

The Harwell News

www.harwellparish.co.uk

What a fabulous Feast! 4000 visitors flock to our annual extravaganza...

You know you're in for a **treat** when the **bunting** goes up in the High street to herald the coming of our village's calendar highlight - the annual **Harwell Feast!** Preparations and celebrations started **many months** earlier and the Feast Committee of dedicated volunteers have worked hard to retain the **traditional** feel of the event, the origins of which can be traced back to [medieval times](#).

This year's Feast event, held as usual on the **late Spring Bank Holiday** in May at the Harwell recreation ground, was attended by around **4,000 visitors**. Many lined the High Street to see the **parade of floats** which had been decorated by **local groups**, led by the **Bagg's Tree Buskers** and with the **May Queen, Elsie Thomas-Imrie**, and her **attendants, Anna Prince** and **Aoife Jeacock**, travelling in a white vintage open-top **Rolls Royce** kindly provided by **David Avery**.

The Chair of the Parish Council, Tracey Pearson chose the **winning floats**:

- | | |
|-----|----------------|
| 1st | Harwell W.I. |
| 2nd | Harwell School |
| 3rd | Little Pippins |

Harwell Fun Club and Village Ukrainian Groups also had floats in the parade.

All made a wonderful colourful **community** aspect to the parade, and were followed by **Morris Dancers**, **Stormtroopers**, **Vikings**, vintage cycles, **classic cars** and traction engines.

We are extremely grateful to all our **volunteer helpers** and offer them a huge **thank-you** – the event simply could not be held without you. Supporters give anything from an hour upwards and are **essential** to the event's success. Particular thanks go to the **Harwell Bowls Club** (harwellbowlsclub.co.uk) who stepped up again to manage an entrance to the Feast.

The Committee **welcomes feedback** and noted that some villagers suggested areas which need **improvement** next year. We urge these and other villagers to **volunteer** to help with these improvements so we can make the **2025 Feast** an even **bigger success**.

Thanks also to our **village shops** and the **Harwellian** for selling the **programmes** in advance. Our main **sponsors** through adverts in the programme were **Oxford Product Design**, **Taylor Wimpey** and **Milton Park**. We also wish to thank **Collard Environmental** for provision of a skip for the day and a prize of a further skip, which was **won** by a villager. Also to **Nuth Bros** for the use of their wheelie bins.

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2024 Float winners - Harwell WI



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The Harwell Feast (continued from p1)



Those who came along to the Feast enjoyed a variety of **craft stalls**, **food stalls**, **hot food vendors**, a **children's adventure area** including a travelling **fairground**, **inflatables** and **circus workshops**, a **teen zone** plus a living history re-enactment provide by the **Ulfhrafnar Vikings** (www.vikingsonline.org.uk), **traction engines**, classic cars, **ferrets**, **falcons**, **Punch & Judy**, live music and **displays** in the main arena, which once again included a **dog show** led by our very own Tim Hart and his lovely assistant **Hartley Hare**, which was great fun. We were delighted to welcome the **Harlequin Bowmen** (www.harlequinbowmen.org.uk) who invited everyone to **have a go at archery**.

The **cost** of staging the event continues to **rise** but, thanks to the **sponsorship**, mentioned above, and such a good **number** of visitors we will be able to **consider applications** for **funding** from **Harwell organisations**, clubs, and others whose activities substantially **benefit** the **residents** of Harwell at our meeting in **September**.

With that in mind, the Feast Committee hereby invites applications for funding.

If you wish to be considered please send us an **email** with details of **what you will use the grant for**, with costings. Include information regarding any **other support** you receive and **existing resources**, accounts (if applicable), to enable the Committee to make an **informed** decision.

The **closing date for applications** is **Saturday 31st August**. Please send your submission by email to theharwellfeast@gmail.com or by post to **The Harwell Feast Committee, 8 Fiddlers Orchard, Harwell, OX11 0FR**.

Dates for your diary:

- The annual **Feast Quiz** will be held in the **Village Hall** on **Friday 22nd November**. Further details of how to enter will be in the October issue of the Harwell News.
- **The 2025 Feast will be held on Monday 26th May.**

With thanks and best wishes from The Harwell Feast Organisers: Kathryn Caudle, Mick and Jayne Conway, Patricia Cooke, Karen Cruddis, Tim Hart, Susan Lambert, Sharon Palmer, Martin Ricketts, Philip Roberts, Warren Taylor and Reg Waite and with special thanks to Janice Markey.

The photographs accompanying this article (cover page, p2, p15 & p16) have been used with the kind permission of Jamie Soames (<https://www.js.photography/>), Karen Cruddis, Martin Ricketts and Pat Cooke. For more pictures do take a look at the Harwell Community FB page!



First place: Harwell WI



Second place: Harwell Primary School



Third place: Little Pippins



The May Queen and her attendants



Abingdon Morris Men



Warring Ulfhrafnar Vikings



Harwell Fun Club



Village Ukrainian Groups



Bagg's Tree Buskers



Storm Troopers



Harwell Parish Council

There are still **2 vacancies** on the Parish Council; if you think you might be interested in **contributing** to the discussion and decisions on **Parish matters**, further information is given lower down on the [Parish Council website's home page here](#) or come along to the next meeting and learn more.

At the **April meeting**, it was agreed that the **Clerk's public office hours** should be **10am to 12.30 Mondays** and **1pm to 3.30pm Tuesdays**.

Planning matters that couldn't be deferred to the Planning Committee included **P23/V2385/RM** a Reserved Matters application for 25 Orchard Way – only the access and number of dwellings were approved before and a previous Reserved Matters application was **withdrawn**. It was agreed to **continue to Object** on the grounds of the **effect on the amenity** enjoyed by users of the recreation ground, **overdevelopment** of the site, and **poor vehicle access**.

Approval was given for a former Parish resident to have a **cremation plot** reservation. New policies for **safeguarding** and **document retention** were also **approved**.

The **May meeting** was the **Annual Parish Council Meeting**, meaning the Council had a lot of **statutory** items on the agenda including electing a **Chairperson** for the year, appointing **members** to Committees, reviewing **legal agreements**, representations on **external bodies** and reviewing **existing policies**.

