

The Harwell News

harwellparish.gov.uk

Celebrating our 250th Issue!

At the 1961 Annual Parish Meeting "Mr Woodall suggested that a news sheet be distributed in **particular** for the benefit of **new** parishioners. It was suggested that the Village Hall Committee might be a better organisation to **sponsor** it rather than the Parish Council."

The first Newsletter in the archives is dated **December 1976**, and under the heading 'Let's start again' it began:

*'There have been a number of **attempts** in the past to produce a broadsheet for Harwell Village.'* The Parish Council said it felt there was a need for it and intended to produce an edition **three** times a year, for which a Publicity Committee was formed.

There was a **special issue** for the **Queen's Silver Jubilee** in 1977, and it reported the 'Walk to Windsor' carrying the **loyal address** from the Parish. There were usually 3 issues per year until **November 1985** when it recorded the **Village Millennium** celebrations. The next issue

was March 1987 - **no. 26**, intended to be a lower-cost **monthly** publication providing more up-to-date information, edited by **Mrs Betty Pyke** and **John Child**, and became bi-monthly.

In 1991 with the new Council, the June issue saw **Martin Ricketts** become editor and with **Mrs Margaret Turner** were the Publicity Committee. **Mr and Mrs Levy** edited in 2003 to 2007, then **Martin** returned until 2016. Then there was about 3 years under **various** hands and the **current** editor has now completed 5 years in post.

All the newsletters are available to view and download from the old PC web site <https://harwellparish.co.uk/>



Harwell Feast Awards 2025

Following a **successful** Harwell Feast, villagers from a diverse range of Clubs, Societies and Charities joined the Feast committee at the **Harwellian** to receive their **Grant Awards**.

Chair **Tim Hart** explained that requests for grants had been **far in excess** of the surplus made this year and making the

final allocation had taken the committee **some time**. Each recipient was asked to describe the **project** that the money would be used towards.

The organisations benefitting were:

Harwell Primary School	£1,500
Harwell Gardeners Club	£ 200
Little Pippins	£1,000
Harwell Scouts Group	£ 600
St Matthews Church Hall	£ 615
Harwell Bowls Club	£1,000
Frances Geering Almshouses	£2,000
Harwell Village Hall	£ 500
2nd Harwell Brownies	£ 500
Danielle Cruddis	£ 300
Chloe Langridge	£ 100
TOTAL GRANTS AWARDED	£8,315



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HarCOG - Harwell Community Orchard

We are **nearing** the **end** of the project - all the trees are **planted**, the **hedgerow** is **growing** nicely, **seating** is in place and we had a satisfactory **first crop** of fruit last year.

The final part of the project is the creation of a **signboard** which will be placed at the **entrance** to the Orchard, giving some **information** about the Orchard and its creation.

There is still **regular maintenance** to be undertaken - namely **weeding** and, most importantly, **pruning** of the trees in the **Spring**. If anyone would like to help us do these tasks we would very much **appreciate** your help.

Please email me at penny.kinloch@outlook.com. Thanks



Penny Kinloch, HarCOG



Harwell Bowls Club – January update

Harwell Bowls Club's will be hosting a **4 week bowls course** starting on **Wednesday 23 April** from **10 - 11am** at Harwell Bowls Club, adjacent to The Harwellian. This course, **open to all**, will be led by the Vale's Active Communities Team who will **introduce** the basics of the game. All people wishing to participate need to wear flat shoes and easy wear clothing.

There will be a **limit on numbers** so if you wish to participate or require further details please email carolfisher39315@aol.com.

If you have **difficulty bending** we do have equipment to **help** you bowl so no bending involved, but please **let Carol know** so equipment can be organised.

If you cannot make this course there is an **Open Day** on **Saturday 26 April** from **2 - 4pm** when you can bring your **family** along for a **taster session**. If this is successful we may trial **Pay As you Go** sessions which will be far cheaper than going to Kassam!

Alternatively we have **club nights** on Mondays from **6 - 7.30pm** where **everyone** is **welcome**.

We do have small carpet bowls and junior bowls for the younger generation.

Please **contact Carol** with any queries.

Harwell Bowls Club looks forward to welcoming you.



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Bell-ringing News - Happy New Year!

Thank you to everyone who joined us on **Boxing Day** morning. We had a **lovely** time with fellow ringers plus quite a few **'have a go'** candidates! Refreshments were **enjoyed** by many too.

After a full programme of **Christmas ringing** at both Harwell and Chilton we are back to our **normal Thursday practice** and **Sunday service** ringing.

Philip Roberts



Harwell Gardeners' Club

We meet in **St. Matthew's Church** on the **first Monday** of every month **Sep - May** to hear **speakers** give a variety of talks based on our common interest of **gardening**.

- **Monday 3rd March** - our speaker will be Stephen Wass with the talk 'The Secret Gardens Of Oxfordshire & The Birth Of Modern Science'. The competition will be 'A photo of an Oxfordshire garden'. There will also be a seed swap.



- **Monday 7th April** - 'How Vegetables Saved My Life' a talk by Kathy Slack. The competition will be 'Spring Veg'.

Looking ahead to **Harwell Feast on May 26th** we will have a **plant stall** offering veg, flower, herb and house

plants. Do come and visit us. We all grow **extra plants** for this village event.

Visitors are welcome at any time of the year. Your first visit is free. After that it is **£3** for a one off visit or two, or a full year's membership is **£15**. Further details available from Janice Markey by email jymarkey@googlemail.com

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



Sustainable Harwell - Jan 2025 Newsletter

Hi everyone - Happy New Year! In this first short Newsletter of 2025 we provide an update about a couple of coming events for the Group and some **important dates for your diary**.



Holloway Hedgerow

Some exciting news and help **needed on Sat 15th February from 10.30am**.

We have now got the **go ahead** from all parties for the next Sustainable Harwell **project** which is planting a **700 metre hedgerow** to create a new **wildlife corridor** along the **Holloway** to the **crossing with the Icknield Way**. Our first session will be planting an **initial 100 metres** of whips on top of the small bank on the eastern side of the bridleway.

