

YARNTON

MAY
2026

VILLAGE

NEWS

Editorial Committee:

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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 4th Indoor Bowls Club, Village Hall, 10 a.m. *(and every Monday)*
Monday 4th Yarnton Manor Spring Open Day, 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.
Monday 11th Community Drop In, Village Hall, 2 p.m. – 4 p.m.
(this is the only Drop In this month because of Bank Holidays and the work on the Village Hall roof)

Monday 4th Yarnton Band, 7.30 p.m. - 8.45 p.m. *(and every Monday, except Bank Holidays)*
Tuesday 5th Yarnton Bridge Club, Village Hall, 9.30 a.m. *(and every Tuesday)*
Thursday 7th 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 8th Copy date June Village News
Wednesday 13th Lunch Club, Village Hall, 1 p.m.
Thursday 14th W.I. Village Hall, 7.30 p.m.
Sunday 17th Village Fete and Raffle Draw, Rutten Lane Park, 12 noon – 4 p.m.
Thursday 21st Gardening Club, Village Hall, 7.30 p.m.
Saturday 23rd Gardening Club Plant Sale, Village Hall, 2.30 p.m.
Wednesday 27th Lunch Club, Village Hall, 1 p.m.

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
Wednesdays 9.30 a.m. Holy Communion
On Facebook 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: enquiries@kmslitho.co.uk

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 June Issue

Material for inclusion in the June Newsletter should be received by midday on **Friday 8th May**.

Copy should be e-mailed to: ruth@astall.com and maryclarke2305@googlemail.com

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 July issue is **Friday 12th June**.

Yarnton Park Village Fete – Sunday 17th May (12 noon – 4 p.m.)

The countdown is on for this year's Village Fete, and we're looking forward to welcoming everyone to Rutten Lane Park on Sunday 17th May from 12 noon – 4 p.m. It's shaping up to be a fantastic afternoon for all ages, with plenty to see, do and enjoy – so do come along and be part of it.

Getting there

To help the day run smoothly, we kindly ask visitors to consider how they travel. There is no official parking for the event, so if you're able to walk or use public transport, that would be greatly appreciated. If you do need to drive, please ensure you park legally and respectfully, avoiding kerbs and being mindful of residents living near the park and around the village.

Volunteers needed

We're still looking for volunteers to help on the day. Even giving just half an hour of your time would make a real difference. There are a range of roles available, including general stewards and helping on stalls such as raffle ticket sales, the 50/50 lucky bucket draw, and the 'bottles and cans' stall. No experience is needed – full guidance and a briefing will be provided.

Raffle

Our raffle is now well underway, with tickets available in advance and on the day. We encourage you to get yours early to be in with a chance of winning. The top prize is £300 cash, generously sponsored by the Chris Lewis Group, alongside a range of fantastic prizes including vouchers from local businesses and days out.

If you'd like to volunteer, purchase raffle tickets or find out more, please get in touch at yarntonparkrenewal@gmail.com

We hope to see as many of you there as possible for what promises to be a great community event.



YARNTON GARDENING CLUB

invites you to a

GRAND PLANT SALE

Saturday 23rd May 2026

Yarnton Village Hall, 2.30 p.m.

Plants of many types and varieties including vegetables, shrubs, house plants, perennials, bedding, annuals, etc.

Plus home-made cakes and produce

Light refreshments, including cream teas.

For further details tel. 372637

Central Yarnton Bridge Club

NEW FRIENDLY BRIDGE GAME

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Tuesday Mornings

9.30 a.m. seated FOR 10 a.m.

Yarnton Bridge Club is now able to offer a friendly game for Bridge Players who have a fair knowledge of the game and would like to improve their play.

We run 12 boards of supervised play with help and guidance from an experienced teacher. No partner needed.

Coffee from 9.30 a.m. - Bridge 10 a.m. to 12.00

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Questions/Queries Please Contact

Jonathan on 07394 994151

johnprice0715@gmail.com

YARNTON PARISH COUNCIL

Parish Councillor Vacancy

Yarnton Parish Council is seeking enthusiastic and community-minded residents to join the Council. This is a voluntary role that offers opportunities to help shape local services, and represent the interests of residents.

As a Parish Councillor, you will work with fellow Council members to help improve community facilities, consider planning matters, support local initiatives and help make Yarnton a better place to live.

No previous experience is required – just an interest in local issues, the ability to listen to residents and work collaboratively to help improve local issues.

If you are interested in becoming a Parish Councillor, we would be delighted to hear from you. Please either contact the Clerk via the contact us page on our website, or attend the next Parish Council meeting.

