



The Harwell News

harwellparish.gov.uk

Remembrance Sunday Parade - 9th November



On Sunday 9th November Harwell Village recognised **Remembrance** with a **Parade** along the Village High Street to the War Memorial where a Commemorative Service was held.

The Parade marched from Townsend to the War Memorial in the High Street, under the **impressive control** of our **new** Parade Marshal

Tim Hart of Harwell Royal British Legion. The parade included **representatives** from the Harwell Branch RBL, Harwell Parish Council, Western Valley Parish Council, the Vale of the White Horse District Council, and large groups from Didcot Army and Air Cadet Forces, Harwell Scouts and Guides. Other Harwell organisations also paraded including: the Bowls Club, Rugby Club, Gardening Club, Harwellian Club, Oxford Manor Lodge, the WI, and the Hart of Harwell.



The **attendance** was the **highest seen** for many years, encouraged by the good weather. The Service at the War Memorial was conducted by Curate Sasha Reeves and Deaconess Joan Impey. The laying of wreaths was led by Angus Horner, Deputy Lieutenant for Oxfordshire, with Dr Tony Hughes playing the Last Post and Reveille to signify the start and end of the two-minute silence.

A bucket collection for the **Poppy Appeal** was made by Hazel Benton and Paul Sedwards, raising **£173.62**. Paul Parlett raised further funds with a tray of Poppies and merchandise.



Following the service held on the High Street, the Parade marched to St Matthew's Church, where upon arrival the Standards formed a **Guard of Honour** at the entrance to the Church.

After the Church Service, the Deputy Lord-Lieutenant, and Harwell Parish Council Chair, joined by the RBL Branch President, Chair, and other RBL members, attended the **War Memorial** at the Commonwealth War Graves in Harwell Cemetery. The Guides, Scouts and RBL Standards formed a Guard of Honour. A short moment of reflection was held and a wreath was laid by the Branch President Reginald White. More photographs can be see here:

[Harwell RBL Branch Parades Facebook Page](#) [Simon Haycox Flickr Remembrance Sunday 2025](#)

Peter Cox, Harwell RBL Branch Secretary

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Bell Ringers News

As you read this the bells of St Matthew's are **out of action**. The clappers are undergoing **essential** maintenance. We are extremely grateful to the **Feast committee** for allocating us a **grant** to enable the work to be undertaken. We have **fingers-crossed** the work will be completed ahead of the **Christmas** ringing.

Over the summer we rang for **5 weddings**, including one of our ringers. There have been two successful **quarter peals** including Ben's first on the treble. Visitors have included the **Bradfield** ringing course and local **Brownies** visiting St Matthew's.

Just recently we rang for the funeral of **Jenny Bosley**, who had connections with Harwell tower through her husband Dougie and Father-in-law, who were both ringers here.

We are again planning to ring on **Boxing Day 10:30-12:00** and invite ringers and non-ringers to **join us**. There will be **refreshments** and an opportunity to **have a go!**

Philip Roberts



Refurbished adjustable staples—similar to the work being done on St Matthew's bells. The staples hold the clappers in place.



Harwell Labs Lawn Tennis Club



The Harwell Labs Lawn Tennis Club is located on the **Harwell Campus** and have **3 courts**. They play in the Newbury and District Lawn Tennis

Association (NDLTA) Summer League, running 2 Men's and a Ladies team. Although a small club, coaching is available and employees can be seen playing during their lunch time and after work.

A **Triple Crown** was achieved this year as the Harwell Labs Men's A were crowned **Division One Champions** of the NDLTA for the **third** consecutive season. Their previous success was back in 1968.

Kevin Davies

Harwell Feast– Grants

Following a **successful** Harwell Feast, the organising committee were delighted to fulfil **most** of the requests for funding.

Among those organisations receiving grants were Harwell Community café, the Bowls Club, Harwell Bellringers, Little Pippins Pre School and the Gardeners Club.

Planning for the **2026 Harwell Feast** is underway and the committee are hoping for another prosperous year.

Pat Cooke



Harwell Feast Village Quiz 2025

13 teams gathered in the Cherry Hall on a late November evening to take part in the annual Feast quiz event. A new twist this year was the **'wipe out'** round where teams lost all their marks on this round if there was **one** incorrect answer. Among the subjects contested were Horses, All things French and Sweets & Chocolates.

The winning team were, once again, **Triple A** (last year's winners - below left with Tim Hart) with **Vin Rouge** in second place (below middle) and **Jack and the Girls** winning the wonderful **wooden spoon** (below right). Good feedback was received after the event and all proceeds go towards the **total funding** made from the Feast.



Tuesday 11th November, Armistice Day

A **short commemoration** was held at the High Street War Memorial on Tuesday 11th November at 11:00. The attendance was high - about 40 people - including pupils and staff of Harwell School, and members of the Harwell Branch RBL.

Branch President Reginald White conducted the Ceremony and recited the **Exhortation** and **Kohima Epitaph**. The Last Post and Reveille were sounded by Dr. Tony Hughes and the Two Minutes Silence was observed. The Branch President thanked all present for their attendance. Traffic marshals for both Commemorations were provided by the Parish Council.

Photographs can be found on the Branch Facebook page, and Branch Treasurer's Flickr account, here: [Simon Haycox Flickr Tuesday 11th November 2025](#).

Harwell Parish Council and Harwell Branch RBL thank all who contributed to the Commemorations.

Peter Cox, Harwell RBL Branch Secretary



Sustainable Harwell - Holloway Hedgerow planting weekend 17th & 18th Jan



Sustainable Harwell volunteers are planning to plant another section of **new hedgerow** along the Holloway after Christmas. On the **weekend of Sat 17th Jan** a group of us will be planting **150 metres** of whips to extend this new **wildlife** corridor.

Everyone is welcome, so if you would like to help with this community project, come and join our merry band.

Email sustainable@harwellvillage.uk and we will send you more **details** about what's involved. Hope you can make it!