We hope to get them **all planted on Saturday 15th February** but could continue planting on the **Sunday** if necessary.

We need to figure out the **best way** to plant the whips. The bank is covered in grass so we could **remove a strip** of grass (like we did for planting whips at the Community Orchard) to make it **easier** to make a slot for the whips (they will be bare-rooted). Or we could cut the grass as **short as possible** and then plant **through** that.

We will go up there and see how **easy/difficult** it is to get a spade through the grass. Any other **suggestions welcome**.

Oxfordshire County Council will also be planting some **trees** within the new hedgerow. These are being **provided** by them and will be **maintained** by them. The hedgerow itself will be maintained by the adjacent **land owners** in the future.

Any **advice** or **offers of help** on the day would be much appreciated. Please email us at Sustainable Harwell to let us know you would like to help out. On the day please **meet at 10.30am** at the bottom of The Holloway and be prepared to get a bit **muddy** and **dress appropriately** for the weather. Bring **sturdy** shoes/boots and **warm** clothes, gloves and a **large fork** or **spade**, **small fork** and **trowel**, or anything **else** you think suitable. If anyone has a **bulb planting device** then please bring that as that might come in handy.

Next Group meeting and talk - **Wednesday 5th March** at the **Village Hall**, starting at **7:30 pm**.

"Dealing with waste in South Oxfordshire"

by Jez Elkin, Waste Prevention and Reduction Officer,
South Oxfordshire District Council and Vale of White Horse
District Council

The national debate about how to deal with the country's **waste production** is an important issue.

Come and join us on Weds 5th March to hear Jez discuss the current **waste strategy** for the local area which impacts us **in Harwell**, including:

- What goes in which bin
- What happens to your recycling
- What happens to food waste
- What happens to black bin waste



If you are a member of another village group, do please **make them aware** of this talk, which should be of interest to everybody. **Everyone is welcome** so please reserve the date in your diary.

Woodlands Surgery Patient Participation Group



<http://www.woodlandssurgery.co.uk>

This is a group of **volunteer patients and carers** who meet regularly with GP practice staff to **discuss** and **support** the **running** of the GP practice.

All NHS practices have a Patient Participation Group and you will find full **details** on the **websites** of all the GP practices.

Please take time to look at the website for **your surgery** and consider **volunteering** to be on the committee of your PPG. Regular meetings are held every **three months**.

Representatives of all sections of the community would be welcome, including parents of young children.

Babs Capps



Harwell Parochial Charities

Honorary Clerk to the Trustees

The Trustees are looking for a someone to take up the duties of the Honorary Clerk .

Harwell Parochial Charities is responsible for the **upkeep** and **management** of the Almshouses on the High Street.

The position of Clerk is a **voluntary** one, and on average should demand no more than an **hour** or **two** of your time each **week**. There is a need for the Clerk to be fairly **flexible** about availability, as on occasion s/he will need to **attend** the almshouses during normal working hours.

Working alongside the Chair, the Clerk is responsible for the **management** of the Charity, and the position will suit someone with **experience** of managing budgets, maintaining financial records and preparing agendas and minutes.

If you are interested and would like more **information** please speak to :

The Chair : Andrew Snowdon 07866 805368



Harwell Parish Council Update

We hope this edition finds you **safe** and **well** after a wet and windy few months. Traditionally December and early January are **quiet** for the Parish Council as local government in general powers down for a couple of weeks over the festive break, less planning applications come in for review and we tie up loose ends as we enter the **final** quarter of our financial year. Despite our meetings being generally quieter, we have still had **plenty** going on!

December saw the appointment of a temporary **locum clerk**, whom you may have spoken to if you have contacted the council in December or January. Whilst they have now **moved on** to pastures new we thank them for their time whilst they were with us, and wish them well wherever they locum next. A returning employee face is that of **Laura White**, who many of you will remember locumed for us in Winter 2023/2024. Laura has returned as the **RFO** (Responsible Financial Officer), originally this was just until a new Clerk & RFO can be appointed, but subject to Council approval at the February meeting, she has offered to stay in a more **permanent** capacity to give the Council more **stability** whilst seeking and training a new Clerk.

In addition to the RFO, we now have **4 new Co-opted Councillors**, appointed at the **January 2025 meeting**. **Cllr Lacy** may be well known to some of you as a longstanding **resident** of our community and we welcome her and her extensive local knowledge to the Council. Similarly **Cllr Dearlove** is a **local** man, whilst now living in Didcot, but living close enough to the parish to qualify as a Cllr, he and his family have lived and/or worked in Harwell for many years and he is keen to bring his knowledge of Harwell and experience as a District Councillor and a Didcot Town Councillor, and now a Western Valley Parish Councillor to help Harwell during a time when it has been **difficult** to find staff and councillors alike. In addition to these two, two other Councillors from Western Valley Parish (WVPC) have volunteered their time and been co-opted to Harwell Parish, **Cllr Peacock** Chair of WVPC and **Cllr Humphries** former Thame Town Councillor. Both have a wealth of **experience** and lashings of **community mindedness** and have volunteered to fill positions which have been vacant for quite some time. We **thank** them all for joining the Council and look forward to working with them over the coming months and years.

Sadly, noting that a lot more of the Council's seats were now full, **Cllr Hawthorne** has **resigned** from the council, resulting in a casual **vacancy**. At the time of going to press we were still waiting to see if that casual vacancy was to be filled by co-option or election. It is likely to be filled by co-option at the next meeting on the **20th February**. We **thank** Cllr Hawthorne for his long service with the council and staying on the council despite being so **busy** during a time where we struggled to fill our vacancies. His **considered** and **even-handed** thoughts and advice over the years were much **appreciated**, and we wish him **well** with his future endeavours.