For further information, and to find out more please visit www.yarnton-pc.gov.uk/become-a-councillor

www.yarnton-pc.gov.uk



St Bartholomews Yarnton

Pentecost Sunday 24th May @ 4pm

Please join us for
Village Prayers in St
Bartholomew's
followed by tea and cake

All Welcome!

Following on from our Village Prayers for Christian Unity in January, we would like to invite you to our Pentecost celebrations.

To pray together, alongside our brothers and sisters from other churches and denominations, for our village, our world and one another.

For all ages, with activities for children.
Followed by conversation over cake!

All are warmly welcome!

Join us for a Benefice walk through the beautiful bluebell woods between Begbroke & Bladon!

Begbroke Bluebell Walk Monday 4th May - Afternoon (time TBC)



Ascension Day

Thursday 14th May
@ 7pm

Benefice Service at St
Bartholomew's
followed by a party!

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 Jan 2026)

Wednesdays:

- 9.30am Holy Communion
- 10.30am Little Sheep (term time)
for under 5s and their parents/grandparents/carers



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



Yarnton W.I.

Hello Neighbours

Walking through our village is a joyful experience this time of year. The trees are in bloom and the birds are happily tweeting their songs. We certainly experienced a few sunny days in April. And of course, some rainy ones too. But with the clocks changing we are certainly in the midst of Spring.

We are celebrating our new year in the W.I. We have received our new programme cards with interesting and diverse speakers in the months ahead, along with social evenings and events to look forward to.

We welcomed Thea Rogers as our speaker in April. The Latin style music and dance steps in the background, along with Zumba exercise moves, ensured we had a fun workout and certainly reminded me of my dreadfully bad level of fitness!

Members attended the quiz night held by the Oxfordshire Federation of W.I.s and enjoyed the evening and learned many new things. Similarly, we joined a well attended Oxfordshire Annual Meeting, with raffles and stalls and wonderful speakers. We are looking forward to a speaker selection day and an evening in Hanborough with other local W.I. groups to share our experiences and to listen to an interesting speaker, as well as a raffle and delicious refreshments. So much to enjoy!

Our speaker for our next meeting on 14th of May will be Dennis East, talking about 'Poetry to make you laugh and think'. It is bound to be a lighthearted evening and to be uplifting and inspiring for all.

We will participate in the Yarnton Village fete on 17th May organised by the Yarnton Park Renewal Group. We will have delicious cakes for sale made by our members as well as a bran tub for the children and information for ladies who may be thinking of joining us. We hope you will stop by.

Enjoy the longer evenings!

Judy Blake, President

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Kidlington & District Historical Society

Our next meeting will be on May 26th, when Dr. Andrew Shapland will be talking about 'Knossos, a myth or reality?' The meeting is held at Kidlington Baptist Church, OX5 2DS. Doors open 7.30 p.m. with meetings starting at 7.50 p.m. Visitors £5. Ample car parking. The June meeting is the A.G.M. and for members only.

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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 rooms are per hour unless stated.

Main Hall

Village residents: £12.00

Non Village Residents: £14.00

Kitchen

£8.00 - per session

Back Room

Village residents: £11.00

Non Village Residents: £13.00

If having a bouncy castle/gaming van an extra charge of £6.00 is charged for electric.

A separate deposit of £100 is required when booking the hall.

For further information or to book the hall please contact
Booking Secretary
yarntonvillagehall@gmail.com or 07948 722633

Updates on 'Botley West'



MORE CONSULTATION OPPORTUNITIES AS MILIBAND DELAYS DECISION

In late March, Ed Miliband, the Secretary of State (SoS) for the Department for Energy and Net Zero (DESNEZ), announced that he has delayed a decision on the proposed Botley West solar power station from 10th May to 10th September 2026. The announcement of a four-month delay means that there will be further opportunities for public consultation on Photovoltaic Development Partners (PVDP)'s controversial application for a Development Consent Order. It also raises significant questions about the effectiveness and relevance of the Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) planning process. As Calum Miller, MP for Bicester and Woodstock, put it in a letter to Miliband's department: 'Why has the Department decided to extend the timetable in order to seek further information from the applicant (PVDP), rather than refusing the application on the basis of the material already before it?'

Background to the delayed decision

In its announcement, DESNEZ said that the additional four months are needed to enable the Department 'to seek further information from the applicant with sufficient time to allow for consideration of this information by other interested parties'. This means that the Department has recognised that there are a number of important questions that PVDP has still not answered, despite an examination process lasting for more than a year.

As Calum Miller put it: 'This is not a case in which concerns have emerged suddenly...throughout the examination there were repeated and serious questions about the adequacy of the applicant's work...the Examining Authority itself was openly critical'. Calum's criticism echoes the concerns about the adequacy of the NSIP planning process that Stop Botley West (SBW), our local authorities and many other interested parties have been voicing for some time.

