

March 2026

# *The* DEDDINGTON NEWS



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## The DEDDINGTON NEWS

On our behalf the parish council manages an annual budget of approximately £111,000, covering everything from the Windmill Centre to grass mowing and street rubbish bins. The current 13 councillors put in a great deal of volunteer time both working behind the scenes on finance, advising on planning applications, dealing with traffic problems and managing recreational facilities and, when needed, providing hands-on help.

By May there will again be two vacancies. The present councillors would warmly welcome candidates from all three villages – particularly if they are younger than 80 and especially if able bodied!

CD

### WHAT'S ON

#### March

- Wed 4 Photographic Society: 40 years of Celebrity Portraiture, Nicholas Posner, Adderbury Institute, 7.30pm
- Tue 10 Women's Institute: Holly Tree Hall, 2.30pm
- Thu 12 History Society: The Man Who Saved England: James Lees-Milne, Christopher Hotten, Primary School, 7.30pm
- Thu 12 People, Planet, Pint: Unicorn Inn, Deddington, 7.00pm
- Wed 18 Parish Council: Old School Room, Hempton, 7.30pm
- Sat 21 Banbury Symphony Orchestra: Spring Concert, Deddington Church, 7.30pm
- Thu 26 Book Group: Call Sally Lambert, 01869 338094 for details
- Fri 27 Monthly Community Lunch Club: Windmill Centre, 12.30pm
- Sat 28 Farmers' Market: Market Place, 9.00am–12.30pm
- Sat 28 Craft Market: Deddington Church, 9.00am–12.30pm

#### April

- Wed 1 Photographic Society: Adderbury Institute, 7.30pm
- Thu 9 History Society: All That Glitters: Woodstock's Cut Steel Industry, Carol Anderson, Primary School, 7.30pm
- Tue 14 Women's Institute: Holly Tree Hall, 2.30pm
- Wed 15 Parish Council: Hempton Lounge, Windmill Centre, 7.30pm
- Sun 18 Cherwell Choral Society: Dvorak Mass in D, Deddington Church, 7.30pm
- Fri 24 Monthly Community Lunch Club: Windmill Centre, 12.30pm
- Sat 25 Farmers' Market: Market Place, 9.00am–12.30pm
- Sat 25 Craft Market: Deddington Church, 9.00am–12.30pm

#### May

- Wed 6 Annual Parish Meeting: Hempton Lounge, Windmill Centre, 7.30pm
- Mon 11 DOGS: Newbury & Crookham GC
- Thu 14 History Society: The Green Man Trail in Oxfordshire, Tim Healey, Primary School, 7.30pm
- Wed 20 Parish Council: Hempton Lounge, Windmill Centre, 7.30pm
- Sat 23 Farmers' Market: Market Place, 9am–12.30pm
- Sat 23 Craft Market: Deddington Church, 9am–12.30pm

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## DEDDINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

### 18 February at the Windmill Centre

**Present:** Councillors ap Simon, Cox, Mobbs, Oldfield, O'Neill, Palin, Robinson (chair), Rogers (District Councillor), Snashall, Swadling, Timms, Watts, County Councillor Epps, the parish clerk, two members of the public and a DN representative.

Nick Gillham from Hempton was co-opted as a new councillor. Hempton parish representatives will meet with OCC's tree officer to select tree replacements for those taken down along Hempton road.

#### Open Forum

A resident of 50 years from Hempton said the build-out at the west end of the village is the best thing his family has seen. He asked that it be established which build-out was being complained of.

#### County Council

The consultation process on local government re-organisation is now live and residents are urged to engage with the process (see p10).

Additional inspections for potholes are being carried out and extra crews taken on. Drier weather is needed for repairs to be carried out. Thames Water will be responsible for some of them and work on replacing mains on the A4260 are likely to continue until June.

#### District Council

Initial hearings on the local plan have started. Cherwell DC is meeting its requirement for Oxford's unmet housing needs.

#### Highways & Transport

There have been complaints from farmers about the build-outs and steep kerbs. DPC will request that OCC replace the kerbs with sloping bricks.

OCC has been asked to reinstate the keep clear road markings at Satin Lane and add a white line across the entrance, giving wider access.

As OCC has refused to communicate with the Clifton speed watch group, CAST, the group asked the PC to make a freedom of information (FOI) request for comparative speed data from other local parishes on its behalf. The PC voted against requesting an FOI and to write to CAST explaining their reasons.

Suggestions are being sought from OCC Highways for actions to solve the dangerous issues at the entrance of Fardon Way, when vehicles are turning right into the development and other vehicles are overtaking them.

The PC will request that OCC remove the redundant bus stop outside Leadenporch House, New Street, and formally convert it to parking spaces.