Councillor Tracey Pearson was elected **Chair**, and **Jeremy Hawthorn** as **vice-Chair**. The **Committees** are **Planning**, which reviews and comments to the Vale WHDC on most applications, **Lands**, which as well as Rec, Cemetery and Allotments for which it has delegated powers also covers Parish Rights of Way and a number of other matters, and **Staffing**.

Again there were **planning applications** that couldn't await the next Planning Committee. **P23/V2693/FUL** was for **Change of Use** of Zulu Farm (just the house and front garden) to a **9-bedroom HMO** – House in Multiple Occupation. The entrance would be through the original gate and the front garden would become almost entirely car-park. The Council had **no comment**.

The **Tennis Club's** request to modify their fence was considered. It was agreed that the Club's proposed **rationale** for the work and enclosing a further small strip of the Rec be **published** in full by the Parish Council, although there was one objection that it was unnecessarily long, mean the cost of publishing it in the local paper would be high.

A **new noticeboard** for Parish Council notices was approved in March and has been installed by the PC office; the **one in the High Street** is now unlocked and **accessible** for **village organisations**.

The **next meeting** of the Parish Council will be on **Tuesday 18th June**.

Prepared by Martin Ricketts, approved by HPC Chair Ms Tracey Pearson



healthwatch
Oxfordshire

Share your experiences of leaving hospital

Have **you**, or an adult that you look after, **stayed in hospital** during the last **12 months**? If so, Healthwatch Oxfordshire would like to **hear** from you!

The county's independent health and social care **watchdog** would like to hear about your **experience** of **leaving hospital**, and any care and **support** you got in the first **few weeks** afterwards.

Healthwatch Oxfordshire would particularly like to **understand** what worked **well** and what could be **improved**, so it can help **shape** the support people receive when they leave hospital.

You can share your **views** and **experiences** by completing this anonymous **survey** www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/leavinghospital

The survey also includes an option to leave your **contact details** so that Healthwatch Oxfordshire can get in **touch** with you for a more **in-depth** conversation about your experience.

If you would like a **paper copy** of this survey to complete, would like it in another **format** or **language**, or would prefer to **speak** to someone about this, please contact **Healthwatch Oxfordshire** on **01865 520520** or at hello@healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk

For more information about this work see www.healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk/news/leaving-hospital

Harwell Hanging Basket Competition

In memory of **John Mackerness** a trophy has been **donated** to the village for an annual **hanging basket competition**. John always had a **wonderful** display in his front garden at **Elderfield Cottage** on the Reading Road.

Your basket should be **visible** in your **front garden** so that the **judge** - a member of Harwell Gardeners' Club - can see it **without** entering your property. **To enter** please email jvmarkey@googlemail.com or telephone **07876 706043** with your name and address. The **closing date** for entries will be **29th August** and the **judging** will take place during the **first 2 weeks** of **September**.

The **trophy** will be presented at **The Harwell Produce Show** on **14th September**.



Introducing District Councillor - Cllr Sarah James (Hendreds Ward, covering homes on Harwell Campus)



You are welcome to **contact me** by **phone** or **WhatsApp** on **07811 085661** or by **emailing** Sarah.James1@whitehorsedc.gov.uk. The District Council looks after **planning**, bin collections, **housing**, leisure centres (including Wantage Leisure Centre), **food hygiene** and some housing-related **benefits**. If you are not **sure** which council to contact about an issue, get in touch **anyway** and I will point you in the right **direction**.

Climate Action Fund open for applications

Local 'not for profit' organisations and town/parish councils can **apply** for a share of the **£100,000 Fund**, with up to **£10,000** on offer for **individual projects** (minimum request of £250). The funding is aimed at **community projects** that help to tackle **climate change** and increase **awareness** and **knowledge** of the importance of **climate action**. A real range of projects have benefitted in the past and you can see these and guidance on **applying** on the **Vale website**.

The fund will be open for applications until **midday 28 June 2024**.

<https://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/vale-of-white-horse-district-council/community-support/grants/climate-action-fund/>

The Mega Reservoir – Call for a Public Inquiry

I'm **backing** GARD's (Group Against Reservoir Development) call for a **Public Inquiry** into Thames Water's draft Water Resource Management Plan, in particular their proposal to build a **huge reservoir** between East Hanney, Steventon and Drayton.

The **Green Group** has written to the Secretary of State to ask them to use their power to call an **Inquiry** and I've **signed** GARD's petition too. You can find the petition at <https://you.38degrees.org.uk/p/stopTWreservoir> or by scanning this QR code:



Talking to Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks (SSEN) about Power Cuts

I'm in touch with SSEN about the problem of **recurring power cuts** and what, if anything, they are doing to improve the network **reliability** in our area.

If you're the kind of person who **counts** how many power cuts they get, do **share your data** with me. Contact details at the **top** of this item.



Cost of Living Help

If you or anyone you know is **struggling**, you can find information on the **help available** from the District Council and others at <https://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/vale-of-white-horse-district-council/cost-of-living-crisis-advice-and-support/>

You can also contact the **Community Hub** which can also direct you to a range of help:

Tel: 01235 422600 Email: communitysupport@southandvale.gov.uk

Harwell Bowls Club – June update: Open Day on 21st July, 2-4pm

We are a small and **friendly** club and the **2024 season** has now **begun**. We **welcome** new players of **any age**, with or without experience. All you need is **flat shoes** to be allowed on the green, we can **provide** all equipment for you to play.



Visit us on our Open Day on Sunday 21st July from 2-4pm!

Or you are also welcome to come on **Monday evenings** during the playing season, until the **end of September**. We are open from **6.00pm until dusk** and you can visit as many times as you like, to find out if Bowls might be the game for you. All equipment is supplied. Any questions please feel free to ring **Rosemary** on **01235 210179**.