Given the seriousness of these concerns, it is worth noting that Botley West is the first and only solar application on which Miliband has delayed making a decision since taking up office in July 2024 - while at least ten others have been approved without further challenges.

MP calls for rejection, not delay

Calum Miller summed up his views with the following statement: 'The Botley West delay speaks volumes. Ministers have kicked the decision down the road because they still need more information from the developer and more time for others to consider it. After a process this long, that is a damning reflection on the quality of the application and suggests the Planning Inspectorate recommended against it. Ministers should have rejected it and told PVDP to come back with a better scheme, not given them more time'.

Prof Alex Rogers, SBW chair, commented: 'It became clear during the Examination phase that the Planning Inspectorate team was not satisfied with a number of PVDP's responses to requests for further information. We welcome the Secretary of State's decision to seek further information from the Applicant, and to allow sufficient time for consideration by interested parties such as the Stop Botley West community group'.

What happens next?

The Department for Energy and Net Zero (DESNEZ) announced that they would send out a request for further information to PVDP shortly after Easter, and publish details on the Planning Inspectorate's Project Information Page. PVDP's responses should be published in the same place. There could then be further requests from DESNEZ addressed to specific bodies or people.

Interested parties including SBW and our supporters will be able to respond and comment on DESNEZ's questions and/or PVDP's answers using an email address or other method to be supplied later.

SBW will send a mailer with links to the questions and PVDP's answers straight after they are published.

Please be ready to act quickly to review the questions and answers and submit your comments to SoS Ed Miliband at the Department for Energy and Net Zero via the Planning Inspectorate using BotleyWestSolar@planninginspectorate.gov.uk

Visit stopbotleywest.com to learn more, to request regular updates and get the latest news on the application and decision

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

Amir Kianzad: amir.kianzad@yarnton-pc.gov.uk

Ian Middleton: ian.middleton@yarnton-pc.gov.uk

Joe McEneaney: joe.mceneaney@yarnton-pc.gov.uk

Lesley McLean: lesley.mclean@yarnton-pc.gov.uk

Samuel Smith: samuel.smith@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:

Jean 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: None

Parish Councillors: There is a vacancy for one Parish Councillor. 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 Annual Meeting of the Parish Council will be held on Wednesday, 13th May at 6.30 p.m. in the back room 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.

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thameswater.co.uk(Report a Problem):
Please report any issues with foul sewage
Overflows near water-courses.
FixMy Street.com:
To report any highway-related matters (e.g. blocked
drains, gulleys, water-courses).

Oxfordshire County Council:
<https://www.oxfordshirefloodtoolkit.com/emergency/report-flood/>
to report any flooding.



Yarnton Gardening Club

May is a busy month for us, with the Village Fete on 17th and our annual Plant Sale on 23rd, as well as our usual meeting and our first outing of the year!

We shall have a stall at the Fete, where we shall be offering the chance for children (and adults) to decorate a small plastic container and to plant a sunflower seed in it, so they can watch it grow as the summer goes on.

The Plant Sale is our main fundraising event of the year. This year it's in the afternoon, starting at 2.30 p.m. and will be inside the Village Hall rather than in the garden, which will be taken up with scaffolding and builders' materials in connection with the new roof for the Hall.

As this is an afternoon event, we shall be offering cream teas - tea/coffee and a scone with jam and cream - as well as tea/coffee and biscuits. There will be a good selection of flower and vegetable plants at very reasonable prices, as well as a cake stall. If you have plants to donate, please bring them along to the Hall from 12.30 p.m., or contact any committee member to deliver to them if you can't be there on the day. We would welcome help from members to run the stalls.

And please come along with lots of money to spend to stock your gardens with beautiful flowers and tasty vegetables.

There may still be time to put your name down on our first outing of the year to Foxington at Britwell Salome, but please contact Serena by 5th May on 01865 378817 if you'd like to go.

The speaker for our May meeting on 21st is Charlotte (Lottie) Newitt, whose talk is entitled 'The Scented Seasonal Garden.' We look forward to seeing you there - visitors are always welcome (£5).

Ruth Astall

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Improving your home Part 9. Conservatories and Garden Rooms

Conservatory extensions can provide a cost-effective way to add bright, versatile living space without the full expense of a traditional extension. Conservatories can serve multiple purposes, from dining rooms and lounges to home offices or hobby spaces. Modern high-insulated designs with high-performance glazing can be used year-round, increasing floor area for dining, relaxation or home working. Because they're generally quicker to build, and fall under permitted development in most cases, they can add value and appeal to a property, with less disruption than a full-scale brick extension.