OCC is considering a third bollard or double yellow lines outside Finishing Touch, Hudson Street.

An unused DPC wheelie bin in Clifton has been used as a traffic calming object but has now been returned to the Deddington store.

#### Finance and General Purposes

The cost of repairing the slide mound at the Windmill playground, around £5,500, was agreed although S106 money is expected to cover the cost.

These Parish Council notes are the view of our reporter, Jill Cheeseman, and not the official minutes. For those, go to <https://www.deddingtonparishcouncil.org/meetingsminutes.html>

There is currently one vacancy on the PC and a further one coming up so new nominations would be welcomed for the 7 May election.

#### Planning

##### *No objection*

Holcombe House, High Street, Deddington: installation of aerial on the frontage.

Ilbury Farm, Nether Worton Road, Hempton: construction and surfacing of two agricultural track sections. Magnolia Cottage, Earls Lane, Deddington: tree works.

1 Philcote Street, Deddington: tree works.

##### Approvals

The Priory, Hudson Street: tree works.

Castle View, Goose Green: tree works.

33 St John's Way, Hempton: single and two storey extensions.

##### *Correspondence*

Quince and Clover is repaving the area in front of café with no planning application made or given. This has been forwarded to Planning Enforcement.

#### Large Scale Developments

The PC has been invited to meet with Milton Advisers, the new owner of the Deddington Estate, comprising Satin Lane allotments, Grove Fields – the field at the end of Wimborn Close, and two sites in Hempton. They appear to be a hard-nosed organisation and the DPC plans simply to focus on what they have to say as it relates to the Neighbourhood Plan.

Members of the PC will meet with Dr Iqbal and colleagues from the Deddington Health Centre regarding the proposed Earls Lane car park, which is part of the new development north of the fire station. A representative from Lucy Development, the new owners of the site will attend the April PC meeting with some plans. There appears to be limited cooperation from OCC and CDC in response to requests from the PC regarding the new nursery building. DPC unanimously decided to become the Approved Body (owners) of the nursery.

#### Environment and Recreation

The shower upgrade for the Windmill is likely to take place in the late spring. There is insufficient space for separate cubicles and the additional cost would be excessive.

The replacement goal post has finally been installed at Castle Grounds.

DPC will congratulate the organisers of February's wassail on its success. Some orchard maintenance will be carried out on 14 March 10.00am–12.00pm, including planting three hazel trees and fruiting hedgerow plants. The Allotment Society has donated one hazel and grant from the farmers' market will pay for the remainder.

**Next meeting 18 March at 7.30pm at the Old School Room, Hempton**



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**THE LITTLE MERMAID WRITTEN BY STEVE MOSS**



'Baddie' Octavia, played by Jen Toll and Meriel by Lily Johnson. Photo Emma Spellman



Dames, Steve Moss and Adam Perry. Photo Emma Spellman

What fun! I went to see it on the first night and thought it was the best yet that I've seen. I'm not a keen lover of panto but it just feels right to see the local production. From the opening number with the whole cast on and around the stage, it went with a swing. That's 66 members of the cast, predominantly young people. I'm not entirely sure how Carrick Cameron, the director, and his support team managed it but everyone involved looked as though they were having a great time and that was definitely infectious. There wasn't a weakness in it. Very early on we were encouraged to boo the baddie Octavia, the Sea Witch (always intentionally misunderstood as 'sandwich', of course). Jen Toll was the excellent baddie who obviously relished being thoroughly evil and is a natural performer, even when she forgets her lines.

Of course, there's not a great deal of storyline – pretty much the standard thing, but with lots of in-jokes with mentions of local businesses and anti-Adderbury vibes! The *DN* got several references this year; I'm not sure if that's bribery. A friend who brought several

overseas students with her from Sweden, Ruanda and China reported the Swedish student said she hadn't expected the audience participation and thought it was an amazing experience. There was some delightful singing from all the young people involved.

Among the stars, mainly children, my stand-out favourites were Sally the Seagull played by Orla Brown, Buster the Crab by Rosie Toll (it obviously runs in the family), Ron the Whelk by Finlay Cox who was hilarious, moving as slowly as a ... and the four fairies were just a delight. They were regularly shunted off the stage with many sympathetic 'Aaahs' but the smallest fairy had the last word.

Apart from the excellent live performance, the backroom boys and girls shouldn't go without a mention. In particular, the make-up and costumes were particularly spectacular with a long list of people involved. The set designer, painters and builders also surpassed themselves.

**Jill Cheeseman**

**KATHARINE HOUSE HOSPICE**

*Leave a legacy of care*

This February, we will again be joining other hospices as part of the 'This is Hospice Care' national TV campaign, which encourages people to leave a gift in their will to their local hospice. Watch the full TV advert.

