited to join us for our annual Christmas Carol Concert at St. Mary's Church, Kidlington. Enjoy a delightful evening filled with festive performances from our talented students, featuring a mix of timeless classics and modern favourites. Admission is free – come share in the joy and spirit of the season with us! We can't wait to celebrate with you.



#### **Aquarius Plumbing**

Tel: 01865 513058. Mob: 07984 121743

Email: grahambullock2001@yahoo.co.uk

Free estimates

No job too small

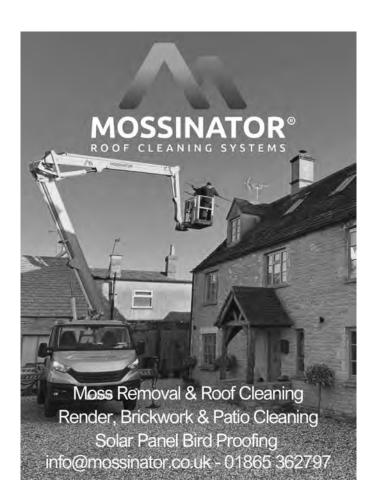
Domestic Plumbing Work

Bathroom and Kitchen refits

Wall Tiling - Floor Tiling - Loft Insulation

Decorating

Environmentally friendly upgrades



## Jerrams Brothers Funeral Directors



SAFE IN OUR HANDS

When someone you love dies . . . its reassuring to know there's someone you can trust.

Serving families in Oxfordshire for over 50 years and with a Funeral Director (Nicholas Tonks) living in Yarnton available for home visits.

www.jerramsbrothers.co.uk

WOODSTOCK 01993 811491 KIDLINGTON 01865 374444



#### YFDG: Multi-Agency Meeting Report

On 23rd October the Yarnton Flood Defence (YFD) held a multi-agency meeting with representatives from Yarnton Parish Council, Cherwell District Council and Oxfordshire County Council, The Environment Agency, Thames Water and local land-owners including Sanctuary, Yarnton Manor and Worton Park. Merton College and Taylor Wimpey were invited but sadly didn't respond. Members of Oxfordshire County Council will attempt to re-engage the new bursar at Merton College, as their co-operation is crucial on several key matters surrounding their land, and the planned PR9 housing development on Spring Hill. It was recognised that several groups have followed through on previously discussed actions. Specifically, thanks go to Sanctuary for removing obstructions, clearing, and improving a connected series of Main River culverts (upstream Phase 1) for the first time in many years, and having recently gained approval for Phase 2, this work is planned to continue to downstream Main River areas. In addition, we appreciate the considerable amount of work that Thames Water have put in, at considerable cost, to repairing and replacing crushed and blocked pitch-fibre foul sewer pipes on Cassington Road and the A44, and improvements to the sewage pumping stations. We've asked both companies to publish details of all recent and planned work undertaken in the village to keep residents properly informed.

The considerable list of village-wide actions discussed at the meeting continued to focus on easing the flow of water to, through and out of the village. The discovery (and removal!) of a football 'perfectly' blocking a pipe which was responsible for the passage of surface water out of the village encapsulates how seemingly small things can have a significant impact. Key areas that we continue to focus on include:

- A major piece of Main River infrastructure work to modify the junction of two watercourses adjacent to the A44 which we hope will reduce flooding further upstream in Aysgarth Road.
- Moving pipes that have wrongly been installed across ditches that can trap debris. Many of these pipes are decades old so tracking down what's in them and who is responsible takes significant time and effort.
- Tracing the waterways that lead out of the village towards the Thames. Some initial work has revealed opportunities to improve waterflow here.
- · Preventing foul sewage egress entering the Main River watercourses, causing downstream environmental pollution.
- Continuing to chase land-owners to undertake necessary maintenance and clear ditches, culverts and SUDS ponds, as well as unblock pipes which we've identified as having a significant build-up of silt. Oxfordshire County Council Highways have committed to jetting/camera inspecting some of these which fall under their remit.