The thermal efficiency of modern conservatories has improved, with advanced glazing technologies, including double and triple glazing, low-emissivity coatings, and thermal breaks, which maintain comfortable temperatures throughout the year while reducing energy costs. In terms of materials, uPVC is cheapest, then aluminium, then timber/wood with bespoke detailing. Polycarbonate roofs are cheapest; glass or tiled/insulated roofs cost more, and triple or high-performance glazing even more. Construction timelines are typically much shorter than traditional extensions, often completed within weeks rather than months.

In terms of costs, a basic uPVC 'lean-to' style will start at around £1,800-£2,400/m² for basic frames with polycarbonate or simple glazing. More complex designs in Edwardian/Victorian styles are around £2,200-£2,800/m², and premium/luxury conservatories in timber with high-end glazing and bespoke features are £3,500-£4,200/m² or more depending on the scale and detail, according Homebuilding Magazine. For context, traditional single-storey brick extensions cost £1,800-£3,500/m² depending on quality and location. Foundations costs can vary from £100-£280/m² depending on ground conditions.

Conservatories are generally cheaper in upfront cost but may cost more to heat, especially if not well insulated or if glazing and roof are not high quality. In terms of return on investment the RICS estimates a 5% uplift on property value, while Savills suggests up to 10%, and 15% for high-quality conservatories.

Garden buildings can provide extra space for home offices, studios, gyms, guest accommodation or simply as a retreat, providing a clear separation between work and home life. Because they are usually classed as permitted development (subject to size and siting limits), most can be installed without full planning permission, reducing time and professional fees. Many manufacturers deliver prefabricated modules, meaning a typical build can be completed in days rather than months, with minimal mess and disturbance. Expect £1,500-£2,500/m² for a basic to standard insulated garden room with electrics; premium buildings may cost £2,500-£3,000+ per m² where large glazing, high-end cladding or bespoke layouts are specified. You should also allow for costs in connection with utilities including electricity, plumbing and drainage.

Well-designed garden buildings that are fully insulated, wired and secure, allowing year-round use, can enhance property appeal. Rightmove reports that listings mentioning 'garden office' or 'garden room' attract more buyer interest, and agents note a growing premium for homes with quality outbuildings. Reliable evidence for return on investment is hard to find, but what evidence there is emphasises that ROI depends on build quality, purpose, and integration with the existing property. High-quality garden offices with utilities would show the strongest returns.

In short, conservatory extensions can make a home feel roomier with more light whilst a garden building can provide a flexible space that is cheaper than an extension, with each potentially boosting resale value when buyers prize extra space.

Jan Liberadzki BA Arch (Hons), MSc

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We are lucky to have Yarnton Band



The Red Lion, Cassington Road, Yarnton

Our band gets an honourable mention in some unusual places, and one place is in *Oxford Drinker*, the newsletter for the Oxford Branch of CAMRA. In an article by Jess Dixon who runs the Red Lion in Yarnton, Jess comments 'we're really lucky to have a Yarnton Village Band full of people of all ages that kicks off our annual May beer festival, which really sets the tone for the day'. As many Brass Bands have their roots in the Temperance movement, I would add that the Red Lion has plenty of non-alcoholic drinks, so whatever you drink, do come along on 2nd May at 2 p.m. and hear us! My own cornet teacher many years ago was a member of the famous Wingates Temperance Band in Lancashire (they dropped the Temperance many years ago) and he charged me 2/6d a lesson; today that would be 12½p. Then we have the Salvation Army bands who also have some roots in the Temperance movement.

In preparation for our summer season, we have been rehearsing, amongst other music, *Angels* by Robbie Williams, *Ob-La-Di, Ob-La-Da*, *Grease*, *Pink Panther*, *Love Story* by Taylor Swift, *Shenandoah* and even *Teddy Bears' Picnic*. We will also be playing at the Village Fete on Sunday 17th May from 2 p.m. - 3.45 p.m.

Congratulations to Thomas Stroud (Trombone) on passing his Grade 7 with Merit, to Daniel Pye (Cornet) on passing his Grade 5 with Distinction and to Lucy Stroud on passing Grade 1 (Piano) with Distinction.

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A Worm's Open Letter to Builders Who Keep Calling My Home 'Just Dirt'

by *Wriggles T. Earthworm, Long-time Soil Resident and Part-time Aeration Specialist*

Before I begin, let me wriggle something out of the way. I am tired, exhausted even, of hearing humans, especially builders in large boots, refer to the ground as 'dirt'. Dirt! As if the entire subterranean world were nothing more than a messy inconvenience stuck to your wheelbarrow. I assure you, from the perspective of someone who literally eats, sleeps, and romances in this stuff, soil is very much alive. Let me take you on a brief tour of my neighbourhood, since you seem determined to bulldoze it without so much as a polite knock.