In January we approved the **budget for 2025-2026**, year starting on 1st April 2025, and subsequent **precept** request. The budgeting process is detailed every year, including making **assumptions** about future spend; potential **pay rises** for staff which are decided nationally, not internally; unforeseen **maintenance** projects; and **planned** large projects. As I am sure you will all agree our considerable spend on maintenance and general management of the condition of the village is **worthwhile**, but whilst costs rise for you at home, similarly those **costs rise** for us too. Many of the rises are out of our hands, such as purchasing **fuel**, removal of **waste** and **utilities** with rises imposed upon us, rather than cost increasing because we are using those services more.

The Council has this year approved an **increase** in the precept requested from you, our residents, of **7.9%**, rising from £139,014 in the current year, to **£148,182** for next year. We have however had a **rise in "tax base"** used to calculate cost per household for a standard Band D home. The tax base fluctuates based on number of **occupied** homes, those receiving **council tax reductions** and/or properties **exempt** from council tax. As our tax base has risen year on year, the resulting cost of the precept we have requested has risen by only **6.33%**. Whilst this does sound like a lot and is higher than inflation currently, this is a real-world increase of **£5.59** per band D household, **per year**. The total cost of the parish council now being **£93.88 per Band D home per year**, the equivalent of **£7.80 per month**.

The Parish Council has traditionally kept the precept increase **low** for a number of years, but the **loss** of the homes and associated income which related to the homes now in the parish of **Western Valley**, without significantly reducing the outgoings of the Council, means that this increase **cannot** be deferred any longer.

Temporarily meetings are being **moved** to the **1st (Lands and Planning) and 3rd (Full Council) Thursday's of the month**. This is to allow the RFO to be in attendance at the meetings whilst we await the appointment of a new Clerk. As such for the next 3 months, meetings of the council will be held on the **20th February; 20th March & 17th April**. Whilst the Council can meet without an officer of the council being present, it is **advisable** to have an officer present to give **legal** advice; take **actions** and compile the **minutes**. It is the intention to return to **Tuesday** meetings as soon as possible.

Please see details on our [website](https://www.harwellparish.gov.uk) regarding **recruitment** of a **Clerk**; details of how to contact us; a full list of our councillors and their respective responsibilities; and all the agendas, minutes & associated papers for all of our meetings. As ever the best way to **contact the Council** is via **email**: Clerk@HarwellParish.gov.uk or by phone if email is not available to you **07749 361957**. Both contact methods are being monitored regularly, but please bear with us it may take up to 72 hours for us to reply.

Laura White, RFO, Harwell Parish Council

MP Olly Glover's message for Harwell News - January update

My warmest wishes for the new year. It was wonderful to join in local **social** and **festive** occasions such as the switching on of **Christmas lights**.

Before parliament ended, I was able to address ministers about important matters. These included: how local communities can benefit from **clean energy schemes**, the need for improvements in services provided by **coroners** following the sudden deaths of those with **epilepsy**, and the need to address **electoral reform**. Some responses were more helpful than others!

I was able to speak in debates about the problems faced by those with **disabilities**, shared concerns raised by **poor estate management**, and championed the **BBC** (which I am sure many of us watched and listened to over Christmas).

The **Transport Select committee** meet to hold the Department of Transport to account. Two key areas discussed have been **rail services and infrastructure**, and the **backlog of driving tests**, which so many constituents have aired concerns about.

Flooding remains a significant concern. I chaired a meeting with Thames Water and the local councils to facilitate **working together**. I will continue to provide updates about this vital piece of work as we need to see real **improvements**. As you will recall I pushed for an **inquiry** into Thames Water's **plans** and continue to press the Minister to meet with me after their verbal agreement to do so.

My team provides **support** for all our constituents. Please **contact me** if I can help, or if you would like me to attend a local event or meet with a local organisation. My parliamentary email address is olly.glover.mp@parliament.uk

If you use social media, you can follow me for more regular updates on **Facebook**: <https://www.facebook.com/OllyGloverLD/> and **Bluesky** - as I have moved away from X/Twitter: [@ollyglover.bsky.social](https://bsky.app/profile/ollyglover.bsky.social)

I look forward to meeting as many as of you as possible in 2025.

Olly.



Matthew Barber, Police & Crime Commissioner Cutting Rural Crime

Rural crime - specifically defined as things like the **theft of farm machinery**, equipment, **damage to crops** and offences such as **hare coursing** - can have a huge impact on **farming businesses**, not to mention the real issues of **safety** for individuals. Thankfully rural crime is **falling** locally. Across Thames Valley it is **down 24%** over the last 12 months and in southern Oxfordshire it's **down 33%** but that's not by accident.

Last year I secured **additional funding** from the Home Office for work focussed specifically in Oxfordshire. Thames Valley Police have **teamed up** with local District Councils, forming a **Rural Crime Partnership** and delivering the following:

- Using undercover **cameras** and **off-road bikes**, officers can now better monitor **remote areas** and track down offenders who think they can't be reached.
- Farmers have received **free security reviews** and **DNA marking kits** for their equipment, making it much harder for thieves to get away and easier to return stolen items if something happens.
- **Rural Crime Advisor**: A dedicated advisor was recruited, to be **out in the community**, offering helpful advice, meeting with local farmers and businesses, and keeping rural industries safer.
- Tackling **Fly-Tipping**: New surveillance tools are helping councils catch and **prosecute** those who dump waste, keeping rural areas cleaner and more beautiful.

More officers have been recruited to the Rural Crime Taskforce, making it one of the **largest** and certainly one of the most **effective** in the country. They recognise that many of these offences are part of **organised crime**. The taskforce are identifying and focusing on the **most dangerous** and **prolific** offenders. In fact they have been so **successful** that whilst there have been reduction in crime here, **other police areas** have seen **increases** as criminals target other places. None of us are safe, unless we're all safe; so we've now established a **South East**

Partnership Against Rural Crime - joining together neighbouring police forces so that we can target criminals all the way from the **farms** they target to the **ports** where they try to export stolen goods.