Where residents can help is by ensuring any ditches and culverts on their land are regularly cleared of debris and plant growth, and by not filling in any existing water courses or SUDS ponds, which we have observed on occasion recently. Please continue to send photos/videos of flooding issues in Yarnton to us at <a href="mailto:yarntonflooddefence@gmail.com">yarntonflooddefence@gmail.com</a> and report issues concerning foul sewage to Thames Water and any problems to do with street/road drainage to FixMyStreet.com as these reports go directly to the correct Oxford County, or Cherwell District Council department to resolve the issue. Documenting evidence is also crucial to build a case for change with the many different organisations. And finally, for those who have been adversely impacted or want to know what to do to prepare for flooding then we'd recommend reviewing the <a href="mailto:oxfordshirefloodtoolkit.com">oxfordshirefloodtoolkit.com</a> website.

#### SMPROPAINTERS LIMITED

PAINTERS & DECORATORS Interior & Exterior painting services

FREE QUOTATIONS
CALL, TEXT, WHATSAPP 07710 896526
or email smpropainters@gmail.com

Professional, reliable, friendly & honest Decorating homes & businesses

DOMESTIC, CONTRACT, NEW BUILDS, COMMERCIAL FULLY INSURED

Dustless Sanding Equipment Used

Dustless Sanding Equipment Used Covers your area. All work guaranteed

(References available on request) Specialist in Farrow & Ball painting

#### PROBLEM FEET?!

NAIL CUTTING, CORNS, CALLOUSES. HARD/DRY SKIN. FOOT MASSAGE.

TREATMENT IN THE COMFORT OF YOUR OWN HOME!

Sharon Davies MCFHP/MAFHP tel. 07941 843353 OVER 21 YEARS' EXPERIENCE

REGISTERED MEMBER OF THE BRITISH

ASSOCIATION OF FOOT HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

#### HOLIDAY ARK DOG WALKING AND PET SITTING SERVICES

#### INSURED AND POLICE CHECKED DOG WALKING AND PET CARE SERVICES

Dog walking and puppy visits - Rabbit and Guinea Pig Boarding using RSPCA 5ft and 6ft hutches -Hamster, gerbil and small bird boarding - Cat feeding and home care service - Pet taxi

www.holidayark.co.uk

T: 01865 842435, M: 07596109489

Family run, based in Kidlington, and your pet and home will be cared for as if they were our own by trustworthy and caring pet lovers and owners.



#### Woodstock Methodist Church, Oxford Street, Woodstock Kidlington Methodist Church, Oxford Road, Kidlington

Minister: Rev. Paul Carter, tel. 01865 373958, Email: <a href="mailto:paul.carter@oxfordmethodists.org.uk">paul.carter@oxfordmethodists.org.uk</a>
Local Contact Woodstock: Mrs Sue Beuzeval, tel. 01865 849696, Email: <a href="mailto:sue.beuzeval@woodstockmethodists.org.uk">sue.beuzeval@woodstockmethodists.org.uk</a>
Local Contact Kidlington: Mel Snelling, <a href="mailto:mel.snelling@kidlingtonmethodists.org.uk">mel.snelling@kidlingtonmethodists.org.uk</a>

There are no Methodist churches in Yarnton, but you will find one in both Woodstock and Kidlington. Details of forthcoming services are below, but there are also various midweek activities, details of which can be found on the appropriate website.

Everyone is welcome to come and join us at any time.

#### **Services in December**

'Local Arrangement' invariably means instead of a 'live' preacher you can watch a pre-recorded service on screen at church.

Go to <u>oxfordmethodists.org.uk/worship.html</u> where details can be found of various recorded services

Woodstock				
$7^{th}$	10.30 a.m.	Rev. Michael Sawyer		
		Holy Communion		
$14^{th}$	10.30 a.m.	Junior Church Nativity		
		'The Grumpy Owl'		
21 <sup>st</sup>	10.30 a.m.	Simeon Mitchell		
		All-Age Carol Service		
$24^{th}$	10.30 a.m.	Rev. Paul Carter		
		Holy Communion		
$25^{th}$	10.30 a.m.	Christmas Day Worship		
		Rev. Paul Carter		
28 <sup>th</sup>	11 a.m.	United Service at Kidlington		

We also have a Junior Church which meets every week at 10.30 a.m. and ranges in age from two to early teens. The first part of the morning is shared with adults in church before we then go round to the church hall to share in our own activities. We are always delighted to see new members, whether with or without their parents!