Play Bowls and Improve Your Health and Wellbeing

It is no surprise that Bowls England, the governing body, supported **Mental Health Awareness Week** in May. It lists the following **health benefits** of playing bowls:

1. **Moderate Physical Activity**, including walking, bending and stretching.
2. **Mental Wellbeing**, focusing on the game provides a distraction from stresses.
3. **Strategic Thinking and Problem Solving**, to anticipate and plan shots.
4. **Community and Social Connection**, fostering social connections.
5. **Lifelong Enjoyment and Skill Development**, start young and the lifelong nature of bowls encourages ongoing physical and mental engagement, promoting a healthy and fulfilling lifestyle.



The **British Heart Foundation** also notes that it's a **gentle** way to get active, providing **exercise** for both arms and legs and that it's **perfect** for all. The gentle pace and **lack** of contact means you can find **children** playing with **adults** and people of different abilities and fitness levels on the **same team**.



Sponsored by [Driving Miss Daisy](#)

MP David Johnston's message for Harwell News - April update

I have had a number of meetings in the last month to progress various **local campaigns** that are a **priority** for me and my constituents.

I met with the **Health Minister** to again push my campaign for better local **health services** and for our infrastructure to keep **pace** with all the new housing that is being built. This is a **priority** for the Government, too. For the year ending October 2023, there were **50.9 million** more GP appointments compared to October 2019 - but there's more to do. Improving our health services is a **key campaign** for me and I am pleased the Minister has **agreed** to write to the local health leaders on our behalf.

I met with the **Water Minister** to again raise constituent concerns about the proposed **reservoir** and to call for public **scrutiny** of the proposal. In December, I wrote to the **Environment Secretary** about this, echoing GARD's call for public scrutiny and have been regularly raising **concerns** with Thames Water and the Environment Agency, who I took to Stevenage recently where I discussed it with them.

This meeting came just before we got the great news that Wallingford Beach has officially been designated as a **bathing water** site by the Government. This is something that residents have **long** been calling for and the Water Minister has rightly recognised the strong show of local **support**.

I took Niamh Dernie, from Grove, to meet the Minister for **Victims and Safeguarding** so she could tell the Minister about her campaign against the **sexual harassment** she and her

friends have experienced and what she would like to see **happen**.

It was also great to welcome the **Science Minister** to meet with and take questions from our great **local science and technology organisations** at my latest Wantage and Didcot Science and Technology Forum. I was glad to hear the Minister **confirm** that the Government will spend **£20 billion** on investment in science and research this year which is **welcome** news for our local sector.

In other news, I had the pleasure of hosting a **reception** at Number 10 Downing Street for people working in our great **early years** sector and was pleased to bring Julie, a childminder from **Didcot** who spent 14 years **fostering** around 30 families, as my guest to recognise her incredible efforts. It was a really **uplifting** atmosphere as MPs from across the country brought people they wanted to **thank** for the work they have been doing to shape **young minds** as well as to help deliver this Government's record **expansion** of childcare.

Didcot TRAIN works with young people, especially those who are **disadvantaged** or vulnerable and provides various **essential services** including youth clubs, mentoring and **outreach** programmes. They are doing great work to **empower** young people. **Thank you** to Ben and the team at Didcot TRAIN who I visited recently to see the work they are doing. Visit their website at www.trainyouth.org.uk.

As ever, if I can help with anything please email me via david.johnston.mp@parliament.uk



Didcot and District U3A

As we enter the 'barmy' Summer months(!) what better **opportunity** for all newly retired or semi-retired individuals wishing to keep mind and body **active** to join the **Didcot and District u3a** and come along to the **monthly meetings** held on the **third Tuesday** of every month at the **Didcot Civic Hall** starting at **2:30pm**.

Over tea and biscuits you will have the chance to make **new friends** and, with more than **30 active Interest Groups** (gardening, walking, family history, learning a new language, ukulele, etc), you will probably find at least one subject that **grabs** your interest and **imagination** for you to... 'Learn, Laugh, Live!' At the monthly meetings you will **meet** like-minded individuals and **listen** to the Guest Speakers, which in the coming months will include:

- **18 June:** Wildlife Wanderings – David Bailey more [here](#)
- **16 July:** listen to ex Life Guards musician - with anecdotes of life playing music on horseback and much more! - Jon Woodhouse

For further information **Google** u3asites.org.Uk or for Didcot & District u3a you can contact the following: Chair: Kath Oldham chair@didcotu3a.org Secretary: Chris Jones secretary@didcotu3a.org

Brian & Lynn Burscough - PR for Didcot & District u3a

Bell Ringing News

In **early April** we rang for the funeral of **Beryl Boyd**. Beryl's father was **Bill Corderoy** who for many years was **tower foreman** of Harwell bells.

On **Thursday 6th June** at 18:30 we joined in with the country wide 'Ring for Peace' to commemorate **80 years** since the **D Day landings**.

We are hoping to have an **open tower** on **August 4th 14:00-16:00**, in conjunction with the last day of the **Hare trail**.

Philip Roberts



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Big Ginger Tom Music - Gig Review



Jacob & Drinkwater with support by Detta Kenzie on 1st June 2024

For the **final** gig before the summer break we had the very entertaining **Jacob & Drinkwater** and up and coming **Detta Kenzie** at Harwell Village Hall who delighted the audience of about 50 people some of whom had travelled from as far afield as **London**, Guildford, **Brighton**, Ormskirk and **Washington DC**.

The choice of **Detta Kenzie** as support (organised as long ago as December 2023) proved to be **inspired** as her **accompanying** guitarist is now **Tobias Ben Jacob** (this was their second gig playing together) and **Lukas Drinkwater** is currently **producing** her new EP. She delivered **five** songs which were a mix of **traditional** folk songs and **two** of her own. Lukas joined Detta and Tobias for the **final** song on double base and the audience went into the break **humming** the ear worm of a chorus. I'm sure if she had **CDs** to bring with her, she would have sold a fair few.



What followed were two **wonderful** sets from Tobias and Lukas with their trademark Morcambe & Wise **banter** between songs. The gig was part of their **10th Anniversary tour** and was promoting their new album "**Ten Years Greatest Hits Volumes 2 to 4**". The first set kicked off with "New Capri" and included the always **brilliant** and never the same "The Devil and Tobias Ben Jacob" done at their request in the dimmed down **blue hue** lighting setting and also their Country & Western song "Saragossa Sea". They finished with "We Are The First Ones" Even and at this stage of the proceedings they left the stage to **great applause**.