With these measures, our rural areas are becoming **safer** places thanks to the **hard work** and **dedication** of Thames Valley Police officers.



COMMUNITY COFFEE MORNINGS

1st Thursday of the month 10.30am at
St Matthew's Church

Fridays 11.00am at The Harwellian

All welcome - just turn up!

Matthew Barber
Your voice in
Thames Valley

Matthew Barber is Police & Crime Commissioner for Thames Valley, working with the police to help drive down crime locally.

STAY IN TOUCH
matthewbarber.co.uk
@matthewbarberpcc
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JOIN THE WHATSAPP COMMUNITY

Promoted by Matthew Barber on his own behalf, of Waterloo House, 58-60 High Street, Witney, Oxfordshire, OX28 6HJ.

Harwell WI

Calling all ladies of Harwell and surrounding area. Christmas is now just a **distant** memory but I hope you all had a **good time** and avoided the flu bug that was rife in the village. Now we can look forward to **lighter** evenings and **spring** flowers.

The **Harwell Christmas Tree Festival** at Little Pippins was a lot of **fun** and the WI tree was adorned with **handmade** Snowflakes.

We now look forward to another year of **friendship** and interesting **speakers** and activities:

- **12th February 2025:** Gillian Cane presents the **Miracles of Bletchley Park**
Find out more about the eccentric characters involved
- **12th March 2025:** **HARWELL WI AGM with Fish-n-chip supper**
- **9th April 2025:** Jane Card will be giving us the history of the **Harwell Frances Geering Almshouses**

Harwell WI welcomes, supports and inspires all women. We meet on the **second Wednesday** of each month at **7.30pm** 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 organize 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



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At times we all need a little support

develop healthy relationships
build life skills
reach your potential

The Oxfordshire Targeted Youth Support Service is here for you.



oxme.info

oxme.info/tyss



Age UK Oxfordshire is a local independent **charity** supporting **older people** in Oxfordshire. We have a variety of **services** available to help you to live **independently** and live life to the **full**. Our services range from **support at home** to helping **link** you into your **community**, from **foot care** clinics to **exercise** classes. We offer a **free information** and **advice** helpline, as well as one-to-one support if you have been a victim of a **scam**.

Please visit www.ageuk.org.uk/oxfordshire email: contactus@ageukoxfordshire.org.uk or call **0345 450 1276**.



Soldiers of
Oxfordshire
Museum

New E. H. Shepard exhibition to open at Soldiers of Oxfordshire Museum, including original Winnie-the-Pooh illustrations

From **18 January to 31 August 2025**, Soldiers of Oxfordshire Museum in Woodstock will host a brand-new exhibition of **artwork** by E. H. Shepard, best known as the **original illustrator** for A. A. Milne's **Winnie-the-Pooh** and the 1931 edition of Kenneth Grahame's **The Wind in the Willows**.

The collection of Shepard's work, including some of his beloved **children's illustrations** alongside a wealth of his **Great War sketches** and **comic art**, come to the museum on loan from the **University of Surrey Archives** and **The Shepard Trust** - on show for the **first time** in Oxfordshire.



Pencil self-portrait of E.H. Shepard seated in his WWI officer's uniform. © The Shepard Trust, c. 1915-1919, from the E.H. Shepard Archive, University of Surrey.

By the **outbreak** of the First World War in 1914, Ernest H. Shepard had already become a **regular contributor** to the popular **Punch** magazine, often drawing cartoons about the war for them among other publications. By 1915 Shepard had **enlisted**, going on to serve as an **officer** in the Royal Garrison Artillery, first in France's Western Front, and later Italy. From the start of his officer training in 1915, he began to **document** the war as he saw it, in

pencil **sketches**, pen and ink drawings, and even **watercolours**. These ranged from humorous caricatures to detailed studies, capturing **life** in the trenches with his own unique style.

Alongside examples of his art, the exhibition will include some of Shepard's **kit** from his war service, such as his Royal Garrison Artillery officer's **forage cap** and identification tags.

Post-war, it was through his regular work for Punch that he would be commissioned to illustrate poems by A. A. Milne first published in the magazine, then for the collection **When We Were Very Young**. These were the first appearances of the bear

that would become Winnie-the-Pooh. Shepard would develop a **close** working relationship with Milne, and illustrate Winnie-the-Pooh, **When We Were Six** and **The House at Pooh Corner**. The series was so popular that they would **never** fall out of print, and today can be found translated into over **50 languages**.

Alongside Shepard's war work and famous children's illustrations, his drawings **beyond the bear** will also feature in the exhibition. He continued his regular work for Punch magazine into the 1950s, as their leading weekly **political** cartoonist for twenty years, and produced cartoons covering the **rise of Hitler** and the Nazis in Germany, appeasement, the Second World War itself, through to the **Labour government** that followed and the radical changes they brought with them.

E. H. Shepard's later work featured in the exhibition will include original sketches for children's books **Betsy and Joe** (1966), which he wrote as well as illustrated, and the Frances Hodgson Burnett's **The Secret Garden**.

In later life, E. H. Shepard **donated** the collections of his work he still possessed to a number of museums and archives, including the **Victoria & Albert Museum**, the National Army Museum, and to Guildford's University of Surrey, the home of the collection going on display at Soldiers of Oxfordshire Museum.

Supporting the exhibition itself, the museum will be running a full programme of **family events** and **activities**, including a new Winnie-the-Pooh themed **visitor trail** 'Up in the Air' challenging younger visitors to find items **lost** around the museum by residents of Hundred Acre Wood. The museum's Under 5s play area has been given a Winnie-the-Pooh-style **makeover**, so kids get the chance to sit and **play** with the beloved bear and his friends.

Other family activities, including regular **tea parties** and **craft workshops**, such as kite and puppet making, will take place throughout the **Half Term**, **Easter** and **Summer Holidays**. Full dates and details will be made available on the **museum's website**.