The Microbe Metropolis

Down here, billions of microbes bustle about like tiny commuters. They break down organic matter, recycle nutrients, and generally keep the whole place running. Think of them as the unsung civil servants of the underground. They don't get holidays. They don't get pensions. They don't even get names. But they work harder than any cement mixer you've ever operated.

The Fungal Motorway

You may think your motorway system is impressive, but have you ever seen a mycelial network? Fungi weave vast underground highways, transporting nutrients from one end of the soil to the other with the efficiency of a well-trained postal service, if the postal workers that is, were glowing white threads with a flair for dramatic expansion.

Root Row

This is the leafy suburb where plant roots mingle, trade sugars, and gossip about rainfall. They're constantly chatting with fungi, microbes, and, occasionally, me. (I'm not saying I'm popular, but I've been known to help a carrot achieve its full potential.)

Worm Borough (Population: many, all fabulous)

My district is a thriving community of tunnels, compost heaps, and the occasional awkward encounter with a mole. We worms are the soil's architects. We aerate, we mix, we enrich. We are, in short, the reason your tomatoes don't taste like disappointment.

And yet, despite all this, you stand above us declaring, 'Shift that dirt over there'. Dirt! You might as well walk into a cathedral and say, 'nice shed'.

Soil isn't just alive, it keeps you alive

Without soil, you'd have no vegetables, no timber, no cotton, no gardens, no parks, and nowhere to drop your sandwich crumbs (which, by the way, we appreciate). Soil filters your water, stores your carbon, and supports your buildings, yes, even the ones you insist on plonking directly on top of my living room.

So please, on behalf of the entire underground community, I beg you, stop calling it dirt. Call it soil. Respect it as a living ecosystem. Call it a living ecosystem at least. Call it the bustling, breathing, wriggling miracle it is.

Or at the very very least, call it something that's respectful while you're stomping around up there. We worms have feelings too, you know.

Happy Gardening

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Is it BBQ time yet?

Who knows! May is usually a good time to get the BBQ out, let's hope the great British weather doesn't let us down this May! Whatever happens, we have everything you'll need, come rain or shine!

Bank Holidays

May is funny month, generally the weather is getting warmer, but obviously in this country nothing is guaranteed. What you can rely on however is the May bank holiday (4th May) and the Spring bank holiday at the end of the month (25th). What a treat!



Sobell's 50 for 50

We're proud to be part of the *50 for 50 Sobell House* campaign, supporting the amazing work of Sobell House Hospice. Throughout May, we'll be fundraising with a range of activities - so keep an eye out for ways to get involved and help make a difference. Every contribution, big or small, will go towards supporting vital care in our community. Watch this space!



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Classic Christie Mystery Comes to Eynsham

The Bartholomew Players are thrilled to announce their forthcoming production of Agatha Christie's beloved Miss Marple mystery, 'A Murder is Announced', adapted for the stage by Leslie Darbon. The Players' decision to put on an Agatha Christie sits well with this year being celebrated as 50 years since Christie's death, the last 40 odd years of her life being spent in Wallingford, Oxon - and also Bartholomew Players celebrated their 50th anniversary last year.

Venue: Eynsham Village Hall, Back Lane, Eynsham, OX29 4QW.

Dates: Wednesday 13th May – Saturday 16th May.

Doors open: 7 p.m., **Performance:** 7.30 p.m.

Price: £14 (no concessions).

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How to talk to your parents about Wills and Lasting Powers of Attorney without sounding greedy

Let's not sugarcoat it: talking to your parents about their Will is, frankly, one of the most uncomfortable conversations you'll ever have. Right up there with explaining Tinder to your gran or asking your dad to please stop forwarding conspiracy videos on WhatsApp.

Because no matter how well-meaning you are, as soon as you utter the words 'Have you thought about putting something in writing?', you might as well have said: 'So, when exactly are you planning to croak, and can I have the house?'

But here's the thing. If you don't have that conversation, someone will pay the price later. Probably you. Or your siblings. Or all of you in a Solicitor's office arguing over who gets mum's jewellery and who gets lumbered with the cat.

So, here's how to navigate this minefield.

Don't make it about money

This is rule number one. Possibly also rule number two and three. If, in your opening line, you sound like a Dickensian villain – 'And what of the family silver, Father?' - you're doing it wrong. Frame it around them, not you. Try: 'I just want to make sure everything's how you'd want it to be.' It's about their control, their wishes, and their peace of mind. Not your fantasy of turning the family home into an Airbnb in Devon.

Normalise the conversation

The British, by and large, would rather talk about anything else - war, dental surgery, even Love Island - than discuss what happens when we die. So treat it like any other practical matter. Just as you'd talk about renewing a passport or fixing the boiler, talk about Wills and Lasting Powers of Attorney.