Giles Barwell, Sustainable Harwell



Local government reorganisation and devolution

On 16 December 2024, the government published a [white paper](#) on a national programme of devolution and reform to local government, aimed at making local government simpler, clearer & more efficient. To replace the six councils that have operated the county since 1974, three interim proposals were submitted to government in March 2025. During November, scrutiny committees, cabinets, councils and executives across all Oxfordshire councils were asked to debate and approve the proposals and submit them again by 28 November 2025. The three proposals developed for Oxfordshire are:

1. **A single unitary council** - proposed by Oxford County Council, where all council services would come together into a single council. Read about their proposal here: www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/council/local-government-reorganisation-and-devolution/one-oxfordshire

2. **Two unitary councils:**

- Oxford and Shires Council created from the existing district councils of Cherwell, Oxford City and West Oxfordshire.
- Ridgeway Council created from the existing district councils of South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse and the unitary council of West Berkshire.

This option is supported by five of the existing district councils, including VWHDC - read more about this option on p5 and/or here: www.twocouncils.org/home

3. **Three unitary councils:**

- Greater Oxford Council – covering Oxford and its green belt
- Northern Oxfordshire Council – covering most of the existing Cherwell and West Oxfordshire districts.
- Ridgeway Council

This option is proposed by Oxfordshire City Council and you can read more about this option here: greateroxford.org/our-proposal/



What happens next ?

Timings will be confirmed by government, but a **statutory consultation** will likely take place in **early 2026**, giving residents, businesses and stakeholders the opportunity to **share their views** on all the proposals for Oxfordshire **before** any decisions are made.

The government is expected to announce its decision in **early summer 2026**.

We expect that, in May 2027, **elections** will take place for a shadow authority (or authorities) – a temporary governing body established during the transition period to a new council.

A new council(s) will **potentially** come into effect on 1 April 2028.

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Harwell Parish Council Update



Forward Plan 2025–2030: A Shared Direction for Harwell

The Parish Council has adopted its first five-year Forward Plan, which sets out how we will **invest** in our facilities, **support** community wellbeing and **protect** Harwell's heritage and natural environment in the years ahead. The

plan pulls together **priorities** such as the Pump Track+, Active Ageing initiatives, biodiversity improvements, heritage signage, and clearer governance and financial planning.

This structured approach aims to keep decision-making **transparent**, focused, and aligned with the needs of the whole parish. A final approval vote is expected at the **December** Council meeting.

Neighbourhood Development Plan – Should Harwell Create One?

At the November meeting, councillors agreed to begin the first step of the process: submitting an **application** to the Vale of White Horse District Council to designate the Neighbourhood Plan Area. This does **not** commit the parish to completing a full Neighbourhood Plan (NP). Instead, it opens the door to early **engagement** with residents before any final commitment is made.

A Neighbourhood Plan is a **community-led** planning document with statutory weight. It cannot block development, but it can **shape** how development happens - design, layout, green space, heritage, housing mix, and movement around the parish - and it can **increase** the parish's share of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) from 15% to 25%.

Why is this being considered now?

Harwell is facing unusually **rapid** and **interconnected** change, including:

- The Crown Estate's purchase of 221 acres east of the Campus (much within the parish)
- The Science and Innovation Campus's expansion (4 million sq ft of new R&D space)
- Planned investment and renewal in Westfield
- Uncertainty over the Vale & South Joint Local Plan
- Wider national planning reform

Potential advantages of an NP

(Local, practical benefits for Harwell)

- Gives the community a formal policy **voice** in shaping design, landscape, biodiversity, and infrastructure.
- Lets Harwell gather its own **evidence** on housing need, landscape character, heritage and green corridors.
- Helps ensure that change "happens **with** the community, not to the community."
- Increases CIL to **25%**, supporting local projects.
- Builds community **cohesion** and **transparency** through structured engagement.



Potential challenges

(Equally important for residents to be aware of)

- Requires **time** (12–18 months) and **budget** (£18k–£24k).
- Raises sensitive land issues **early**.
- **Cannot** stop strategic development allocated by the Vale.
- Needs **sustained** involvement from volunteers & the Clerk Team.
- Must be reviewed **every** five years.

What happens next?

Before committing to the full process, the Parish Council wants to **understand** residents' views. A community questionnaire will be launched shortly, but residents are warmly invited to **share** early thoughts - positive or negative - by emailing clerk@harwellparish.gov.uk.

Remembrance Sunday and Armistice Day: Thank You

Thank you to everyone who took part in Harwell's Remembrance commemorations, and particularly to the Royal British Legion for their leadership. There has been a lot of **positive** feedback and the events show Harwell's strong **commitment** to remember those individuals and animals who have sacrificed their lives to protect our country.

Budget 2026–27: Have Your Say

Work is now **underway** to prepare next year's budget, which will **shape** local services, maintenance, and priority projects. A **special meeting** on **13 January 2026** will focus solely on the budget and precept. A more "regular" **Council meeting** will follow on **20 January 2026**. Residents are encouraged to **share** suggestions or priorities with the Clerk Team.

Christmas Tree Recycling 2026



Vale of White Horse District Council will **collect** real Christmas trees from Harwell on Friday 16 January 2026. If you would like to recycle your tree, please bring it to the **corner of the**

Harwellian Car Park (left side of the entrance) **by Thursday 15 January 2026**. Trees taller than 6ft should be **cut** into smaller sections before being left.

A **reminder** will be shared on Facebook and on the Council website in the New Year.

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 and we will get back to you as soon as we can. *Your Clerk Team: Bryan Urbick, Clerk & RFO - and Louise Edmonds, Deputy Clerk & RFO.*



December 2025 Update from Vale of White Horse District Councillors, Cllr Hayleigh Gascoigne and Cllr Debra Dewhurst

Hello from Hayleigh and Debra



Sunday 9th November was **Remembrance Sunday**, and like every year, we honoured to be laying a **wreath** of Remembrance on behalf of the Vale of White Horse District Council. Each year, we **parade** down the High Street in Harwell Village alongside **veterans**, cadets, parish councillors and other local groups.

National Government's plans to **reorganise local government** still

dominates the discussion at the council, and the work of the officers. By the end of November, we will, as a council, have submitted a **proposal** to the Government for their consideration. To be clear, this will be **their** decision – and they have, in the case of Oxfordshire, **three** submissions to look at. The **Oxfordshire unitary***, the **Greater Oxford model*** and the one which the Vale is putting forward alongside four other councils; Cherwell, West Ox, South Ox and West Berkshire. The proposal has the potential to **save** the most money of all the options – with possible savings reaching **£59.8m** a year. It would create authorities that are **big** enough to be efficient, stable and reliable, but **local** enough to care and be responsive to communities.