For grown-up visitors, **James Campbell**, author of *Shepard's War* and the upcoming *Art of Winnie-the-Pooh*, and Chairman of The Shepard Trust, will give a **series of talks** on the life of E. H. Shepard and his art. Dates for these talks will also be announced in the near future and we look forward to welcoming visitors to the new exhibition soon.

Duncan Parsons, SOFO Museum



2024 Poppy Appeal Harwell

The collecting boxes in the **Harwell shops** and **businesses**, and in the **Harwell Campus** organisations, the **house-to-house** collection in Harwell, and the **Remembrance Sunday** bucket collection raised a total of **£1879.72**. We also collected **£252** by **QR codes** across the district.

Special thanks to the **Chilton PAO**, the house to house and bucket **collectors**, all **shops** and **organisations** who hosted a collecting box and those who **delivered** and **collected** the boxes.

Peter Cox, Poppy Appeal Organiser Harwell Village and Campus



Harwell
Branch

GOBO Youth Theatre Update

If you're new to the village, you might not know that we have a **youth theatre**, or maybe you've been here a while and just managed to **escape** our clutches! But either way, we're currently rehearsing up a **storm** for you with our latest production – "**DREAMLAND**", which we'll be performing in the **village hall** on **27th-29th June**.

Maybe you didn't even know that our awesome village hall **converts** into a **theatre**!

Either way, we'd love for you to know these things now.

And know that **all young people** are welcome to join.

Our sessions are on **Saturday mornings** in the **village hall** from **10am-12:30pm** (11:30am-1pm for younguns), and **fees** are £216/term (£126), with **12 weeks** per term plus an **annual production**.



Minis group is ages 5-9, Midis from 10-13, and Maxis 14-19. We also have **subsidies** available if you're eligible for **free school meals** for example.

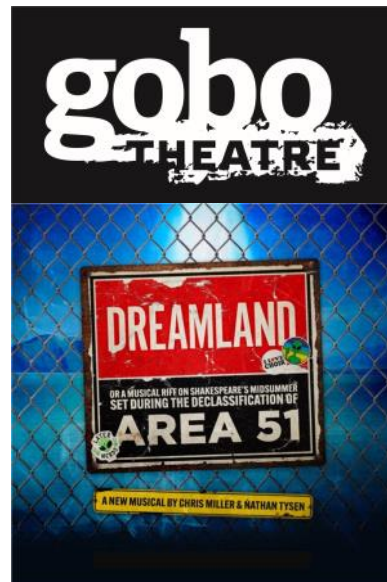
We're a **super friendly** and fun group, and love to develop **all** individuals. Please **contact us** if you would like a **free trial** (some groups have limited spaces) –

amy@gobothatre.co.uk or **07970 581924**.

We'd love to meet you, and maybe you can either **be in**, or **watch**, our **next show**!

Amy Standish, Director

<https://www.gobothatre.co.uk/>



Fundraiser Workout Classes in March!

Harwell resident, **Gemma Exelby**, is running the **London Marathon** in April, and has organised **fundraiser classes** being held at **Harwell Village Hall** on **Sunday** mornings in **March**. Join us for BodyBalance, Yoga or HIIT, all of which are led by **local** fitness instructors. **All abilities** welcome, and **100%** of proceeds go to Anthony Nolan. Look forward to seeing you there!



Our purpose-built pre-school is set in an idyllic orchard and has a large outdoor play area. We offer exceptionally high-quality early years provision including an onsite Forest School. We are delighted to have maintained our 'Outstanding' Ofsted rating. (January 2015 and July 2019).

Little Pippins recognises that each child is an individual with their own individual needs and learning styles. We therefore endeavour to promote positive learning and development through a well-planned play-based curriculum which includes differentiation and either support or extension of activities.

We are open term time only, between the hours of
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September 2025 admissions

The closing date for registration applications for admission in autumn 2025 is Friday 5th April 2025.

Call us on 01235 821 741, or
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www.littlepippins.org.uk Registered Charity number 1105994



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Have you recently needed health or medical care immediately or the same day in Oxfordshire?

Healthwatch Oxfordshire would like to hear from **anyone** who has needed **urgent** or **emergency** care or **help** in Oxfordshire in the last **two years**. This might include **calling NHS 111** or your **local GP practice**, going to a **hospital Accident and Emergency (A&E)** department, or contacting a **mental health crisis team**.

We'd like to know what you **understand** about these health services, what **information** you used to find out about services, and your **experience** of getting the **right help quickly**.

Your **feedback** will help us understand your **experiences** and identify **areas for improvement**.

To tell us about your experiences, please **complete our short online survey** at <https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/UECservices/> or by **scanning the QR code** above.

The survey is **anonymous** and will be open for comments **until Monday 17th February 2025**.

If you would rather **talk to someone** about your experience, or would like a **paper copy** or **translated version** of the survey, please **contact Healthwatch Oxfordshire** on **01865 520520** or at hello@healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk

To find out more about the work of Healthwatch Oxfordshire see www.healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk

Request for Help

Harwell Parish History Group have had an enquiry from the **East Hendred Museum** as to whether anyone in Harwell has any photos of the **Harwell (Rural) Company of the 5th Berkshire Battalion Home Guard**. East Hendred and Harwell were **both** in that company. They are putting on a **summer exhibition** to commemorate the **80th anniversary** of the end of World War II.

Please contact **Jane Parker** on jl.parker@btinternet.com if you have anything to share. If you have photographs but do not wish to lend them, I am sure they can be scanned.

Thank you. *JMC, Secretary HPHG.*



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Big Ginger Tom Music - Gig Review



Lucy May Walker and The Dunwells Double Bill on 17th January 2025

Big Ginger Tom Music celebrated its **50th gig** at Harwell Village Hall with a wonderful night of entertainment from **Lucy May Walker and The**

Dunwells. It was the **third** time at the Hall for **both** artists and they certainly seem to **enjoy** themselves.