After some **feedback** during the break, the blue hue lighting was **voted** by the audience the way to proceed with the rest of the gig. The second set included a couple of **requests** including "Polyphonic Life". At the end of their set there was **rapturous** applause and cries for **more**, so they duly came **back** and played "To Call You Friend" dedicated to their **friend**, who sadly died young. They did this unplugged **directly** in front of the audience. It was a wonderful way to **end** the evening.

We are now taking a break for the summer but will be back at Harwell Village Hall on **6th September** with **The Dunwells** supported by special guest **Lucy May Walker**. Tickets to all our gigs are available from wegottickets.com or by contacting Duncan at biggingertommusic@gmail.com. For more information about BGTM events see the village hall website www.harwellvillagehall.co.uk/events or go to the **BGTM** website at www.biggingertommusic.co.uk/events

Duncan Chappell, Big Ginger Tom Music For some more cracking music, check out Folkin' Around on Radio Cherwell - <https://radiocherwell.com/our-programmes/listen-again>



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Sunday 7th July 5pm

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- Wed 16, Thur 17, Fri 18 and Sat 19 October; 9:30am-11:30am and 13:00-14:30pm on Sat only

£7 per child, accompanying adults free. Booking essential. Children must be accompanied by an adult. Aimed at children aged 18 months to 4 years.

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- bbowt.org.uk/events
- 01235 862024 or sceec@bbowt.org.uk

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Harwell WI

Well here we are in June already. How **lovely** to see the **gardens** bursting with Summer colour.

Our **June 12th meeting** promises to be a fun evening. Our talk is entitled "**I'm A Poet, Not As You Know It**" (Characterful, original poetry to make you laugh & cry).

June 19th Members will enjoy a **Garden Party** in one of our members gardens. Here's hoping the weather is kind to us.

July 10th – is yet to be confirmed (look out for posters around the village).

July 27th to August 4th - Harwell WI is taking part in **Harwell Village Hare Trail**. See if you can spot our Hare!

There is **NO MEETING IN AUGUST**. But a **walk** has been arranged: **The Agatha Christie Trail and a Pub lunch**

Harwell WI welcomes, **supports** and inspires all women. We meet on the **second Wednesday** of each month in **Cherry Hall** at **Harwell Village Hall**, where we are entertained by interesting and informative **Speakers**, followed by a cup of tea/coffee and cake/biscuits, and a good chat. **All** visitors are made very **welcome**, and you will not be on your own, so **come along** and see for yourselves what we are all about. You won't be disappointed. In addition to the monthly meetings Harwell WI also organises days out, **walks**, crafts, **Knit & Natter** group.

If you would like to know **more** or have any **queries** please email: harwellwi@oxfordshirewi.co.uk

As well as our normal monthly meetings and organised events, you also have the opportunity to attend various events held by **Oxfordshire Federation WI**. These include crafts, day trips and holidays. These events are advertised in the monthly WI magazine **Oxfordshire Inspires**.

Lesley Muddiman

theWI
INSPIRING WOMEN



CPRE Summer Events

Summer Garden Open Days 2024 - in aid of CPRE Oxfordshire

£10 per head, £5 for under 16s, under 10s free. Teas will be available – donations welcome.

Places limited so please reserve in advance – see www.cpreoxon.org.uk

Sat 6 July, 2.30pm-5pm Coopers & Woolstone Lodge, Woolstone

Two wonderful gardens, within walking distance of each other, together offering **topiary**, herbaceous borders, **wild garden**, vegetable garden, **rock garden**, stream and **open views** across countryside and White Horse Hill.

All proceeds to CPRE Oxfordshire, the Countryside Charity.

Helen Marshall, Director



The countryside charity
Oxfordshire

Campaigning to protect our rural county

Harwell Gardeners' Club



Thank you to all who **grew plants** for our stall at **Harwell Feast** and to all who made a **purchase**. We raised an amazing **£528.50** for our club funds which enables us to book good **speakers** to come in and give **talks** throughout the year.

Thank you also to The **Harwell Feast Committee** for putting on this event with such **enthusiasm**. Your hard work is much appreciated.

During the next **three months** we go out to visit gardens. **Anyone** is **welcome** to join us on these visits which are all **private** bookings and mostly from The NGS.

On **June 3rd** we visit **Denton House, Garsington**. On **July 1st** we visit **Whitehall Farm, Widford** and on **August 5th** we visit **Ashbrooke, Great Shefford**. If you would like to join us on one of these **evening** garden visits we ask that you contact **Kate Hunneman** on **01235 835163** or email kate.hunneman@gmail.com for further details.

On **Monday September 2nd** we return to evening talks in **St Matthew's Church** at **7.30 p.m.** The speaker is Russell Attwood and the talk is 'A Passion For Pumpkins'. The competition is 'An Unusual Pumpkin'.

The annual **Harwell Produce Show** is on **Sat 14th September** in **Harwell School**.

Schedules are available in **Bobs Butchers** and **everyone** is welcome to enter. There are classes for **children** and **adults** in everything from **vegetables**, fruit, **flowers**, art, **handicrafts**, domestic and **photography**.

Every class in the school enters the competition so there is a lot to **see** and **admire** on the day even if you are not entering.

Do come along for a **happy village get together**.

Any enquiries about Harwell Gardeners' Club can be sent to the Chairman, Janice Markey on jymarkey@googlemail.com

Janice Markey, Chairman, [Harwell Gardeners' Club](http://HarwellGardenersClub.co.uk)



Reservoir Update

Thames Water is working **closely** with other water companies in the southeast to **protect** future water supplies for **millions** of people. Population growth and hotter, drier summers place additional **pressure** on our water resources, so to keep the taps running, we must **invest** in new **infrastructure**.



A **new reservoir** in Oxfordshire would help to **safeguard** millions of households from the risk of drought, providing a **sustainable** water supply for **generations** to come.