The proposal would create **two councils** covering the following geographical areas:

- **Oxford and Shires Council** would comprise all of the existing district areas of Cherwell, Oxford City and West Oxfordshire.
- **Ridgeway Council** would be made up of the whole of West Berkshire Council's area and all of the existing district areas of South Oxfordshire and the Vale of White Horse.

The proposal has been designed to meet the **criteria** set out by the government earlier this year. The criteria called for **all** proposals to be for councils that serve populations of around 500,000, are **financially** stable, deliver **high-quality services**, are **responsive** to the needs of communities, and support positive

growth across the region. Residents can read the **full proposal** or an **abridged** version on the website <http://twocouncils.org>.

In the last update, we explained the current position with the **Joint Local Plan** – which is still at the **examination** stage, though the Planning Inspectorate asked us to **withdraw** it. The Inspectors said the councils had failed in a “duty to co-operate” with Oxford City Council on the single issue of **how many homes** South and Vale should plan in their districts to help Oxford with its unmet needs. The councils wrote back to the Inspectors setting out **concerns** they had with the Inspectors' recommendation.



The latest development is that a few days later Matthew Pennycook MP, Minister of State for Housing and Planning has written to the Planning Inspectorate, the organisation that oversees all Planning Inspectors, to request that they “**be proportionate**” in how they apply the guidelines related to the duty to co-operate, and to consider the **context**. The Minister's letter also welcomed Inspectors providing more opportunities during the examination process for councils to **clarify** how they've met the duty to co-operate.

Now the two councils have written to the Inspectors again requesting that they **reconsider** their initial conclusions in light of the Minister's letter, along with **legal** points the councils have raised, and Oxford's **latest** published housing figures – which show that we have already planned **enough** to cover the unmet need.

As a reminder, council meetings are held in **public** and if you wish to address council or committee, you can contact Democratic Services.

To keep up to date with our activities and general council news please also **follow us** on FaceBook:

www.facebook.com/CllrHayleigh & www.facebook.com/Debra4BlewburyAndHarwell

Or email us: hayleigh.gascoigne@whitehorsedc.gov.uk and debra.dewhurst@whitehorsedc.gov.uk

**Ed: see page 3 for more information on the other options*

continue to use water **wisely** over the winter months so water resources in our region continue to **recharge** ready for spring and summer next year.”

South East Strategic Reservoir Option (SESRO)

Our Statutory Consultation is **open**. We're proposing a new **reservoir** in Oxfordshire, near Abingdon, to supply water to **15 million people** across the South East, including customers of **Thames Water**, Affinity Water and Southern Water.

Our statutory consultation runs for **11 weeks** from **28 October 2025** to **11.59pm on 13 January 2026**, and we invite you to have **your say** on our proposals.

The **feedback** gathered during our consultation will inform our Development Consent Order (DCO) application, which we expect to submit to the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs in **Autumn 2026**.

For more information visit thames-sro.co.uk/sesro/statcon2025.



Thames Water Update

End of the Hosepipe Ban

We're pleased to announce that the hosepipe ban, introduced in July to help protect our rivers and make sure there's enough water to go round after prolonged dry weather, **has been lifted** with immediate effect. Your **continued** careful use of water has helped make a real **difference**. Following the above average rainfall we've seen since October, our storage position has **recovered** well. Farmoor reservoir is now **nearly full** and the aquifers in the Cotswold region are at **normal** levels for the time of year. This means the risk of drought has now **greatly reduced**.

Nevil Muncaster, Strategic Water Resources Director at Thames Water, said: “We'd like to say a big **thank you** to our customers for their support in helping to protect water supplies over the past few months. We're encouraging all our customers



A Message from Olly Glover, MP for Didcot and Wantage

This month has been **incredibly busy**, full of constituency engagements alongside exciting activities in Parliament.

In Parliament, I secured a commitment from the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care to help **unblock** progress on the **GP surgery** in **Great Western Park**. At Prime Minister's Questions, I **challenged** the Prime Minister on the Government's decision to **delay** SEND reforms until 2026, asking what he has to say to parents and education staff who are deeply **worried** by these delays. I also led a debate on the proposed **cuts** to funding for the International Baccalaureate (IB) programme - an issue that affects many families at **Europa School** - and spoke on the need to **improve** statutory **maternity** and **paternity pay**.

I have also been busy in my new role as **Transport Spokesperson** - speaking in Westminster Hall debates on **sustainable aviation** and **headlight glare**, and pressing the Secretary of State for Transport on the environmental impact of the proposed **third runway** at Heathrow.

It is always a pleasure to meet constituents in Parliament. Recently, I've met with residents **campaigning** to end cages for farmed animals, and with local **pharmacists** attending the launch of the new Shot in the Arm vaccine campaign.

Back in the constituency, I've held **surgeries** in Wantage and Didcot and met residents on the **doorstep** in East and West Challow. I joined members of CulBug (the Culham Bicycle User

Group) for a **cycle** trip and opened the new **visitor centre** at Culham Campus - planting a tree and recognising **60 years** of remarkable work at the site. I also had the pleasure of visiting Fitzwaryn Special School and Wantage Primary Academy to see **Bikeability** training in action alongside the Local Transport Minister, Lilian Greenwood.

It was wonderful to attend SOFEA's "**Donate What You Can**" community meal in Didcot, where all proceeds support the charity's **Nourish and Flourish** programme. I also visited the Thames Travel bus depot in Didcot and made further progress on improving the **Orchard Centre**, where parking is now **free after 7pm** every day. Lastly, it was a privilege to lay a **wreath** in both Wallingford and Didcot at **Remembrance** day events, alongside laying a wreath on the **Poppy Train** at Didcot Railway Station. Lest we forget.

As always, if there is **anything** you feel I can help you with, please do not hesitate to contact me and my team at olly.glover.mp@parliament.uk, or by leaving a voice message on **0207 219 7657**.

Olly.