Gifts in wills are a vital source of funding for Katharine House. In fact, one in ten people is cared for thanks

to the generosity of those who leave the hospice a gift in their will. Remembering the hospice in your will is a very special way of making sure the local community can receive care and support for years to come.

Find out more details about writing a will for free with Octopus Legacies: [khh.org.uk/support-us/leave-a-gift-in-your-will](http://khh.org.uk/support-us/leave-a-gift-in-your-will).

## POSTCARD FROM AMERICA

*Home Owners' Association, Putin, Exercise*

There is a new president in Colorado. The electorate has been guaranteed openness and a caring approach but benign dictators have a tendency to start feathering their nests and veering into fascism. I hope I am not going to follow this route to madness.

For some obscure reason I volunteered to take over as president of our community home owners association.

In common with most communities around here our neighbourhood has its own set of rules and has a board to enforce them. These rules cover 77 pages: I know because I have just read them. The position of president can be ideal for a power mad human being, a bit like Neighbourhood Watch gone crazy. Most Americans are very committed to their own 'castle'; they want their own land, their own yard work. Our community is very different. The land is owned by the community, the association maintains the roofs, the pool and the infrastructure. It is a half million dollar business and now I'm the boss. What can possibly go wrong?

It's hard to summarise the current state of madness in America. A government that creates a mask-wearing police force which is unaccountable to the law of the land is certainly slipping away from democracy. Killing your own citizens would cause huge uproar in Europe but America has always killed a larger percentage of its own. The difference now is that the latest two were white. This administration has read the Putin playbook. Firstly, you control the media, then you manage the billionaires and finally you prioritise loyalty over competence. They have now demanded that Meta and Google provide details of people posting anti ICE comments. No wonder Trump has a picture of himself with Putin on the wall at the White House.



The final act on the path to autocracy is to control the election process, and once again Trump is spreading doubt about the integrity of the system. Democracy relies on trust in the system. What Trump wants is to shake that belief so that he can undermine the midterm elections in November. He wants to stop mail-in voting

and for the Federal government to take over control from the States. He wants to limit voting by making voters produce their ID. All these potential changes will have a much bigger effect on poorer people and on the Democrats. The final step will be instructing the military to monitor the polling stations, which will scare away legal immigrants. One thing is for sure, he isn't going to put up with losing Congressional seats without a fight. Very difficult times await this democracy.

I am happy to report that I have discovered a new area of the convenience society, the quickie exercise class. My wife says I need to be doing more work on my core, apparently old people like me need to be exercising both the brain and the body. The brain work is being addressed with daily mahjong – it is obviously good for me to be beaten soundly by my wife's intellect – and I have finally managed to find the answer to boring gym work. My new favourite place puts you in a special suit and passes electric current through you while the trainer directs the torture. And it only takes 20 minutes a week. I love it.

Let's hope that exercise will keep this president a lot fitter than the other one. I have made my first decree: please feel free to visit us and swim in the Ward Memorial Pool.

**Mike Ward**  
*mikeatcherwell@gmail.com*

## NOT AGAIN!

'How is your steak, madam?' 'We would love you to tell us how you like your new electric toothbrush.' 'How well did our delivery service perform for you today?' 'We invite you to join our consultation and tell us what you think about our proposal to build a new town on your doorstep.' Our time is relentlessly besieged for the profit of others, converting our opinions about the footling into statistics for the sellers' webpages and, occasionally, about the important – when no notice is likely to be taken of our input.

I, for one, am both cynical and weary of having my opinion solicited on just about everything. Yet I am going to suggest you consider taking a few minutes to complete HealthWatch Oxfordshire's online survey at <https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/rurallivingpublic/> or by using the QR code before the deadline of 1 April. This survey is targeted specifically at residents of



Deddington together with Chalgrove, Sonning Common, Faringdon, Stanford in the Vale, Shrivenham and Watchfield. It aims at getting a picture of what it is like living in these rural areas and will be supplemented by focus groups of up to 12 participants in each of the target areas.

The focus is learning people's views on living in these communities and what are both the assets of living there and the barriers to wellbeing: what helps people stay healthy and well, and what makes this difficult?

Led by UCL's Institute for Health Equity, the survey is part of Oxfordshire's effort to become a Marmot Place. This is a programme under which more than 40 local authorities across England and Wales are committed to making a long-term difference to the health of their communities by addressing identifiable local health inequalities mostly shaped by wider social inequities.

**CD**

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## CHURCH

February began with our Candlemas services. We had fun making beeswax candles in the family service and in the evening we took time for reflection with our beautiful candlelit Choral Evensong. On Shrove Tuesday we enjoyed Pancakes and Plonk, before Lent began on Ash Wednesday. It's not too late to join our 'Come & See' Lent Course. Find our more and register at <https://oxford.anglican.org/campaigns/come-and-see/> and join our discussion groups on Tuesday evenings at 7.30pm in church.