Our ambition for the reservoir is to create a **natural**, tranquil space which will be **sensitively landscaped** to blend with the surrounding countryside. We want to work with **local communities** to ensure we create **new green spaces** that everyone can enjoy. You can find out more about our current **proposals** at

www.thames-sro.co.uk/sesro.

We'll be holding a series of **community information events** this summer, where you'll be able to **find out** more about our plans. Do look out for **updates** on the **events** page of our website www.thames-sro.co.uk/events. This is a great opportunity to **meet the team** and discuss any **questions** or **concerns** you may have. We look forward to seeing you soon.

Sally Harding, Community Engagement Officer



Age UK Oxfordshire is a local **independent charity** which helps enable older people in Oxfordshire to live life to the full. We provide free local information, advice, and a wide range of **support services**, from **exercise classes** and digital support to telephone **befriending** and bereavement support – with much more in between.

To find out more visit www.ageuk.org.uk/oxfordshire, email: contactus@ageukoxfordshire.org.uk or call **0345 450 1276**.

GARD newsletter contribution: June 2024

GARD issued a call on 20th December 2023 to the Secretary of State for a **Public Inquiry** into Thames Water's plans for the huge **Reservoir** between Steventon, Drayton and East Hanney.

When GARD issued the call for a Public Inquiry, we asked via **Freedom of Information** request to see the Environment Agency's **advice** to Secretary of State, Steve Barclay, on the Thames Water plans.

Finally last month, DEFRA **agreed** to our request and released the EA's advice, revealing that the EA have serious **reservations** about the plan, and quite a few of these echo GARD's criticisms about lack of **substantiation** that SESRO (South East Strategic Reservoir Option) represents the best value plan, and our doubt on its resilience to **droughts**, amongst others. However, the most important take-away from this advice is the EA recommendation on page 6-7 in the Executive Summary:

"We recommend that:

Thames Water is not allowed to publish its plan. The company should make further changes as set out in ... These changes will require regulators to review them before the company's plan is allowed to be published. We also advise that due to the public interest shown in the consultation that Defra considers whether further public scrutiny is required before the plan is published."

Not being allowed to "publish the plan" equates to the plan **not** being acceptable as it stands. Clearly our call for a Public Inquiry has **stayed** Barclay's hand, reinforced by the EA opinion. There are many forms of further 'public scrutiny', e.g. a **consultation** of a "revised-revised-draft Plan"(!), but we believe the most **efficient**, in-depth and probably even the quickest, would be a Public Inquiry.

Please write to DEFRA at water.resources@defra.gov.uk, supporting our call for a Public Inquiry into this damaging and unnecessary project, citing the Environment Agency opinion. Also, please, if you have not already done so, **sign our petition** to the Secretary of State at: <https://you.38degrees.org.uk/p/stopTWreservoir> or scan the **QR code** to the right =>.

Derek Stork, Chairman GARD



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Changes to telephone landlines - the “Digital Switchover”



Do you know a family member with a lifeline or community alarm?

Help them check if the #DigitalSwitchover will affect their service.

The UK's **telephone network** is being **upgraded**, which means that **landline services** are **changing**. You can still have a landline in your home, but the **technology** that powers it will be **different**.

This means that in future, landline calls will be delivered over **digital technology** called Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP), which uses a **broadband** (internet) connection.

For most, switching over will be straightforward, but some people may need **new equipment** or **support** to make the changes.

The **decision** to upgrade has been made by **industry**, not Ofcom (the telecommunications ombudsman) or the UK Government.

However, Ofcom does have **rules** that telephone suppliers have to adhere to, in order to **protect** customers in **power cuts**, and to require phone companies to provide access to **emergency calls**. For more information/FAQs visit [Age UK Consumer Advice](#).

BT, who are rolling it out region by region, will **begin** making the change in **Oxfordshire** in **spring 2024**. If you **already** have a broadband connection, you may **only** need to plug your phone into your **broadband router** or use an **adapter** to connect your **phone** and **router** together.

Contact your telephone supplier and let them know if you:

- Have a **disability** or any other needs that mean you will need **extra help** with this change
- **Don't have** a mobile phone or if the mobile phone signal at your home is too **poor** to ring for **emergency services**



Your telephone supplier may be able to **delay** changing your system or provide **additional help** during the change.

You will be able to keep your **current phone number**.

Your supplier will be able to offer you a telephone plan at the **same cost** you currently pay, or you can **choose** to upgrade your service, if you wish.

This switchover may affect some telecare devices and other equipment such as pendant alarms.

Carium is the supplier for people who have an alarm fitted by Oxfordshire social services. **New Carium devices are already digital** and will work after the switchover. If you have an **older** device Carium will get in touch with you to **swap** it for a digital version.

If your device is **not** from Carium, we suggest that you take the following steps:

- **Contact** your personal alarm or telecare device supplier to **check** if your device will be affected. If you need to **upgrade** your device, they may be able to provide this for **free** or they may need to charge a one-off **fee**
- Whoever your telephone supplier is, **make sure they're aware** that you have a telecare alarm and will need **extra support** during the switchover.

If you have a home-security alarm, such as a burglar alarm, which uses your telephone line to alert you when the alarm is triggered, you will need to **contact** your alarm provider to **check** if your device will be affected by the digital switchover. If you need to upgrade your device, they may be able to provide this for **free** or they may need to charge a one-off **fee**.

The new digital landline system will rely on electricity from your household electrical socket, so will not work during a power cut. You can use a **mobile** phone as a 'back-up' way of getting in touch with people.

Checking your mobile phone **signal** in various areas of your home would be **sensible** to ensure you can make a call should you be in **bed**, for example. You may wish to **change** your mobile phone provider, if another service has **better signal** in your area.

If you live somewhere where you **rely** on your landline (for example you may not have a mobile phone, or experience **poor** mobile **signal**), then your landline telephone supplier will offer you a '**resilience solution**' to make sure you can still make emergency calls during a power outage.

Ofcom rules for telephone suppliers currently state they only need to ensure you have access to emergency calls for **1 hour**, though most suppliers are providing solutions which will last on stand-by for up to **8 hours**.