Preventing fly-tipping and keeping our pubs open

Matthew Barber
Your voice in
Thames Valley

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

I wrote about **fly-tipping** some months ago, so I will not reiterate everything here, nevertheless the colossal waste dump at **Kidlington** has brought the issue to the fore again.

We know that in this case the Environment Agency has been far **too slow** to act. Only taking action **months after** it was reported to them and only really when there was national **media** interest. Although the Environment Agency is the body responsible, Thames Valley Police has assisted with making one **arrest** (so far) in the case.

This is at the **extreme** end of the scale of course, but I have raised the **concern** that changes to our own local recycling centre by Oxfordshire County Council **significantly** increases the risk of fly-tipping. From January 2026 you will have to **book** in advance to use the tip, as well as new **charges** and **restrictions** being imposed. This is not just an inconvenience for residents but risks pushing people into the arms of **illegal** waste carriers. Remember fly-tipping is a **crime** and if you pay an unlicensed

waste carrier who goes in to dump your waste, you could be held **liable**!

You can check at: <https://environment.data.gov.uk/public-register/view/search-waste-carriers-brokers>.

On an entirely different subject, many of our **local pubs** are really feeling the **pressure** right now. Behind the headlines of the budget there are real **family** businesses. Most acute at the moment is the change in **business rates** but this comes on top of the pressures of additional **duty**, National Insurance, **minimum wage** and VAT.

One publican I spoke to is seeing an increase in their rateable value of **£22,400**. Another local business is seeing their rateable value nearly **double** from £62,500 to £120,000 overnight!

Pubs are a **vital** part of our community. If they close, many may never reopen. Add your voice to our campaign at saveourpubs.org and make sure you get out and **support** your local pub!

Oxfordshire ageUK 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**.

Harwell WI

Look at the amazing **Poppy Carpet of Remembrance** (right) placed in the Church after the service on **9th November** at the War Memorial. The idea was the brainchild of a **WI member**, who co-ordinated the hard- working people of Harwell village, who knitted, crocheted and created poppies of all kinds, then the **mammoth** task of bringing it all together to create a **magnificent** carpet of poppies.

We have some very **interesting** topics for the next few months. The days have become shorter and the evenings longer therefore a **perfect** time to come along to Harwell Village Hall and have a taster of what we are all about.

Below are what you can look forward to **hearing** and joining in with for the next few months:

- **Dec 10th:** Christmas Party for Members only
- 2026**
- **Jan 14th:** Extend Fitness, Balance and Brain - start the New Year with a fresh look at fitness
- **Feb 11th:** Medicinal Poisonous Plants - find out more about the eccentric characters involved
- **Mar 11th:** Annual Meeting

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 organized 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*.

A Very Happy Christmas to you all and a Peaceful New Year!

Lesley Muddiman



Pic: Adrian Bollon

GARD Update on the proposed reservoir at Steventon

What's happening now?

Consultation response to Thames Water's submission for Planning Consent (Development Consent Order, DCO).

Dates: DCO Consultation Nov 2025 – Jan 2026. DCO application submitted – late 2026

New facts that have emerged

Costs have **trebled**, from £2.2 to £7+ billion (since the Rapid Gate 3 submission). Land: Thames Water now requires **38km² of land** to meet biodiversity/flood-mitigation needs, to relocate solar farms and to control land along every watercourse. See the red-line map on our [website](#). Questions about public access due to **security** and water **quality** issues remain **unanswered**. Thames Water will be responsible for rewilding acres of land that doesn't add to nature but replaces what is lost.

Do you know these facts?

The proposed reservoir will hold **150 million cubic metres of water**, most of it **above** ground level - 11 times the volume of Farmoor. All costs will fall on Thames Water, Affinity Water and Southern Water billpayers. Thames Water has not yet published **safety analyses** about flooding or dam breach. The River Thames has not enough settled water to fill Farmoor - can Thames Water fill a mega-reservoir?

Flooding and design

Clay compaction trials were hampered by groundwater conditions. The results are **not disclosed**. The water table will rise 1 metre because of the reservoir effect on waterways. Groundwater flooding requires a full perimeter underground water control drain. Groundwater mitigation is not yet modelled/proven. Local villages already have a water table close to ground level. Emergency discharge plans are **incomplete**. No report has been published on the effect on the River Thames of a massive **release** of water. Emergency discharge must be tested every year.

Acceptable alternatives

Thames Water continues to develop the Severn Thames Transfer (STT) plan, which would be quicker, cheaper, more drought resilient and ecologically **sustainable**. STT would add to an already developing national water grid. A smaller reservoir sited off the Zone 3 flood plain would **not** threaten communities in the same way, nor would it destroy the flood plain. Works start date – 2029. Works completion extended date - 2043. 3 years after the target in-service date = 15 years of local **chaos**.

ACTION: Join GARD and help gard.secretary@btinternet.com. Write to your MP and Councillors.

[Group Against Reservoir Development / GARD](#)



December News – The Importance of Soil

Seasonal Spotlight

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

The Yellow Wagtail Partnership



Yellow Wagtail on Hedge
(c) Mike Pollard

We wanted to bring a bit of **colour** to this month by mentioning one of our main projects - the Yellow Wagtail Partnership. The Yellow Wagtail is not a species one would think about at this time of year, as by now they will be back in the wintering grounds in sunny **West Africa**. Wild Oxfordshire have partnered with Earth Trust and

Church Farm Partnership and Lower Farm to **collectively** manage four-miles of **wet grassland** along the River Thames from Clifton Hampden to Shillingford. The aim of the project is to **sustainably** manage these grasslands for the benefit of wildlife including the Yellow Wagtail, but also in a way that is **economically beneficial** for the partnering businesses. However, this project is not just about the Yellow Wagtail, we want to increase the plant and insect **diversity** and **abundance** as well. This in turn will increase the amount of food available for **many** species of bird including House Martins, Swifts, Snipe and Lapwings. Check out our website for more information.