A good time to bring it up? When some celebrity dies without a Will (they always do). 'Did you see that Prince/Liam Payne died intestate? His estate's still in court. Absolute nightmare. Have you sorted yours?'

Understand what a Lasting Power of Attorney actually is (and explain it properly)

A Lasting Power of Attorney isn't just for 'when we're 97 and babbling into the curtains'. It's a legal safety net before you lose capacity - think stroke, dementia, or a nasty fall followed by hospital food and confusion.

There are two types: Property and Financial Affairs used for managing money, bills and property and Health and Welfare used for decisions about care, treatment, and even whether they live at home or in a care facility.

Without one, if your parent becomes incapacitated, you can't just 'step in' and sort things out. You'll be dealing with the Court of Protection tied up in a process so slow and convoluted it makes filling out a tax return feel like a walk in the park.

Play the 'I'm doing it too' card

One of the best tactics? Lead by example. Tell them you're making a Will and sorting out your own Lasting Powers of Attorney. It shifts the tone from 'You're old and you might die' to 'This is just sensible adulting'. You become the responsible one, not the vulture circling the bungalow.

Beware the sibling timebomb

If you've got brothers or sisters, this gets... complicated. You might all have different relationships with your parents, and very different ideas of what's 'fair'. And even if you're all smiles at Christmas, the moment there's money on the table, childhood rivalries reawaken like a horror sequel no one asked for.

Encourage your parents to be clear and transparent in their Wills. If they're giving one of you more (say, because you've been the main carer), let them write a Letter of Wishes explaining it. It may not stop tears, but it might stop unnecessary legal fees.

Don't leave it too late

People wait until there's a diagnosis, or a scare, or something dramatic. But by the time you're dealing with actual incapacity, it's often too late. A person must understand what they're signing. No mental capacity? No Lasting Power of Attorney or a Will. So have the conversation when everyone is still in control. Ideally while your mum's still beating you at Wordle.

In summary, keep the focus on them, not you - treat Wills and Lasting Powers of Attorney like smoke alarms: essential, even if a bit dull. Lead by example with your own planning, and make sure they understand that this is about protecting their wishes, not relinquishing control. In the end, nothing shows you care more than making sure your parents' wishes are clear - and preventing the kind of chaos that could leave you fighting over the family silver in court.

Anna Boucher is an inheritance tax, wills and probate specialist solicitor at The Burnside Partnership (Combe office). Each month, Anna will share helpful tips on inheritance law, mixing humour with practical advice. If you have any followup questions, you can email her at anna.boucher@theburnsidepartnership.com or call the Combe office on 01865 987781 and ask for her secretary, Sarah.



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The winter season has concluded; congratulations to all involved, especially the Yarnton Diamonds U13s, who finished runners up in division 3. Focus now turns to the senior summer league, and by mid-May three teams will be playing in the Oxfordshire League - a mix of our seniors, U19 and U15 players.

The club had a fantastic outing to watch Birmingham Panthers play Manchester Thunder in March, with 54 members heading to Birmingham's Utilita Arena with posters and Pom-Poms ready to shout on the Panthers (Oxfordshire's talent feeder franchise) - a thrilling match to get to watch live. We are also looking forward to our annual netball tournament and awards night on Saturday 27th June.

The club does have space for new members - sessions run on Tuesdays at Rutten Lane, Yarnton. Seniors 7.30 p.m. until 9 p.m., with school years 10-13 preceding at 6.15 p.m. to 7.15 p.m. The younger age groups meet on Wednesday evenings - school years 4-6 are 3.30 p.m. - 4.30 p.m., with years 7-9 at 4.40 p.m. - 5.40 p.m. For updated information on all age-groups, please make contact:

yarntonnetballclub@outlook.com or yarntonyouthnetball@gmail.com or via Facebook. Local recreational netball is just fun and brilliant to be involved in - do get in touch.

The Netball Soft and Gentle Super-league(NSL) continues until the finals in Manchester on 20th June, with all matches each weekend showing live on SKY and YouTube, with a Saturday match also being shown live on BBC Online/iPlayer. Loughborough Lightning continue to hold top spot, with London Pulse and Manchester Thunder kicking at their heels. Tickets through England Netball website. The Commonwealth Games is in Glasgow this July/August. Netball were invited into the Commonwealths in 1998 and England Roses fiercely compete; the excitement of winning Gold in 2018 still resonates. World Netball and Australia are leading the bid to get netball included in the Olympics which will be hosted by Brisbane in 2032 - please link to <https://netball.sport/back-the-bid/> to pledge your voice to the bid. England Roses have this year moved up to 3rd place in the World Rankings behind Australia and New Zealand, with Jamaica 4th. What will this Commonwealth Games bring? The excitement will build.