Kid	lington

Mulligion		
$7^{th}$	10 a.m.	David Harper
$14^{\text{th}}$	10 a.m.	Alistair Jackson
21st	10 a.m.	Rev. Paul Carter
		Holy Communion
$25^{th}$	10 a.m.	Christmas Day Worship
		Rev. Paul Carter
$28^{th}$	11 a.m.	Anne Bedford
		(united with Woodstock)

Every Thursday we meet at 10.00 a.m. for a short informal time of prayer followed by coffee. On the third Thursday of the month, this incorporates a celebration of communion. All Welcome!

The Kidlington church also runs a Junior Church and crèche on Sunday mornings.



## **PELLMANS**

#### **Your Local Solicitors**

- Business and Business Contracts
   Contracts
- Property
   Residential, Commercial & Agricultural
- Wills, Probate and Trusts
   Tax Planning and Lasting Powers of Attorney

01865 884400

www.pellmans.co.uk

1 Abbey Street, Eynsham, Witney, OX29 4TB

Home visits available



#### Oxford Bus & Morris Motors Museum Museum newly accredited and a Christmas Jumper Competition



We are delighted to announce that VisitEngland has awarded the museum its 'Quality Assured Visitor Attraction' status. The award follows a visit to the museum by a mystery shopper, who rated the museum across eight topics. A 60% rating is classed as good, being the pass mark. We achieved 'an overall commendable score of 73%'.

The assessor stated in his report that 'key strengths highlighted in the assessment included the staff, cleanliness, and the attraction itself. The carefully curated displays offer a fascinating insight into Oxfordshire's transport heritage, bringing the past vividly to life. What makes the experience even more special is the team of staff and volunteers, who are friendly, knowledgeable, and clearly passionate about what they do, creating a warm and engaging atmosphere throughout the visit.'

The assessor identified that we have some work to do on the toilets and catering facilities. The trustees have formed a sub-committee to review these and other suggestions in the report, which would improve our visitor offering. A different mystery shopper will visit during 2026 when the museum will be reassessed.

Locally other attractions with the award include Blenheim, Oxford Castle and Prison, The Ashmolean, The Sheldonian, Bodleian Libraries, Didcot Railway Centre and Waterperry Gardens.

Father Christmas will be visiting the museum and seeing children in his 'Bus Grotto' on Sundays 14<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> December between 10 a.m. and 3 p.m. There is a small extra charge for every child who sees Santa but each child will receive a present. On both days The Oxford & District Model Railway Club will be bringing their model railway layouts for visitors to see. Older children and adults may be allowed to operate some trains.

On New Year's Day we shall have heritage bus rides from 11 a.m. until 3 p.m. when we shall have a free to enter competition for 'The Best Christmas Jumper'. If you are feeling a bit frail after the previous night's celebrations, come along in your best or worst jumper and enjoy the museum and wallow in nostalgia.

May I wish all readers a Very Happy Christmas.

Frank Collingwood

#### YARNTON PARISH COUNCIL

Email: clerk@yarnton-pc.gov.uk, telephone: 01865 378476, website: www.yarnton-pc.gov.uk

All correspondence sent by letter or email to the Parish Council must include the sender's name, address and telephone number. The Parish Council is unable to discuss correspondence received without these details. Please note that the Parish Council office is open to residents by appointment only as the office is not staffed full-time.