<https://www.wildoxfordshire.org.uk/projects/yellow-wagtail>

Tips for looking after wildlife this winter:

- **Always move** your burn piles before you light them! The best habitat piles are usually created on nature reserves and to the untrained eye, these look a lot like burn piles. The wildlife thinks so too and so many creatures use burn piles to **sleep** in, including **hedgehogs**, frogs, **voles**, and lizards. To avoid burning hibernating wildlife, you must move burn piles **before lighting** them.
- **Crack ice** on your bird baths, water dishes and ponds so that our winter wildlife can still drink. Who knows which birds you might see enjoying a sip.
- **Leave area(s)** of your garden **undisturbed** to allow hibernating wildlife to sleep in **peace** and unharmed. Some invertebrates hibernate in hollow stems of grassland and scrub species such as **cow parsley** and other umbellifers. Avoid cutting these as they might be home to sleeping **beetles**, bees, **spiders** or even ladybirds.
- **Log piles** are well sought over for both people and wildlife at this time of year. If you can, try to leave a pile outside **untouched** to allow hedgehogs and other hibernating wildlife to sleep in it over winter.

- If you find a **sick** or **injured** **hedgehog** or other wild animal, please call

Twiggywinkles Wildlife Hospital on **01844 292292**

To find out more about Wildlife friendly gardening - head over to the Wild Oxfordshire website at www.wildoxfordshire.org.uk and have a look in guidance.

World Soil Day

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

Sophie Cunningham, Wild Oxfordshire Yellow Wagtail Partnership Officer <https://www.wildoxfordshire.org.uk/>

COMMUNITY COFFEE MORNINGS

Tuesdays 11am at The White Hart
1st Thursday of the month 10.30am at
St Matthew's Church
Fridays 11am at The Harwellian
All welcome - just turn up!



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1st Harwell Scouts Update

A very big **thank you** to everyone who turned out to enjoy the **Community Fireworks** in November and those behind the scenes who made it happen, it was a **fantastic** event this year and the **funds** raised are being put to good use in closing the **appeal** for our **van** to transport kit to Scouting events and the general **upkeep** of our extensive **facilities**. It is always pleasing to see how **engaged** and enthusiastic our young people are, particularly Scouts and Explorers, even under conditions of precipitation and **cold**.

Harwell Explorers, along with our new Network Unit (18-24s) have got **big plans** for 2026! After a brilliant week last summer at Kernow Jamboree in Cornwall, this year we have our sights set on something **further** afield! We're going to be making our way to the **World Scout Centre**, Kandersteg, in the Swiss Mountains! Where the young people will have the chance to take part in activities with Scouts from all over the world and head into the Bernese **Alps** Mountain Range for some adventures. We'll be stopping on our way to soak up some **culture** and local environment in Luxembourg, Germany, France, and Belgium.

To make this happen we need to raise **further** funds, and so have got some **events** lined up for the next 9 months. Please keep your eyes peeled for more details coming soon!

Christmas Trail – Throughout December

Trail maps will be available to buy **online**, at **Bob's Butchers**, and

the **Harwellian** from the beginning of December.

Santa Sleigh – Friday 19th December

The big man himself will be touring around Harwell from **4:30pm**.

Swiss Cultural Evening – Saturday 24th January

Join us to **find out more** about the World Scout Centre, Kandersteg, and enjoy a cosy evening of Fondue & Apple Strudel, in your local Mountain hut (the **Church Hall**).

Ceilidh – Saturday 28th March

Get out those **dancing** shoes for an evening of fun in the **Village Hall** (Dinner included).

Sponsored Challenge Hike – July

Harwell Explorers and Network will be getting **sponsored** to complete a challenging hike over **2 days** circling our Scout District. Our aim is to walk the distance from Harwell to Kandersteg between everyone taking part!

Adult Help

We currently have a need for further **adult volunteers** to help with the Beaver (6-8) and Scout (10.5-14) Sections. If anyone is able to lend us a couple of hours of their time on the weeks they are available I'd be very grateful to hear from you.

Chris Bee, Group Lead Volunteer

1st Harwell Scout Group glv@harwellscouts.org.uk



Harwell Gardeners' Club

We meet on the **1st Monday of the month** at **7.30pm** in **St Matthew's Church**.

Membership is **£15 per year** or **£3** per session for **occasional** visits. Your first visit is **free**. Coming up...

- **Monday 5th January** - 'Can Gardening Claim To Be A Fine Art ?' by Timothy Walker
Competition : Photo - Oxfordshire In Winter
- **Monday 2nd February** - 'Beautiful Kashmir' by Anthony Powell
Competition : Snowdrops

Members of Harwell Gardeners' Club carry out lots of **community gardening** including The War Memorial, Harwell School Gardening Club, Didcot Hospital Garden and new for 2025 was **The Sunflower Club** - a gardening club for **children** on the allotments. This club has had an **exciting** first year and we are grateful to The Parish Council for their support. We are now closed **until March**.



Janice Markey, Chairman
[Harwell Gardeners' Club](#)



Big Ginger Tom Music - Gig Review



It's been a **phenomenal** couple of months since our last gig review with **four** fantastic gigs, three of which were **sold out**!

Katherine Priddy with support from Roswell Road on 17th October 2025 - SOLD OUT

First up, **Roswell Road** - duo Jasmine Watkiss and Zoë Wren - a



female Simon & Garfunkel came to mind, especially when listening to their **wonderful harmonies** on 'Arabella' and 'End of the Line'.

They are currently recording an album with the help of The

Dunwells. A co-write with the aforementioned, 'Holy Mountain', was another strong song full of harmony. The audience loved them and rightly so, as Roswell Road are a delight to listen to live and we thoroughly recommend them if you haven't seen them yet!

Katherine Priddy was joined on guitar and vocals by George **Boomsma**, playing two forty five minute sets - the first live show she had done in awhile.

Katherine's hallmark are her vocals which sound quiet, yet pack a powerful emotive punch - 'First House on the Left' being a prime example, which sounded as good live as it does on the album. Other highlights (and let's be honest, the whole set was!) included 'A Boat on the River', 'Northern Sunrise' and a song written about her dad, 'Father of Two'.

Katherine releases her third album, 'These Frightening Machines', on March 6, with a UK tour to follow in April.

Edwina Hayes on 1st November 2025



Unfortunately our opening act, Barton Hartshorn, was still recovering from a virus, so couldn't make it, but very graciously Edwina agreed to do **two longer sets** and was on stage for about 2 hours in all.