Sue Blackshaw- Yarnton Netball Club

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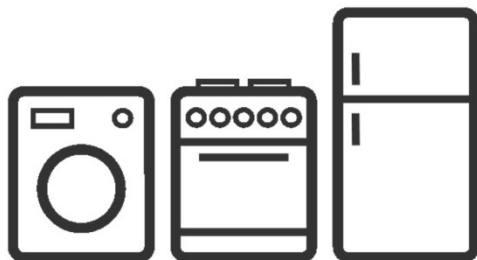
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Soldiers of
Oxfordshire
Museum

***Lee Miller: A Woman at War* exhibition to go on display at Soldiers of Oxfordshire Museum, Woodstock, this summer.**

- **Exhibition of war photographs by renowned photojournalist, photographer and surrealist, Lee Miller from 23rd May – 13th September 2026.**
- **Follows a major exhibition of her photographs at London's Tate Gallery.**
- **Includes photos taken of nurses at Churchill Hospital Oxford, her first wartime assignment for *Vogue*.**
- **Alongside many iconic photographs taken in wartime Britain, Miller accompanied US troops into Europe, a correspondent on battles and the liberation of concentration camps.**

Soldiers of Oxfordshire Museum, the county's military museum based in Woodstock, opens a new exhibition of Vogue model, surrealist photographer and war correspondent Lee Miller's wartime work in *Lee Miller: A Woman at War*, from 23rd May to 13th September 2026.

During the Second World War Lee worked as a combat photographer with the US Army, creating a unique historical record. The new exhibition will showcase her experiences of the time, covering her war correspondence work for *Vogue* from 1942 where she highlighted women's roles in the war effort, as well as the reality of life for women caught up in conflict across Europe. Her first wartime assignment for *Vogue* captured nurses at work at a then-US Army hospital in Oxford – Headington's Churchill Hospital. A number of these photos will feature in the exhibition, returning to the county in which they were taken, a look back at the earliest days of her war photojournalism. © *Lee Miller Archives, England 2026. All rights reserved. www.leemiller.co.uk*

Miller would become one of the few female photojournalists on the front line covering the Normandy invasion and the liberation of Paris. Her work in the newly-liberated concentration camps of Buchenwald and Dachau was sent to *Vogue* in 1945, accompanied by the caption 'I IMPLORE YOU TO BELIEVE THIS IS TRUE.' Her background in surrealism often came to the fore, especially with her photographs of the Blitz, and the iconic photograph of her bathing in Hitler's bathtub in Munich on the same day he died was heavy in symbolism. She wrote 'I washed off the dirt of Dachau in his tub'. Her 60,000+ negatives and documents were discovered in her attic by her son, Antony Penrose, after her death, leading to her recognition as a pivotal 20th-century artist and photographer. Soldiers of Oxfordshire Museum is thrilled to be exhibiting her groundbreaking work and are grateful to the Lee Miller Archives and Farleys House & Gallery Ltd for allowing us to bring you this exhibition.



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Lee Miller: A Woman at War continues the development of the museum's ongoing work to highlight creative responses to conflict alongside more traditional narratives, examine the role of popular culture in how we see conflict, as well as the role of women as not just witnesses of war but in shaping the course and history of it too.

Alongside the exhibition, the museum will host a 1940s photography 'Pro Am' with Oxford Photographic Society on Sunday 7th June, offering the chance for professional and amateur photographers alike to capture photos inspired by Lee's photojournalism. Living historians in wartime fashions and uniforms will provide models at the museum, around Woodstock, and at Blenheim Palace. Ami Bouhassane, Lee Miller's granddaughter and author of several books on her grandmother's life and work, will also visit the museum for an evening talk at 7 p.m. on 3rd September. Check the museum's website for further details and tickets for these events, when available.

Lee Miller: A Woman at War opens on the Cloister Gallery at Soldiers of Oxfordshire Museum, Woodstock on 23rd May. Admission prices apply; please see www.sofo.org.uk for up-to-date admissions and visitor information, including prices, offers and opening times.

Please note: Our free entry offer for Blenheim Annual Pass holders does not include entry to the Lee Miller exhibition, but all other galleries are included.

Soldiers of Oxfordshire Trust is a Registered Charity (No. 1145408)
Soldiers of Oxfordshire Museum, Park Street, Woodstock, OX20 1SN, tel. 01993 810 210
www.sofo.org.uk/ frontofhouse@sofo.org.uk

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

Minister: Rev. Paul Carter, tel. 01865 373958, Email: paul.carter@oxfordmethodists.org.uk

Local Contact Woodstock: Mrs Sue Beuzeval, tel. 01865 849696, Email: sue.beuzeval@woodstockmethodists.org.uk

Local Contact Kidlington: Mel Snelling, mel.snelling@kidlingtonmethodists.org.uk

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 May

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

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

Woodstock

3 rd	10.30 a.m.	Rev. Paul Carter <i>Holy Communion</i>
10 th	10.30 a.m.	'Christian Aid' – Local Church Group
17 th	10.30 a.m.	Circuit Celebration at Wesley Memorial
24 th	10.30 a.m.	Paul Spray
31 st	10.30 a.m.	Rev. Jean King

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!