The Dunwells opened the evening with a 60 minute set and they were **joined** by Lucy for a couple songs, "Break My Fall", "All Time High" and "Will You Wait For Me". The set included their usual opener, "Animal" and "I Could Be A King". There was of course the usual brotherly **banter** between songs and they got the **audience** all singing with "Best Life" and "I Care". A **great** way to **start** the evening.

After the break Lucy was **joined** by The Dunwells for "Run Back Home", they then left her to it and she delivered a very **entertaining** if somewhat **chaotic** and sometime **hysterical** set alone, losing it completely in "Too Picky" when we had an impromptu 2 minute **instrumental** while she composed herself.



There were the usual **favourites** of "Bad Day" and "Safety Net" and The Dunwells rejoined her for her last song "I've Got You" and they did an **encore together** of "Heartbreak Songs" which also descended into hilarity when Joe added a "hey" that wasn't expected, and Dave missed his queue twice.

It was an evening that will stay in the mind for a **long time** and **well worthy** of being the **50th gig**.

Our next gig at the Village Hall is **The Sam Kelly Trio** supported by **Sarah Yeo** on **Saturday 22nd February**.

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 at 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>

HARWELL PAROCHIAL CHARITIES

Registered charity no. 204399

TRUSTEE VACANCY, FRANCES GEERING ALMSHOUSE

Harwell Parochial Charities was formed in 1893 by the amalgamation of **10 Harwell village charities** set up since Elizabeth I's reign to aid the poor in the parish. By the 1990's their funds had dwindled to very little, and the Charity Commission agreed to wind them up and remaining assets were transferred to the **Frances Geering Almshouse Charity**, which continues as an almshouse.

The Almshouse, which is in the High Street, by the War Memorial, originally housed 6 women, each in a single room. During the last century it has been converted to 2 **individual houses**. It has Grade 2* listed status.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES OF TRUSTEES

- Hold the Charity in **trust** for present and future generations
- Place the interests of residents, and the preservation of their dignity and independence at the **centre** of the Charity's values
- Guard the **reputation** of the Charity, and act solely in its best interests
- Take responsibility for the Charity's **compliance**, performance and **assets**
- Deliver a high standard of **governance**
- Ensure the **effectiveness** of the Charity



The Trustees of Harwell Parochial Charities are responsible for the management and finances of the Almshouse, and the care of the residents appointed to live there. The Trustees meet **3 times a year** and will decide **policy**, ensure that the Charity is **following** its charitable purposes, staying financially **viable** and looking at any **current issues** that may need addressing. This is done with the help of the **Clerk**, who carries out the day-to-day duties.

There are currently **8 Trustees**, who are appointed on a rolling **4 year** term of service.

We are looking for **four new Trustees**. The particular areas of skills and knowledge we require are in **Financial Management and Investment**, and in **Building Maintenance**. Knowledge of the **Law** and **Risk Assessment** would also be valuable. However, we would be pleased to hear from **anyone** who has an interest in being part of a small charity providing **benefit** to the village community.

For more information, please contact the Chair of Trustees:

Mr Andrew Snowdon

Tel. 07866 805368 email: andrew@l-cm.co.uk

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FRIDAY 16 MAY

SAM CARTER - SUPPORT: THREE IDLE WOMEN

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TBC

FRIDAY 19 SEPTEMBER

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FRIDAY 17 OCTOBER

SETH LAKEMAN - SUPPORT: TBC

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For further information contact

heather.stevens46@btinternet.com



The Orchard Film Club

February 2025 Update

We hope those who came to see our December and January films enjoyed them, thank you for coming! Our next film is on **Friday 7th February** and is **"A Man called Otto"** starring Academy Award Winner Tom Hanks, Maria Treviño and Rita Wilson.



Synopsis - Based on the comical and moving no. 1 New York Times bestseller, A Man Called Otto tells the story of Otto Anderson (Tom Hanks), a grumpy widower, who meets his match when a quick-witted, pregnant woman named Marisol (Mariana Treviño) and her young family move in next door. An unlikely friendship is born that turns his world upside down.

Upcoming film dates 2025

We have confirmation that our April film will be 'Paddington in Peru'! Here are the dates for the first half of 2025 for you diaries:



- Friday 7th March – The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie (12)
- Friday 4th April - Paddington in Peru (PG)
- Friday 2nd May - title to be announced
- Friday 6th June - title to be announced

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.

Harwell Parish History Group - February 2025

The Spring series of talks starts up on **19th March 2025** with the **History of the GWR Abingdon Branch** (Ivan Cadge), followed by **'MG: Abingdon's Legacy'** (16th April, Richard Martin - who we hope will bring some 'examples' to the car park!) and then **'St Matthews – a church in the landscape'** (21st May, Adrian Rance McGregor). Entry is **free** to members and **£3** to non-members. At the **March** meeting, membership subscriptions (now £12.00 for the year) **are due**.

American Harwells

In March, we are expecting a visit, kindly organized by Liz Roberts, from 11 Americans who claim descent from **Roger**, brother of **John of Harwell**, Bishop of Bath and Wells. It was the American Friends of Harwell who funded in 1981 the **Har(e)well Window** in St. Matthew's Church, which shows Bishop John's **coat of arms**. (This is **not** a "crest" – his bishop's mitre on top of the shield would have formed the heraldic crest). "Harwell" is an **uncommon** surname in Britain, but abounds in various forms in the USA. So, which Harwells went to the USA and why? The story starts with **Bishop John**, born c. 1320 near **Wellshead Lane**. His family had **higher** status than was usual for a small landowner. His father, John atte Halle, had an M.A., unusual at that time; it is possible he first intended to be a **clergyman**. John atte Halle's wife was Margery le Balliol (Bayloll), **heiress** of the Harwell family of **Norman** descent. Therefore his son John was educated to a level which enabled him to become a clergyman of the type who worked in administration and **government**. By 1351 John was a **royal administrator** in England and France for Edward III & Edward, the Black Prince during the 100 Years' War. At one point he **governed** Gascony. Then he joined the **Regency Council** for Richard II. So, a seriously **influential** civil servant, but as was the custom, his "pay" was many church posts, including in 1366 the **Bishopric of Bath and Wells**.