Solutions may be in the form of:

- a **basic mobile phone** (if you have a suitable signal in your area). You will **not** need to pay for a separate mobile phone contract.
- a '**hybrid**' phone – this looks like a normal landline phone with a plastic **aerial** on it. The phone detects a power cut and switches to using its built-in SIM and battery, like a mobile phone would. You will **not** need to pay for a separate mobile phone contract.
- a **backup battery unit**, so that your phone will work **normally** during a power cut for up to **8 hours**.

How the change will affect calls:

- When you pick up your phone, you will **not hear a dial-tone** and
- when you make a call, you will **need to use the full phone number including the area code for ALL calls**, including local calls.



Frances Geering Almshouses Appeal

In an effort to **raise** some much needed **funds** for the Almshouses, and to raise the profile of these historic buildings within the community, the Trustees have set up a **GoFundMe** page:

<https://www.gofundme.com/f/essential-repairs-for-this-historic-building>

You may have noticed some **building work** going on last month, mostly to do with the **exterior drainage**. The next stage will be the **interior**. The Almshouses have a dire



problem with **damp** & this needs to be addressed with a **major restoration project** to ensure that our village and our residents will continue to benefit from the Almshouses into the future. The trustees have taken out an **Almshouse Association loan of £50K** and do have some **savings** but the total work comes to an eye-watering amount of more **than £100,000!** We are applying for **grants** but this is much more **difficult** for buildings that **do not have public access**. If every household in the village gave **£5** we would be well on the way to **achieving** our target, as well as showing we have the **support** of the village!

We do hope we can count on your support!

Direct Donations: Last issue we omitted the bank account name and apologise for any difficulties people had donating as a result. Details for those preferring to make a direct bank transfer are: Account name: Harwell Parochial Charities; account no: 67193581; sort code 08 92 99. For further information contact : clare.wagner@jabrin.co.uk or tel: 01235 835425



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Oxfordshire's military museum celebrates 10th Anniversary with new exhibitions, events and objects



Soldiers of
Oxfordshire
Museum

Throughout 2024 Soldiers of Oxfordshire Museum (<https://www.sofo.org.uk/>) will be celebrating its **10th anniversary** with the addition of **new** and updated **permanent displays**, new exhibitions and **events**. A special 10th anniversary display will also open from **1 June to 1 October**, a look back at some of the museum's most **significant** moments and stories, as well as a **showcase** of the museum's favourite objects from past displays and a few objects that have **never** been on public display before.

With the assistance of **OxLEP Grant funding**, the museum has **updated** its permanent exhibition space over the past few months, including brand **new displays** and **expansions** to existing key stories ahead of the anniversary.



A **new audio tour** of the museum (available now) has been narrated by **comedian** and **keen historian Al Murray**. Known for his Pub Landlord persona, Murray also **hosts** the popular Second World War podcast *We Have Ways of Making You Talk* alongside **historian James Holland**, as well as a growing annual history festival, *We Have Ways Fest*. Also providing voiceover for the new audio tour will be his father, 'The Colonel' **Ingram Murray**.



Also on offer is a special **10th Anniversary ale** brewed by historic Oxfordshire beer-makers **Hook Norton Brewery**, who celebrate their own **175th anniversary** in 2024. The D-Day-inspired '**Horsa Hop**'

will be sold from the **museum shop** and during museum events, proceeds from the celebratory golden ale will **support** the Soldiers of Oxfordshire Trust's **continued work** collecting and preserving the county's military stories and artefacts.

Hook Norton will **further** support the museum, providing a **bar** for a celebratory **Garden Party** in the grounds of SOFO and The Oxfordshire Museum in Woodstock on **22 June 2024**, from **12 noon - 8.30pm**. Marking the museum's anniversary but also **Armed Forces Day 2024**, the party will feature **living history displays**, activities for all ages, opportunities for **tours** of the museum and **object handling**, as well as a performance by the **Waterloo Band & Bugles of the Rifles** in the evening.

The first of the museum's updated **permanent displays**, *Bloody Battles and Dangerous Diseases*, presents a **Horrible Histories-inspired** look at **wartime medical advances** and the ways in which these, combined with new equipment, helped soldiers' **survival** on the front lines. Like so many of the museum's displays, the new exhibition pod is **packed** with engaging **interactives** especially for **children**, and opportunities for younger visitors to **handle** and **try on** real survival equipment, such as **helmets**, body armour and pilot's **lifejackets**.

A revamped '*Secret War*' display builds on the popularity of its recent **Spy Oxfordshire** exhibition and explore county connections to the real world of **secret agents** and espionage through the lens of Ian Fleming and **James Bond**. Visitors will be able to see Bond film **props**, such as a pair of **shoes** worn by **Sean Connery** in *Never Say Never Again*, alongside Fleming artefacts like his **golden typewriter**. A collection of **real spy kit** from the Second World War has also now been acquired by the museum, including rare equipment like **concealed daggers** and radio sets. A ladies **hairpin** is revealed to be a potentially **lethal weapon** in the hands of one of Special Operations Executive's female agents.



Building on SOFO's 2023 Women & War temporary exhibition, a **brand-new permanent display**, *A Woman's War*, looks at the story of women in the Armed Forces, from **Auxiliary services** of the First and Second World Wars right up to conflicts as recent as **Bosnia**. Highlights of the display include a Women's Royal Naval Service (WRNS or 'Wrens') hat which belonged to **Enid Innes** who served as a Cypher Officer during the Second World War, and worked on planning for **Operation HUSKY** - the Allied landings in Sicily - in 1943.

A year of **major anniversaries**, 2024 also sees both the **80th anniversary of D-Day** and the **110th anniversary** of the start of the **First World War**. Both of these will be **commemorated** at the museum with new exhibitions. Highlighting Oxfordshire people's stories from the **Normandy invasion**, and open from **18 May to 24 September 2024**, *Oxfordshire to the Orne* will take in home front **memories** of the build up to the Normandy invasion to famous **stories** from D-Day itself, such as the county regiment's **capture of Pegasus Bridge**. The **Great War anniversary** will be marked with an exhibition of collector John Noott's *The Art of WWI* from **25 June to 29 September**, featuring a collection of **original pieces** produced during, and depicting scenes from, the conflict. This will be followed in December with an exhibition of **Winnie-the-Pooh** illustrator E.H. Shepard's **sketches**, including work he produced during his own Great War service as an **artillery officer**.