Following her usual format, the first set she played songs that held dear **memories** for her, each one introduced by a witty **anecdote** about her family, her early life starting out as a performer or her times in

Nashville. She included a few **covers** as well, such as Leonard Cohen's 'Famous Blue Raincoat' and a couple of Bob Dylan songs.

The second set comprised of songs **requested** by the audience during the break, this of course induced 'Waiting for the guy to die', which was then juxtaposed with Eric Bogle's song 'And the band played Waltzing Matilda'. For her **encore** she delivered a beautiful rendition of Randy Newman's 'Feels Like Home'.

Ninebarrow on 21st November 2025 - SOLD OUT

Starting off with one of their **signature** songs 'Walk With Me', Ninebarrow (Jon Whitley and Jay LaBouchardiere) soon hit their **stride** with their version of Bob Dylan's 'I Will Be Released' via the Nina Simone version, as this was a jazzed up

version. The duo's recently released 'The Hour of the Blackbird' album saw them recording some of their songs with two **community choirs**. Not an easy thing to replicate live, however, with a bit of modern wizardry (a laptop!) they sang along to the choral backing on 'Hey John Barleycorn' which was great to hear performed live.

The second set began with their version of the Christy Moore classic 'Ride On' (written by Jimmy MacCarthy) - Jay and Jon's vocals complemented each other perfectly on this song and 'Names in the Sky'. Ninebarrow don't really do **political** songs, however, in these strange times their song 'Under the Fence', based on the Calais refugee camps, was very moving.

Rusty Shackle with support from Craig Joiner on 5th December 2025 - SOLD OUT

Craig Joiner was back in Harwell for the **fourth** time and performed six **great** songs from his latest album and a new track, which will be on his next album. His delivery of songs such as 'Lark and Grey' and 'Old Will' left the audience **spellbound**. He finished with 'The Wedding Day of Eliza May' and left the stage to **rapturous** applause.



Rusty Shackle were of course **immense** opening the first set



with 'Late Night Living' and playing favourites such as 'Lanterns',

'Moving On' and 'Down to the Valley', as well as **three** songs that will be on the new album - 'Unshakeable', 'Your Arrows' and 'Riders of the Purple Sage'. They finished the first set with their cover of 'The Bones'.

The dancing started **early** this year with some the audience starting 3 songs from the end of the first set. The second set saw more dancing to songs such as 'The Devils's Pulpit', 'Sam Hall', 'Coming Home', 'Newport Rising', 'Roie Lee' and of course '3AM'.

Their encore was 'Praise You' and it was heartily joined in with by all. It was a **great end** to the evening and to the year.

We look forward to seeing you all back in Harwell in 2026.

Thanks to Jason Ritchie for the reviews for Katherine Priddy and Ninebarrow - more here: biggingertommusic.co.uk/past-events

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>

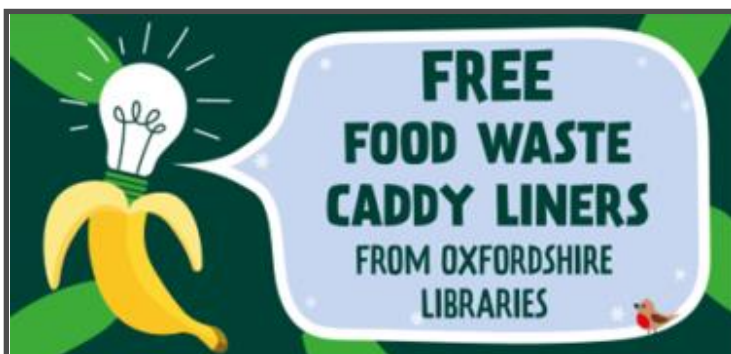
Improving our Fire & Rescue services

Oxfordshire county council would like your **feedback** on their proposals to **improve** Oxfordshire's Fire & Rescue services. They aim to:

- **Match resources to risk**, based on an understanding of where incidents are most likely to happen.
- **Improve community safety**, by reshaping & enhancing their prevention and protection work, to meet the changing needs of Oxfordshire's communities.
- **Futureproof the service** by reviewing how it operates, to help make informed decisions to ensure long-term sustainability and resilience.

**HAVE
YOUR SAY**

Visit letstalk.oxfordshire.gov.uk to learn more and submit your feedback by 20th January 2026.



To help you recycle your food waste over the festive period, you can pick up a **free roll of food waste caddy liners** from any Oxfordshire library in December (while stocks last).



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The Orchard Film Club

December 2025 Update

We apologise for the short notice of cancellation of our November film, The Penguin Lessons. In light of the police investigation into the allegations against the author (and main character of the film) this was the right thing to do.

Our next film is on Friday 12th December and is “**Promising Young Woman**” starring Carey Mulligan as Cassie, a woman

Orchard Film Club

Friday 12th December 2025

in The Orchard Hall, Harwell Village Hall

Film showing at 7.30pm Doors and Bar open from 7pm
Tickets £6 per adult, £3 for under-17s, available from Bob's Butchers and on the door

haunted by her past. After her best friend Nina was raped and subsequently took her own life when her assailant was not held accountable, Cassie leads a **double life**. By day, she works at a coffee shop, but by night, she pretends to be drunk at bars to expose and confront men who attempt to take advantage of vulnerable women.

Upcoming films:

- Friday 9th January 2026 - The Roses (15)



Orchard Film Club

Friday 9th January 2026

in The Orchard Hall, Harwell Village Hall

Film showing at 7.30pm Doors and Bar open from 7pm
Tickets £6 per adult, £3 for under-17s, available from Bob's Butchers and on the door

- Friday 6th February - title to be announced
- Friday 6th March - 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 (adults) & £3 (children) and available in advance from **Bob's Butchers** in the High Street, and on the **door**. See you soon and **Merry Christmas!**
Alison, Martin and Janice.