#### Parish Council Chairman:

Mike Groves: mike.groves@yarnton-pc.gov.uk

Parish Council Vice-Chairman:

Fiona Mawson: fiona.mawson@yarnton-pc.gov.uk

**Other Parish Council Members:** 

Debbie Behan: debbie.behan@yarnton-pc.gov.uk lan Middleton: ian.middleton@yarnton-pc.gov.uk Samuel Smith: samuel.smith@yarnton-pc.gov.uk loe McEneaney: joe.mceneaney@yarnton-pc.gov.uk Lesley McLean: lesley.mclean@yarnton-pc.gov.uk Dorothy Walker: dorothy.walker@yarnton-pc.gov.uk

Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer: David Thornhill: clerk@yarnton-pc.gov.uk

**District Councillors:** 

lean Conway: jean.conway@cherwell-dc.gov.uk Lesley McLean: lesley.mclean@cherwell-dc.gov.uk Dorothy Walker: dorothy.walker@cherwell-dc.gov.uk

**County Councillor:** 

Lesley McLean: lesley.mclean@oxfordshire.gov.uk

**Planning:** Any members of the public who wish to comment on or object to any of the following planning applications can either contact Yarnton Parish Council via the Clerk's office or Cherwell District Council via the planning portal here: https://planningregister.cherwell.gov.uk/.

#### Planning applications:

25/02396/LB. Replacement of a rotten window in the bathroom on like-for-like basis, Hill Farm, 202 Cassington Road, Yarnton, OX5 LOD.

MW.0104/25. Proposed Hazardous Substances Consent under the Planning (Hazardous Substances) Act 1990 for the storage of Biogas up to a maximum quantity of 17 tonnes at Severn Trent Green Power Cassington AD Facility, Worton Farm, Worton, OX29 4FL.

25/02838/F. Extension of garage premises to provide enhanced car valeting facilities, EV charging and associated works, 93 Woodstock Road, Yarnton, Oxfordshire, OX5 1PT.

**Parish Councillors:** There are currently vacancies for two Parish Councillors. If you are interested in becoming a Councillor, please either contact the Parish Clerk for details or attend the next Parish Council meeting.

**Future meetings:** The next ordinary Parish Council meeting is on Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> December at 6.30 p.m. at Yarnton Village Hall. Members of the public are welcome to attend all Parish Council meetings for all or part of the meeting. Members of the public who wish to speak need to contact the Clerk 7 days in advance of the meeting giving notice of what they wish to say; any person will be limited to 5 minutes, and the total time for public contributions is limited to 15 minutes. Members of the public wishing to speak on any other matter or to be involved in the Councillors 'general discussion may only do so at the discretion of the Chairman.

Covering Kidlington, Yarnton and Begbroke
Offers help to anybody over 60 or
disabled with gardening, befriending,
shopping, dog walking etc.
All Volunteers are fully DBS checked.

Please contact
Kidlington Information
Centre on
01865
378479





#### **December News - The Importance of Soil**

#### **Seasonal Spotlight**

Winter can be quite a harsh time of year for much of our wildlife, but for some species it can offer a bit of respite from the harsher, colder climates further north. Winter is a fantastic time to see many bird species that we won't see in summer, such as redwings and fieldfares. Birds such as starlings start to flock, forming impressive murmurations in the sky. Why not visit your local nature reserve on a winter's day and see what new species you can find?

#### The Yellow Wagtail Partnership

We wanted to bring a bit of colour to this winter's month by mentioning that one of our main projects is 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 and 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, but also in a way that is economically 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 as well. This in turn will increase the amount of food available for many species of bird including house martins, swifts, snipe and lapwings. Check out our website for more information. https://www.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 to the untrained eye, these look a lot like burn piles. The wildlife thinks so too and so many creatures use burn piles to sleep in, including hedgehogs, frogs, voles, and lizards. To avoid burning hibernating wildlife, you must move burn piles before lighting them.



- Crack ice on your bird baths, water dishes and ponds so that our winter wildlife can still drink. Who knows which birds 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 even ladybirds.
- Log piles are well sought over for both people and wildlife at this time of year. If you can, try to leave a pile outside untouched to allow hedgehogs and other hibernating wildlife to sleep in it over winter.
- If you find a sick or injured hedgehog or other wild animal, please call Tiggywinkles Wildlife Hospital on 01844 292292

To find out more about wildlife friendly gardening - head over to the Wild Oxfordshire website at <a href="https://www.wildoxfordshire.org.uk">www.wildoxfordshire.org.uk</a> and have a look in guidance.