Often referred to as a '**hidden gem**' in Woodstock, the independent museum can be found **across the garden** from Oxfordshire County Council's **Oxfordshire Museum** and Woodstock Library. The 10th anniversary updates make it the **perfect** time to visit, for both regulars and newcomers alike. Holding the collections for both **Churchill's old regiment**, The Queens Own Oxfordshire Hussars and the famous Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire Light Infantry, SOFO not only tells the story of the county's **soldiers**, but of the **many other** Oxfordshire people impacted by historic and modern conflicts.



**The Harwellian on Thursday mornings
9.30am until 12.00 noon**

Walk in any time, come when you like
£2 a session, the first week is free
 Tea and coffee are provided
 Open all year round (except Christmas)

Any craft, learn a new skill from other members and occasional demonstrations.
 For further information contact
heather.stevens46@btinternet.com

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At Harwell Village Hall (Orchard Hall, car park on Westfield)
 For more info email funclubharwell@gmail.com

Find us on Facebook

The Orchard Film Club

June 2024 Update

We've just shown **Wonka** on 7th June, many thanks to all who came, we hope you enjoyed it.

There **won't be a film in July**, as we are taking our summer break a month earlier this year, so our next date is **Friday 2nd August** and will be **"One Life"** starring Anthony Hopkins, Johnny Flynn and Helena Bonham Carter.



London broker Nicholas Winton helps rescue **hundreds** of mainly Jewish children from Czechoslovakia in a race against time before the **Nazi** occupation **closes** the borders. Fifty years later, he's still **haunted** by the fate of those he wasn't able to bring to safety.

Upcoming film dates for 2024

- Friday 13th September – The Miracle Club
- Friday 4th October – The Holdovers
- Friday 8th November - Young Woman of the Sea
- Friday 13th December - film to be announced*

*We would like to show a family-friendly film for Christmas and welcome suggestions! Please email your ideas to us using the address below.

Details of films & trailers can be found on the [Harwell Village Hall Events](#) pages or look out for the **posters** on display around the village and in **Bob's Butchers window**.

Visit our webpage [here](#) and/or [sign-up](#) to our regular newsletter. Please send your suggestions for films to:

orchardfilmclub@gmail.com

Films are shown in the **Orchard Hall at Harwell Village Hall**, doors/bar **open at 7pm** & the film **starts at 7.30pm**. Tickets are **£6** and available in advance from **Bob's Butchers** in the High Street, and on the **door**. See you soon! Alison, Martin and Janice.

COMMUNITY COFFEE MORNINGS

1st Thursday of the month 10.30am - St Matthew's Church
 Fridays 11.00am - The Harwellian
 All welcome - just turn up!

Harwell Parish History Group - June 2024

Talks

We have had a **very successful** series of talks this Spring on **Commonwealth War Graves**, **Adnam's Farmhouse**, and Capability **Brown's** work at **Radley**. The Autumn series will start on **September 18th** with Stephen Barker's talk on **Trench Humour in the First World War**, followed on **Wednesday October 16th** by John Harrison on the historical development of **English style Bells and Bell Ringing**. We conclude on **20th November** with **The Gunpowder Plot** (Jane Card) which, surprisingly, has a **connection** with Didcot, albeit miniscule.

Talks are **free** for HPHG members, and **£3.00** for visitors - who are very **welcome**. All take place in the **Cherry Hall**, starting at **7.30p.m.**

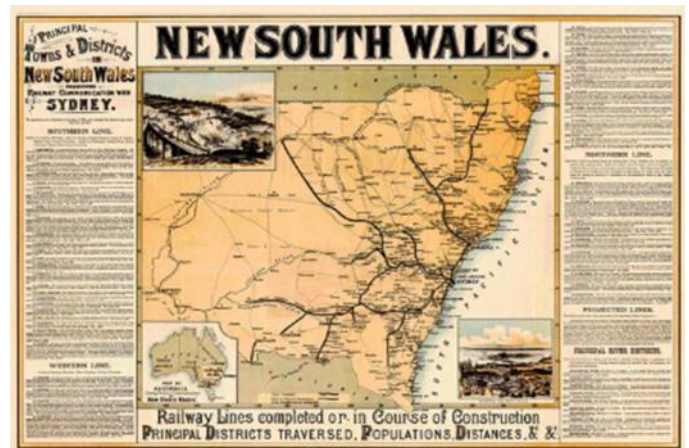
Isaac Robey, tenant of Adnam's Farmhouse at the time of the Great Fire (1852): an afterlife

by the Rev. Brendan Bailey, the current occupier of Adnam's Farmhouse.



"Adnams Farmhouse and its occupants played a **part** in the Harwell Fire of 1852, but until recently, only the fate of **George Morrel** was known. He had **started** the fire by setting alight the **hayrick** behind Adnam's Farmhouse. Convicted of **arson**, he was transported to **Western Australia**, where he died of **epilepsy** in 1864.

But what of the **tenants** of the farm, Isaac and Martha Anne Robey? The Berkshire Chronicle helpfully tells us that they were **insured** with the Royal Farmers office (which later became Royal Insurance). There is correspondence from the period 1850-52 between Isaac Robey and William Adnam which indicates that the Robeys were **struggling** to meet their rent payments because of poor harvests. But they **disappear** from local records after the fire. What became of them? Nestled among the passenger lists for the ship, **John Bunyan**, which landed in **New South Wales in.....** were Isaac Robey (blacksmith) and Martha (seamstress), both born in **Oxfordshire**. In 1861, they were resident in **Central Cumberland**, New South Wales, with a 6 month residential qualification on the electoral roll.



Map of New South Wales, 1886



Cumberland County landscapes: Savannah and moist shale woodlands. By Qumarchi - Own work, CC BY-SA 4.0

Martha Robey **died** in 1873, aged 51 years old. Isaac **remarried** three years later to a widow, Jane Jones, and **two children** were born later in 1877 (Augustus) and 1881 (Louisa). In 1887 Isaac was **arrested** and charged with wife desertion, after which he **disappears** from the Australian records. Augustus, however, turns out to have been a bit of a **rogue**, being arrested and sentenced to **hard labour** on several occasions. He married and divorced at least **twice**.