The arms of Bishop John.

This is a visual pun, called a "canting" arms

As a clergyman, John could **not marry** or have legitimate heirs, but his **eminence** and Margery Bayloll's **status** allowed his elder brother Roger and his descendants to marry **very advantageously**. These descendants were traced and described by John Fletcher and Jan Whittaker in **The Harwell Trail** (1981), now a rare pamphlet. (My thanks to Kath Luker for the loan of this.) These Harwells obtained several estates in **Worcestershire** through marriage, and therefore re-located to that county. For example, Roger married the heiress to **Wootton Wawen** (spelt variously), keeping the Harwell coat of arms but "differenced" according to heraldic rules. The Harwell arms, variants or quarterings of it, appear on several effigies in Wootton Church.



The arms of the Harwells of Wootton Wawen. Note that the centre stripe ("fess") is wavy not "nebuly" (cloud-like), and the hares' heads are silver not gold.

Roger's 5 times great-grandsons included **Sir Edmund** (III) Harewell (1567-c.1620), Knight of the Order of the Bath, and **Sir Thomas** (d. 1611). These all had interests and investments in the **Virginia Company of London**, which established a **colony** there. Sir Thomas's son **Francis Harwell** (d. 1629) actually made a round trip to **Virginia** to further the development of the colony. Meanwhile, Sir Edmund ran into such dire **financial** problems that he had to sell the family land. This was a loss not only of **income** but of **status, rank** and **opportunities** for advancement. It was, therefore, his sons Thomas Fulk Harwell and John Harwell who emigrated to the Americas to **improve** their prospects.



Sir John Harewell (1365 – 1428), son of Roger of Harwell and nephew of Bishop John. in Wootton Wawen Church.

A portrait of Sir Edmund does exist but the only copy I can find is on ancestry.co.uk and is very unclear. We know he was wearing a **ring** with a **hare's head** on it. Like Bishop John, who has hares and representations of water on both his coat of arms and his tomb, he was proud of the name **"Har(e)well"**! JMC



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



Rules of the Game

Are you a **mystery lover**? 2025 marks the centenary year of **The Viaduct Murder**, the first mystery novel by Ronald Knox. Having trained as a Church of England minister, he is best remembered for Knox's Ten **Rules for Detective Fiction**, a kind of Ten Commandments for writers to "play fair" with readers, giving them a realistic **chance** to solve the whodunnit. Examples include, "No hitherto **undiscovered** poisons may be used, nor any appliance which will need a long **scientific explanation** at the end." His rules were adopted by The Detection Club, where he was a **founder** member alongside Agatha Christie, Dorothy L. Sayers and other notable Golden Age authors.

Life itself is a mystery far **beyond** anything that Poirot, Vera or Ludwig has faced. No surprise, then, that self-help books are such **big sellers** every January. If only we knew the rules, our lives would make so much more sense. But which book, which rules, where do we even **start**?

People have been asking that question for as long as we have written records. When Jesus was travelling around Israel, a religious teacher asked him what was the most **important** of all the many, many rules that were current. His answer? First, he said, love God with your **whole heart**, soul, **mind** and strength; then love your **neighbour** as you love yourself.

Many people would skip that first rule and go straight to how you can and should love yourself and those around you. Certainly, most people, when you get to know them, genuinely want to be thought of as **good people**, and to be a help and support to others, whatever their beliefs about life, the universe and everything. So, can't we just start there?

Look out at the world, and ask yourself, "How's that going for **humanity**?" It's a mixed picture at best. I don't need to list the **wars** that rage around the world. Even in our communities and families, most of us will know people whose lives are **hurt** by poverty, injustice or **abusive** relationships.

That's why I for one need to take Jesus seriously and look **beyond** myself. Because if it all depends on me, however hard I try, however well I seem to be doing, sooner or later I'll **run out** of love, patience and wisdom. It's happened before, and it will

happen again. I need a better **foundation** for when storms come, a better **supply** for when all I need to flourish or to help you flourish has run out. The best answer I know is to look to God as the **source** of all that is good.

I love a good mystery, and just occasionally I work out whodunnit **before** the sleuth wraps up the case. For the mystery of life and how best to live it, I'm grateful that Jesus gave us this **vital clue**. So, my New Year's Resolution? I'm going to try and hold on to those **two simple rules**. I'll let you know how it goes!

Jeremy Parsons, Rector, Harwell and Chilton Churches

What's coming up during February and March 2025

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 (BCP) 11am

13th February and 13th March All Saints' Chilton and **27th February and 27th March** 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).



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.

For more information visit the [Fledgelings Group FaceBook page](#)

Both mornings run within term time only.

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

Special Services during March

Wednesday 5th March Ash Wednesday, All Saints' Chilton

Sunday 30th March Mothering Sunday

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



Didcot and District U3A

For all **newly retired** or **semi-retired** individuals, what better way to start the New Year than to find or expand on an new **interest** and join **groups** of like minded individuals, learning a language, photography, gardening, and 28 + other such groups that can be found at the **Didcot & District u3a**.

More information can be obtained by attending the **Monthly Meetings** held on the **3rd Tuesday** of every month in the **Civic Hall Didcot** starting at **2:30pm**, whilst making **new friends** over tea and biscuits followed by a **interesting talk** by a visiting Speaker.

Upcoming topics include:

- **18 February** - the History of Didcot - By David Taylor from the Didcot & District Archaeology & History Society.
- **18 March** - Shrunk Garden - By Timothy Walker - moving and making a small garden from scratch !
- **15 April** - Women in the Victorian Army - Dan Allen
- **20 May** - AGM

For additional information go to membership@didcotu3a.org. Looking forward to seeing you there !