#### **World Soil Day**

The 5<sup>th</sup> December **is** World Soil Day, held annually to highlight the importance of healthy soil and its sustainable management. Soil is vital for plant growth and therefore food production. Healthy soils filter and store water, reducing the risk of flooding. Soil can even help mitigate against climate change by storing carbon from the atmosphere. In addition, soil provides a habitat for many different species including bacteria, fungi, worms, invertebrates. It is estimated that a single teaspoon of healthy soil can contain more living organisms than there are people on Earth - that's over 7 billion microbes! We can all do our bit to support healthy soils. This can be in your garden through reducing the amount of chemicals you apply, composting and mulching, or turning your lawn into a meadow. We can also do our bit by supporting farmers who are working to improve their soil quality through sustainable farming practices – when you can, buy organic or directly from the farmer. *Sophie Cunnington, Wild Oxfordshire Yellow Wagtail Partnership Officer*, https://www.wildoxfordshire.org.uk/



#### **Yarnton Netball Club**

As the first half of the winter season concludes, our two senior teams have been playing Oxfordshire League on Wednesday evenings. Emeralds were promoted to Division One and are having an excellent season, currently placed 6<sup>th</sup> out of 12 teams. Diamonds in Division Three are yet to find their feet but enthusiasm runs high. Our Inters (U19s) play on Monday; their games have been competitive as they work together and hope to make inroads into the well-established oppositions which dominate their division.

The Sunday junior league has seen U15s, U13s and U11s begin the season with keenness and talent giving them all several wins against other very experienced clubs. The seniors now train in one session on Tuesdays at Rutten Lane, Yarnton 7.30 p.m. until 9 p.m. with school years 10-13 preceding them at 6.15 p.m. - 7.15 p.m. The younger age groups meet on Wednesday evenings – school years 4-6 are at 3.30 p.m. - 4.30 p.m., and school years 7-9 are at 4.40 p.m. - 5.40 p.m. For further information please make contact by email:

## <u>yarntonnetballclub@outlook.com</u> or <u>yarntonyouthnetball@gmail.com</u> or via Facebook.

Nationally, England will have played New Zealand in London in November and will then play Jamaica on  $6^{th}$  and  $7^{th}$  December in Kingston, and  $13^{th}$  and  $14^{th}$  here at the London Copper Box. For further information and tickets please visit the England Netball website.

#### Back the Bid: It's Netball's time

The Olympic Games in 2032 will be held in Brisbane. Australia are leading a bid to include netball. On a recent visit I saw 24 floodlit netball courts on one site in Adelaide – all being used every evening of the week for all age groups. The game is massive there, and continues to grow here, but if it is to be included in the Olympics, support for the bid is needed. The link is <a href="https://netball.sport/back-the-bid/">https://netball.sport/back-the-bid/</a> - please do add your pledge if you would like to see netball included.

Sue Blackshaw



#### SWD Smart Alarms & CCTV



- Smart Intrusion Alarms.
- Video Surveillance (CCTV).
- Video Doorbells.
- Free Security Consultations.
- Tel: 01865 965319
- Web: www.swdsecure.co.uk
- Email: enquiries@swdsecure.co.uk

## Window and door repairs

Failed double glazed units, window and door locks, hinges and hardware.

Why replace your doors or windows? We can repair them. Free estimates, no minimum order, speedy and affordable.