So, and I'm embarking on **brazen conjecture** here, was the fire in the rickyard a "put up job"? Did Isaac Robey **persuade** George Morrel, a simple lad with epilepsy, to **set** fire to the rick for a portion of the **insurance** money or some **gift**? Was the spread of the fire an unfortunate **accident**, but one which allowed the Robeys to **cover up** an insurance swindle?

Interestingly, George Morrell said at his trial that a boy or man had **promised** him some **apples** if he set fire to the rick. This story was initially **dismissed** by local magistrates, but at the Assizes, the judge did **not** discount the possibility. Noting that Morrel was not quick witted, he stated that **if** someone had persuaded Morrel to set the fire, it was a **pity** he had not come forward.

The **picture** of Isaac Robey from Australia might point us in the direction of a rather **unscrupulous** and unsavoury character. But, although many farmers prospered in the 1850s, he could simply have been a **desperate** tenant trying to solve a rent problem. On the emigration ship, his **trade** was given as "blacksmith". Was he out of his **depth** as a farmer? We will probably never know."

The Summer Mini-Magazine

We hope to produce **at least** one online HPHG mini-magazine for members, who may **share** them with friends. Contributions from **anyone** on any type of history – family, **local**, a national anniversary, a piece of **art** – would be **warmly** welcomed. Please send to harwellhistorygroup@outlook.com or contact me directly.

JMC



Greetings from St Matthew's Harwell and All Saints' Chilton!



Did you know?

St Matthew's Church have a **hall** here in Harwell that is available for **hiring** out for family **gatherings**, exercise classes, etc.



The Hall has a **well-equipped kitchen**, three **toilets**, parking, folding tables and chairs available, is **centrally-heated** and double-glazed. It is located in **Harwell** on the corner of Wellshead Lane and The Park. Address: St Matthew's Church Hall, The Park, Harwell, Didcot **OX11 0HB**.

If you would like to **find out more** about **how to hire** the hall, please visit <https://www.harwellandchiltonchurches.org.uk/churchhall> or leave a **message** at the Church Office on **01235 834256** and someone will get back to you.



What's coming up during June and July 2024



Monday mornings 9.30am-11.30am

St Matthew's Church

Wednesday mornings 9.30am-11.30am

Chilton Community Room.

A **free** playtime with **refreshments** for grown-ups and a **snack** for children. Singing songs and a short Christian focused story reminding us of God's amazing love for us and the world.

Both mornings run within term time only.

1st Thursday of the month - 10.30am to midday - Community Café at St Matthew's Harwell - please come along, bring **friends** and family for good free **coffee** and home-made **cake**.

Thursday midweek Communion 11am (all BCP)

13th June All Saints' Chilton and **27th June** St Matthew's Harwell. **11th July** All Saints' Chilton and **25th July** St Matthew's Harwell. Everyone is welcome.

3rd Saturday of the month - 10am to midday Oasis Café at All Saints' Chilton - Everyone is welcome to come along to enjoy free **coffee** and a **chat** (always delicious biscuits and cakes too).

For full details of all our Sunday Services please look out for our flyer or consult the [calendar on our website](#).

Everyone is welcome to come along to any of our services.



Steventon Choral Society Summer Concerts

Music

for a Summer Evening

with Steventon Choral Society

popular songs from the 60s, 70s & more

Thursday 13th June &
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7.30pm (bar from 7pm) in Steventon Village Hall



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steventonchoral.org.uk

SAMUEL FOXON
Musical Director




Music for a Summer's Evening

Madrigals and Partsongs

Saturday 22nd June 2024, 7:30pm

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www.didcotchoralsociety.org



Harwell Feast in pictures

**This page:**

1. Dog Show
2. Archery Have a Go
3. Craft Marquee
4. Benson Veteran Cycles
5. Popular food stalls
6. Bentley on parade
7. Hot Rod on parade
8. Junior archery
9. Fairground

Overleaf:

11. Soft archery
12. Fairground inflatables
13. Dog show
14. Fire engine
15. May Queen & attendants with 2nd prize Harwell Primary float
16. Traction engine
17. Punch & Judy
18. Hartley Hare
19. Ulfhrafnar Vikings
20. Barbie Booth
21. Morris Minors parade



THE HARES OF HAR(E)WELL

2nd Annual Hare Trail
around Harwell

Saturday 27th July
to
Sunday 4th August

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or telephone 01235 861409
alternatively
email Janice Markey on
jvmarkey@googlemail.com
or telephone 07876706043

Deadline for entries 21st July

What will you
make your hare
out of?



Other than where stated and in reports of Parish Council matters, any opinions expressed are not those of the Parish Council. Items for the August issue should be sent by **15th July** to

news@harwellparish.co.uk

Printed copies of the Harwell News will be available for collection at the Harwell Newsagents, Bob's Butchers, the Harwellian, St Matthew's church porch and in Harwell Village Hall for users. It is available online at <https://www.harwellparish.co.uk/harwell-news/>

Sign up [HERE](#) if you would like to receive an emailed copy of the latest issue.

Advertising queries to the clerk.

Parish Contact Information

All contact information can also be found on the **new** Parish website:

<https://harwellparish.gov.uk/>

Phone: 07749 361957

Post to: Clerk, Harwell PC, Harwell Village Hall, High Street, Harwell, OX11 0EX
Core office hours, in the office at the Village Hall, are 10am to 12.30 on Mondays and 1pm to 3.30pm on Tuesdays

Parish Councillors

Mamta Bajre, Cath Convery, Mike Fox-Davies, Jeremy Hawthorne, Robert Hughes, Paul Luper, Tracey Pearson (Chair), Gavan Raine, Martin Ricketts.

District Councillors

Debra.Dewhurst@whitehorsedc.gov.uk

Hayleigh.Gascoigne@whitehorsedc.gov.uk

Campus Ward:

Sarah.James1@whitehorsedc.gov.uk

County Councillor:

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07939 912997

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