Brian & Lynn Burscough - PR for Didcot & District u3a





An essential new reservoir for the South East

As we move into the Spring, our teams will be undertaking a range of **environmental surveys** to support the next steps in the **reservoir design**. This involves surveying the local **trees** and **ecology**. Additionally, we've started our **archaeological** assessments with oversight from **technical experts**, digging shallow **trenches** in nearby fields to explore any potential findings. These works are necessary to ensure we **document** and **preserve** anything of archaeological **significance** below the surface of the ground. All topsoil is being carefully **stored** and will be **replaced** once the surveys have been completed. You may notice our work from the **public footpaths**.

Our **clay compaction trial** at Hanney Road continues, and following the creation of the **borrow pit**, we are planning to **test** the clay in **March 2025**, when the weather is **drier**. For more details or questions, visit our website for updates: www.thames-sro.co.uk/sesro



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Cholsey Repair Café - 15th March

at the Cholsey Pavilion, 10am - 12.45pm. Skilled fixers can tackle electrical equipment, bicycles, tool & knife sharpening, repairs to clothing, light woodwork, toys, glueing, ultrasonic cleaning and more. No charge is made but donations are appreciated, to cover costs. www.cholseyrepaircafe.com



BBOWT - Sutton Courtenay Environmental Education Centre

For children and families

Family Event: Wild Stories and Mask Making

Tuesday 18 February 10-11:30am and 1:30-3pm

Disappear into a rabbit hole of imagination as you join in with live storytelling, then get creative. For families with children 4-11 years. Indoor session but the reserve will be open for picnics and play between 11:30am and 1:30pm. £10 per child.

Day camp: Winter Wildness

Wednesday 19 February 9:30am-3pm

A day camp for 8-12 year olds outside on the beautiful nature reserve. Activities include nature crafts like raft and shelter building, tool use and a campfire. £35 per child – drop off and collect at the end of the day.

7+ Workshops Birdbox Building

Thursday 20 February 10am and 11:30am

Come along and learn to use a hammer and nails to construct your own bird box from pre-cut wooden pieces. Suitable for age 7+ with an accompanying adult. No younger siblings please. £15 per box. Please see website for more details.

Young and Teen Rangers - Monthly Saturday clubs for young people aged 8-17 years who love wildlife

Check the website for dates / booking. £7 per child;

Nature Tots

Fun outdoor sessions on our beautiful nature reserve for 18 months to 4 years, Wed-Sat once a month. Check the website for dates, £7 per child.

For adults

Nature, Natter and Nibbles

A monthly session for adults of all ages.

1 Friday per month - Feb 7, Mar 14, April 11 - 10:30am-12noon

Come take a mindful stroll with the learning volunteers, noting seasonal changes and immersing yourself in nature. We finish with hot drinks, biscuits, cake and chat. £4.50, suitable for over 18s (babies in carriers welcome too!).

Crafting a Future we'd be Proud to Leave to Future Generations

Saturday 8 February 1:30-3:30pm

A community crafting session for adults and young people exploring current environmental issues, £10 per head.

Adult Memory Basket Weaving Workshop

Saturday 15 March 2025, 9:30am - 4:30pm

Learn to weave willow from the nature reserve, fabric scraps and memories into a beautiful, useful and unique basket. Go home with something to use and treasure. Tea and cake included, £50.

BOOKING IS ESSENTIAL FOR ALL SESSIONS!

For more information, more events and to book please head to our website: www.bbowt.org.uk/events

01235 862024 or sceec@bbowt.org.uk

**Sutton Courtenay Environmental Education Centre,
Sutton Courtenay Road, Didcot, Oxon, OX14 4TE**

Other than where stated and in reports of Parish Council matters, any opinions expressed are not those of the Parish Council. Items for the April issue should be sent by **15th March** 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
For appointments please email Clerk@HarwellParish.gov.uk

Parish notices can be found on the new noticeboard by the office at the Village Hall.

Parish Councillors

Mamta Bajre, Cath Convery, Anthony Dearlove, Mike Fox-Davies, Robert Hughes, Vaughn Humphries, Lucy Lacy, Paul Luper, Simon Peacock, Tracey Pearson (Chair).

District Councillors

Debra.Dewhurst@whitehorsedc.gov.uk
Hayleigh.Gascoigne@whitehorsedc.gov.uk
Campus Ward:

Sarah.James1@whitehorsedc.gov.uk

County Councillor:

Sally.Povolotsky@oxfordshire.gov.uk
07939 912997

MP: Olly Glover

House of Commons, London, SW1A 0AA
olly.glover.mp@parliament.uk

Harwell News edited by Alison Fautley,
print version distributed by Martin Ricketts.

The Harwellian Club

Valentine's Evening

Saturday Feb 15th
8pm
Live singer - Luke

Enjoy a special evening of food and music with your loved ones; whether partners, friends or family

Members £10 pp / Non members £11pp
Includes a classic or vegetarian platter

Pre booking only - purchase tickets from the bar

Priority given to members

love

First Steps BABY BANK

February Wish List

DESPERATE FOR CLOTHES AGED:

18 - 24 months - girl only
2-3 years - girl & boy

No other clothes needed this month. Thank you

Most in need of:

- Warm coats, hats and gloves
- Baby Wipes
- Sippy bottles - for toddlers (new)
- Plastic weaning cutlery (new)
- Stage 1 standard formula
- Nappies - Sizes 5, 6, 7 + 8
- Weaning bibs (plastic scoop bibs)
- Baby Flannels

Also needed this month:

- Nappy bags
- Baby top to toe wash
- Moses basket sheets
- Sleeping bags - aged 0 - 12 months
- Hooded baby towels
- Cosy toes for buggy
- Ladies shampoo & conditioner
- Nipple cream
- Baby Food - All ages 6 month +
- Baby Shampoo

Donations can be dropped to us at Didcot Baptist Church, Wantage Road, OX11 0BS
Tuesdays and Fridays 11am-1pm

We also have donation baskets in Sainsbury's (Orchard Centre store) and SOHA