HARWELL ARTS AND CRAFT GROUP

COME AND JOIN US

The Harwellian on Thursday mornings 9.30am to 12 noon
Walk in any time, come when you like

£2 per session, the first week is free

Tea and coffee is provided, open all year round (except Christmas)
Any craft, learn a new skill from other members and occasional demonstrations. For further information, contact
heather.stevens@btinternet.com

Youth Theatre Update

Now the academic year is well under way, Gobo is excited to have

announced its **annual show** and be gearing up for **auditions!** This year we will be performing “**Mirror Image**” in the village hall over the first weekend in **July**. “Mirror



Image” is a fractured fairy tale where a few of the minor characters from well-known stories decide they’re **fed-up** with being in the background and want to become **rulers** and heroes! They break through a **portal** into the reality of high school and

discover things are quite **different** there! There’s plenty of opportunity for loads of juicy roles for our young people to play and we’re looking forward to starting rehearsals in **January!**

If you didn’t know the village had a youth theatre, here are the details:



“Dreamland” 2025

Saturday mornings in Harwell Village Hall from 10am-12:30pm (11:30am-1pm for younguns), and fees are £234/term (£138), 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 or are a young carer 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@gobotheatre.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.gobotheatre.co.uk/>

Harwell Parish History Group - December 2025

Talks

As I write, we await the November talk by Lois Glithero, trained at the Kelvin Centre for **Textile Conservation**, Glasgow University. In October, Professor Katherine Watson delivered to a **very large audience** an expert and interesting talk on **forensic medicine** and forensic science. Grateful thanks to those who helped out with the 20 minute technical hitch!

The next **mini-magazine** will be out towards the **end of January**.

The **Spring 2026 programme** :

- **March 18th** - Joseph Rogers on **History of Tithe Barns**, with local examples;
- **April 15th** - Jane Card on **The White Hart, emblem of Richard II**;
- **May 20th** - Catherine Sampson on **Berkshire and, South Oxon churches: hidden gems & stories**.

Talks are always in the **Cherry Hall** of the Village Hall, starting at **7.30p.m.**

Father Christmas and Narnia - and wardrobes

October 16th saw the **75th anniversary** of the publication of *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe* by C.S. Lewis (1898-1963). In the story, the four Pevensie children are **evacuees** from London to the countryside. Through the wardrobe they reach **Narnia**, where the **White Witch** has made winter permanent: "*Always winter and never Christmas; think of that!*". **Father Christmas**



The Ghost of Christmas Present, from Dickens's A Christmas Carol. Note he wears green, not red.

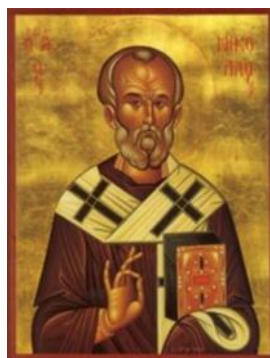
appears roughly half way through the book, a sign that the witch's power is **weakening**. He is described conventionally (red robe, white beard, with reindeer) but he is both **glad and solemn**. He hands out serious presents for **fighting** the witch: a healing cordial, weapons, and a horn which will summon help. He also distributes **festive food** throughout Narnia, including plum (i.e. Christmas) pudding.

Father Christmas's appearance is a **surprise**. Up to that point, the Narnians have been **talking animals**, very many figures from Classical

mythology (fauns, centaurs, dryads) and folklore (dwarves). "Narnia" was the **Roman** name for the town Narni, in Umbria.

When a child, Lewis saw the name in a Latin Atlas, liked the sound and **underlined** it. His generation and class started learning Latin early! (He later gained first class honours degrees in Classics, then English Literature.) The Chronicles of Narnia are infused with Christian theology *as interpreted in Lewis's time*; a theological friend once disparagingly described the books to me as "*the New Testament re-written for talking animals*". But to people his Narnia, Lewis took an **eclectic**, rich mix of characters. The hero of the books (a Christ symbol) is the lion "*Aslan*" – the **Turkish** word for "lion".

Interestingly, Father Christmas derives ultimately from **St. Nicholas of Myra**, also from Turkey. When his remains were



Icon of St. Nicholas of Myra/ Bari

stolen by Italian merchants for their new church, he became **St. Nicholas of Bari**. He is the patron saint of children, pawnbrokers, sailors, brewers, the unmarried and more. Dutch emigrants took their name, **Sint Nikolaas**, to the U.S.A. The name was contracted to "*Santa Claus*".

Malcolm and I possibly saw **the wardrobe**. Lewis's house, The Kilns in Headington, was bought by the acclaimed agricultural historian Dr. Joan Thirsk, F.B.A., and her husband.

Joan showed us the **wardrobe**, left in the house when the Thirsks bought it, because its size had made it **impossible** to remove through the hall for auction in 1973. (The house had been remodelled in the 1940s.) Unfortunately, our memories of it are **vague**.

But there have been "*wardrobe wars*", and much confusion. There are

TWO "*original*" wardrobes. One made by C.S. Lewis's grandfather, and auctioned in 1973, is now in California. At the Wade Centre, Illinois, is the one from The Kilns, thought to resemble **more closely** the one described in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*.



The wardrobe in the Wade Centre



The Dutch Sinterklaas – dressed as a bishop. His feast day is December 6th.

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year from The Harwell Parish History Group.

JMC



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



There's something for **everyone** in our churches over **Christmas**. What's your favourite? We have **carol services** that trace the story of Christmas, a chance to decorate the church **Christmas trees**, the magic of **crib** services, **bells** ringing out in celebration and, of course, **midnight** and **morning** services that usher in **Christmas Day**. What do **you** look forward to every year? What will you put in your calendar this year?

What's coming up during December 2025 and January 2026

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 11th December and 8th January held in All Saints' Chilton. 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.

Special Services over the Christmas Period

13th December 4.00pm Family Carol Service All Saints' Chilton

14th December 6.30pm Carols by Candlelight Service,
All Saints' Chilton

21st December 4.00pm Family Carol Service,
St Matthew's Harwell

6.30pm Carols by Candlelight Service,
St Matthew's Harwell

23rd December 3.30pm Crib Service, All Saints' Chilton

24th December 3.30pm Crib Service, St Matthew's Harwell

10.00pm Christmas Eve Communion,
All Saints' Chilton

11.30pm Midnight Communion,
St Matthew's Harwell

25th December 9.30am Christmas Day All Age Communion,
All Saints' Chilton

10.30am Christmas Day All Age Communion,
St Matthew's Harwell

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.

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Chat
Singing

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

Find us on Facebook

Volunteers needed!
Next prep course starts Tuesday 13 January

HOME START
Southern Oxfordshire

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Would you like to support families in your community?