Kidlington

3 rd	10 a.m.	Rev. Michael Sawyer <i>Holy Communion</i>
10 th	10 a.m.	Liz Spain
17 th	10 a.m.	Circuit Celebration at Wesley Memorial
24 th	10 a.m.	'Churches Together' Rev. Paul Carter
31 st	10 a.m.	David Harper

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.

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Oxford Bus and Morris Motors Museums

On the first May Bank Holiday weekend there will be a display of model railways at the museum on Sunday 3rd and Monday 4th provided by the Oxford & District Model Railway Club and other enthusiasts. There will be regular bus rides from the museum each day. A great day out for all the family - and quite inexpensive!

Morris Day is on Bank Holiday Monday 25th May, when our newly restored 1948 Morris 10 Series M will emerge from the workshop. We are also expecting a lot of visiting Morris's cars. So the museum car park and yard will be full. As a result, there will be no free car parking in the museum grounds.

On the outbreak of the First World War, the War Office took over direction of the manufacture of all motor vehicles. From March 1915 until 1917 Daimler Y type chassis were built to be used as army lorries. The lorries usually had an open, canvas covered cab and a fixed side timber body, typical of military cargo vehicles of the period. The contemporary photo shows one.



The chassis was actually built for Daimler by the Associated Equipment Company (AEC) at its Walthamstow factory, using Daimler's famous sleeve-valve engine. AEC had built 8,821 by the Armistice in 1918. But suddenly, the War Office no longer needed so many lorries!

Many returned from France to a huge dump at Slough. Demobbed soldiers came back without jobs to go to. A number used their severance pay to buy one of the lorries and convert it, by removing the military body and replacing it with a bus body. Some became single-deckers, some double-deckers and some charabancs. They were also bought to form the basis of many UK bus fleets. Oxford bought 43. Several of these vehicles remained in service until 1935; however, the majority were sold again during the early 1930s to be converted back into lorries.

We have a number of Y type chassis in the museum. The Y type had a high ground clearance so bus passengers had to 'climb' aboard. The pictured one is in the area where we show how manufacturers reduced the height of double-deckers over the decades so that the buses could get under the low Oxford railway bridges.



Other examples in the collection are our open top 1916 double-decker and our unrestored country bus from the 1920s. Each chassis has six solid tyres and each one cost £1,000 in 2000. Bus restoration is an expensive business.

Our speaker for April was Dave Thornhill, who spoke to us about flooding and climate change. Dave runs Yarnton Flood Defence. Dave explained the different types of flooding and how infrastructure and nature-based solutions can help improve this. He detailed what flooding and climate change mean for our communities and how we can prepare and adapt.

There will be no speaker meeting in May due to our A.G.M. taking place on 7th May. The next speaker meeting will be on 4th June, when John Wilford's talk is entitled 'Soundman a journey through Rock and Roll'. John will speak about his 30 years as a sound engineer and tour manager and has worked with well known artists and musicians. Visitors £3 to include tea/coffee and biscuits.

The Scrabble Group, a recently formed group, with a full complement of eight players, got off to a great start in February. The sessions are held in a members' homes which can accommodate eight players comfortably. We meet on the first Tuesday of the month at 10 a.m. Please contact the group coordinator if you would like to be on the waiting list. We currently have a space for one new member. For further information please refer to our website: www.woodstocku3a.uk

The Welsh Conversation Group held its first meeting on 26th March. We were able to chat in Welsh over coffee and homemade Welsh cakes, help each other with grammar and pronunciation and share language books. If you are a Welsh speaker or want to improve your Welsh, please get in touch with us. The next conversation group will meet at 10.30 a.m. on Thursday 23rd April in a member's house. All levels of ability in Welsh welcome.

Our monthly meetings are held on the first Thursday of each month at St. Hugh's Centre, Hensington Road, Woodstock, OX20 1JL. 2 p.m. for a 2.15 p.m. speaker. Our u3a branch is centred in Woodstock but welcomes people from the surrounding areas. Our interest groups develop when someone is willing to run them – maybe you have something that you can offer? If so please make contact with us through the website: www.woodstocku3a.co.uk. We would be delighted to hear from you.

For more information on forthcoming speakers, please visit our website: www.woodstocku3a.co.uk.

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