## Don't replace it! Repair it!

Call Jon on 07935 826312

Simons Glazing . E-mail simonsglazingltd@hotmail.co.uk 5 Wayside Cottages, Woodstock Road, Yarnton. OX51QH



Based in West Oxford and family run, we can provide for your Fencing and Landscaping needs

Fencing Decking Landscaping

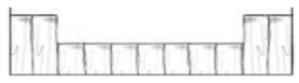
Paths Patios Garden Walls

Sheds Garden Services Bin Stores

#### Installation Maintenance and Repair

For a no obligation quote call Alan on 01865 421273 07565564349

Visit our yell.com page to hear what our customers say about us



www.milanoxford.co.uk





#### Your Local Expert Drainage & Emergency Plumbing Service

Drain Clearance • Emergency Plumbing • Remedial Drain Repairs CCTV Drain Surveys • Domestic and Commercial Services

> O18653898O4 oxford@draindoctor.co.uk

#### www.draindoctor.co.uk

## CombeMill, Blenheim Palace Sawmills, Combe, OX29 8ET

Combe Mill is closed for the Winter, opening again and 'In Steam' on 15th March 2026. We would like to thank all who came along and supported our charity during 2025.

#### The Riverside Tea Room is still open.

**Winter menu:** Homemade soup and crusty bread; soup and cheese scone; soup and filled soft roll; baguettes; homemade cakes; tea, coffee, soft drinks.

Why not call in and see us? All are most welcome.

**Open Wednesdays only.** 10.30 a.m. until 3 p.m. Closed on Wednesdays  $24^{th}$  and  $31^{st}$  December.

Telephone: 01993 358694.



Design Landscaping Maintenance Drawings, plans, planting schemes Paving, fencing, paths, planting

Regular or one-off

Transform your garden into something amazing.
We've got every aspect covered!

t. 01865 884074

m. 07796 145476

www.bloomsgardens.co.uk



#### December

From all the staff and residents of Yarnton Manor - Merry Christmas to our village friends and neighbours! We look forward to seeing some of you at the St Bartholemew Carol Service on Dec 14<sup>th</sup> and welcoming you to the Manor for refreshments afterwards.



Christmas comes early here at the Manor as our American colleagues deck the halls in early November and our Oxford students finish term and head home to celebrate at the start of this month. Few things look more festive than the Manor lit up with trees and lights, and the many gatherings of people sharing joy and delight that we welcome. But the splendour is also a reminder to us that while we put on our finest show in honour of the birth of Jesus, he himself only required a place to be born and people to love him.

That's a challenge to us - to keep remembering what truely matters in the midst of a busy commercial season and to go on simply looking for ways to welcome and to love those around us in this year and well into 2026.

Want to know more? Sign up for our newsletter by using the QR code or Check out our new website! yarntonmanor.org



## Budgens OF YARNTON







A firm favourite in the calendar for many
— and especially for us here at Fraser's
Budgens! It's been another busy year in
the store, with lots of exciting
developments, from store improvements
to welcoming fantastic new suppliers like
Mudwalls, bringing even more quality and
local produce to our shelves.

A huge thank you to all our customers and staff for making 2025 a great year.

Wishing you all a wonderful Christmas and an even better year ahead in 2026!



Don't forget that we have pretty much everything you'll need for Christmas, whether it be those batteries you forgot, finer wines for the Christmas table or a lovely COOK meal for dessert. Have a look at what we have before making that big trip to the

Check out what we have from Mudwalls this Christmas. From sprout stems to purple sprouting broccoli!



WE'RE EVEN OPEN FOR A FEW HOURS ON THE 25<sup>TH</sup>!

## Budgens

#### **Xmas Opening Hours**

24th Dec6.30am-11pm

25th Dec 10am - 2pm

26<sup>th</sup> Dec 8am – 8pm

31st Dec 6am - 11pm

1st Jan 8am - 8pm



AND 10% OFF FOR PLATINUM

MEMBERS



#### **Xmas Opening Hours**

23rd Dec9am - 2pm

24<sup>th</sup> Dec 9 – 1.30pm

25th - 26th DecCLOSED

27th Dec 9am - 2pm

31st Dec9am - 1.30pm

1st JanCLOSED



Remember, you can join our exclusive Platinum Club online at <a href="https://www.frasersbudgens.co.uk">www.frasersbudgens.co.uk</a>. You'll get 2p off a litre every Saturday &Sunday, A third off Platinum Car Washes Mon-Weds, 20% off hot drinks, 10% off Laithwaites, a free product each month and money off vouchers too... phew!