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- Change the lives of the families you support
- Make friends & connect with your community

We have strong demand from families in the Vale of White Horse and South Oxfordshire and need local volunteers to support them!

If you can spare a couple of hours each week to support a parent and their children, please contact us on:

admin@homestartso.org or 01235 511152
www.homestart-southernoxfordshire.org.uk/volunteer

Didcot Phoenix Drama Group Panto - Sunday 25th January 2026

Didcot Phoenix Drama Group is excited to bring you on an adventure next January with their pantomime, **The Little Mermaid!** With a script written by Devon Tyrrell, the drama group will take on a **new adaptation** of this much-loved fairy tale.



Phoenix Drama Group's tale will be **familiar** to devotees of Hans Christian Andersen's tale of the mermaid who swapped her voice for legs so that she can marry the prince of her dreams, whom she saved from drowning while on her visit to the land. Andersen's tale was published in a book of fairy tales for children in 1837 and ends tragically, yet optimistically with the mermaid obtaining ethereal eternal life. Disney decided the original story was too sad and so altered the ending.

In Phoenix's version, the mermaid, called **Oceana**, has to convince **Prince Hans** to marry her within **24 hours** before she turns into sea foam - all without her voice that she has used to bargain with the Evil Sea Witch, **Pearl!**

- 🎭 Will Oceana get to Prince Hans before Pearl does?
- 👑 Will Queen Iva ever convince Prince Hans to get married?
- 🐬 Will Oceana's friends and family be able to help her get her voice back?
- 🐟 Why is everyone just eating fish? 🐟🐟🐟

So, **dive in** and join Oceana to discover what can happen when you give up your voice, for the chance to **walk** on land!

Phoenix will be performing at **Didcot Civic Hall** on Saturday **24th of January 2026 at 2:30pm and 7:30pm** and at **Harwell Village Hall** on **Sunday 25th of January 2026 at 3:30pm**.

Tickets are £12pp for adult, £10pp for children and concessions, and £38 for the family bundle!

Buy Tickets from Ticketsource: <https://www.ticketsource.co.uk/didcot-phoenix-drama-group>

Or look at their website: <https://didcotphoenixdrama.co.uk/>

Alison Driscoll, Didcot Phoenix Drama Group

Phoenix Drama Group presents....
The Little Mermaid
A family panto by Devon Tyrrell

Adult: £12
Child: £10
Concession: £10
Family Bundle: £38
(Family includes 1 adult and 3 children OR 2 adults and 2 children)

Didcot Civic Hall
January 24th 2026
2:30pm and 7:30pm

Harwell Village Hall
January 25th 2026
3:30pm

Find tickets at: <http://www.didcotphoenixdrama.co.uk> or at <http://www.ticketsource.co.uk/didcot-phoenix-drama-group>

Didcot and District U3A



One in four of the population is in the Third Age! Third Age? The **first age** refers to childhood and dependence, the **second age** to full time employment and parental responsibilities and the **Third Age** is that which follows, where one is retired or partially retired. The U3A believes that this can be one of **creativity, fulfilment and friendships!**



Therefore, if you have recently **retired or are semi-retired** and living in Didcot or the surrounding area and looking for new interests whilst making new friendships, then look no further and consider joining the **Didcot & District U3A to... 'Learn, Laugh, Live'!**

With over **30 Interest Groups**, you could learn a new language, delve into your family history, enjoy walking with friends, learn to play an instrument, and many more (full details can be found on Didcot.u3a.site.uk)!

New members are always warmly welcomed to join (first visit is 'free to see') and chat over tea and biscuits at the monthly meetings are held on the **third Tuesday of every month** for this nationwide self-help teaching and learning organisation in the **Didcot Civic Hall, meetings start 2.30pm**. Meetings for the coming months will include:

- **December 16th** - Christmas Party at the Barn (a ticket event) - Jon Woodhouse - former Military Bandsman with selection of Christmas Music!

🧨 **2026 - Happy New Year!** 🧨

- **January 20th** - Politics in 20th Century Oxford - the life of Olive Gibbs - Liz Woolley
- **February 17th** - Women and the Victorian Army - Dan Allen

For further information concerning matters u3a and wishing to 'Learn, Laugh, Live' . . . then go to the NEW WEBSITE: didcot.u3asite.uk

Brian & Lynn Burscough - PR for Didcot & District u3a

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Other than where stated and in reports of Parish Council matters, any opinions expressed are not those of the Parish Council. Items for the next issue should be sent by **15th January 2026** 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, The White Hart, 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

Cath Convery, Patrick Davison-Locke, Wayne Fleming, Hayley Greaves, Jeremy Hawthorne Robert Hughes, Vaughan Humphries (Chair), Lucy Lacy, Simon Peacock.

(one vacancy)

District Councillors

Debra.Dewhurst@whitehorsedc.gov.uk

Hayleigh.Gascoigne@whitehorsedc.gov.uk

Campus Ward:

Sarah.James1@whitehorsedc.gov.uk

County Councillor:

rebekah.fletcher@oxfordshire.gov.uk

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

JOIN US FOR A

KIDS' CHRISTMAS PARTY!

TICKET INCLUDES: DISCO | PARTY GAMES | FINGER BUFFET
| COOKIE DECORATING | CRAFT | PRESENT FROM SANTA
FACE PAINTING FOR AN ADDITIONAL COST

MONDAY 22ND DECEMBER 3 - 5PM

AGED 11 AND UNDER

£7.50 PER CHILD

PURCHASE TICKETS AT THE BAR

EMAIL CHILDREN'S NAMES AND AGES TO EVENTS@HARWELLIAN.CLUB

BOOKINGS LIMITED TO MEMBERS' CHILDREN/GRANDCHILDREN

HARWELLCOME COMMUNITY CAFE

Thursdays 2-4pm at the Harwellian

Join us for a warm and inviting gathering where everyone is welcome! Enjoy FREE tea, coffee, and cake while connecting with neighbours and friends. A wonderful opportunity to relax and build community every Thursday afternoon.

Bring your family and friends—all are welcome!

Hosted by the Harwellian Club, Westfield, Harwell OX11 0LG and organised by St Matthew's Church, Harwell OX11 0HL