On 1 March we celebrate St David's Day in our family service, including making daffodil pinwheels and flower displays, then at 6.00pm we offer a peaceful time of reflection in our traditional Sung Evensong. On 15 March we celebrate Mothering Sunday, before looking ahead to Holy Week, which begins with Palm Sunday on 29 March. Special services are then held each day, culminating with our joyful Easter Day family service on 5 April. See our Easter card insert for more details.

Deddington church is open from 9.00am–4.00pm for anyone wishing to visit, pray, meditate or simply be and services are streamed live. Barford St Michael's church is open every day between 10.00am and 3.00pm.

The Rev Nick Fielden is vicar of Deddington with Hempton and the Barfords. Mondays are Nick's usual day off, so if you need to contact a member of the clergy urgently on a Monday, please contact one of the wardens (please see the church website or Facebook).

For funeral and home visits in case of illness please contact the vicar on 01869 934 794 or vicar@deddingtonchurch.org, or one of the church wardens – Deddington: vacancy; Barfords: Sue Addison (07484 718791), Sally Barber (07776 241218) or barfordchurches234@gmail.com. For baptism, wedding and general enquiries please contact the parish administrator, office@deddingtonchurch.org. For updates see [www.deddingtonchurch.org](http://www.deddingtonchurch.org) and <https://www.facebook.com/DeddingtonChurch>.

### January

#### Parish Church SS Peter and Paul

Mon 8.45am Morning Prayer  
 Tue 8.15am Morning Prayer  
 Wed 10.00am Holy Communion (with healing prayer on 4th Wednesday)  
 Thu 9.30am Tea + Toast and Squiggles and Wiggles (term time)  
 Fri 8.45am Morning Prayer  
 5.15 pm Evening Prayer

Lent Course: Every Tuesday 3–31 March at 7.30pm in Deddington church

Sun 1 10.30am Family Communion (breakfast and crafts from 9.45am)  
 6.00pm Evensong  
 Sun 8 10.30am Holy Communion  
 Sun 15 10.30am Holy Communion (Mothering Sunday)  
 Sun 22 10.30am Holy Communion  
 Sun 29 10.30am Holy Communion (Palm Sunday)  
 Mon 30 7.00pm Compline

#### Hempton

Sun 15 9.00am Holy Communion (Mothering Sunday)

#### Barford St Michael

Wed 5.15pm Evening Prayer  
 Sun 1 10.30am Coffee and Chat  
 Sun 15 10.30am Family Service (Mothering Sunday)  
 Sun 22 10.30am Family Communion

#### Barford St John

Sun 8 9.00am Holy Communion  
 Sun 29 9.00am Holy Communion (Palm Sunday)

#### From the Parish Registers:

*Funeral*  
 10 February Doreen Watkins

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### RC Parish of Hethe

#### Holy Trinity, Parish of Hethe

Sunday Masses 10.00am, 12.00 Noon (Latin)  
 Holyday Masses 9.30am, 6.30pm  
 Confessions Sundays 5.00–6.00pm during Holy Hour

#### St Joseph's, Banbury

10.00am Sunday Mass

#### St John's Church, Banbury

6.00pm Friday Confessions and Holy Hour.  
 10.30am Saturday Confessions  
 4.00pm Vigil Mass for Sunday  
 8.30am Sunday Mass  
 11.30am Sunday Mass

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## PFSU AND NURSERY

We are looking forward to Easter. At Nursery the children are creating Easter bonnets at home for their Easter Parade and at Pre-school we will be making Easter baskets. The children will also be celebrating the Japanese Festival of Hinamatsuri, enjoying food tasting and trying Irish dancing for St Patrick's Day

and taking part in World Book Day.

Don't forget to buy your map for the Easter Trail from Deddington Library. It is on Saturday 21 March between 9.30am–11.30am.

**Shrene Saleh-Gillett**  
[info@deddingtonnurseryandpfsu.co.uk](mailto:info@deddingtonnurseryandpfsu.co.uk)

## LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION

The latest phase in the national reorganisation of local government, which would replace the current two-tier county and district system with unitary councils, is a public consultation running from 5 February to 26 March. Full details, including a link to the online survey, are available at: <https://tinyurl.com/bddb83z>.

There are three proposals for local government reorganisation in Oxfordshire.

### *A single unitary council (One Oxfordshire)*

Proposed by Oxfordshire County Council

This proposal would abolish the six existing Oxfordshire councils and replace them with a single county-wide unitary authority. The new Oxfordshire Council would deliver all local services across the historic county boundary. It is the preferred option of Oxfordshire County Council which emphasises streamlined services, unified planning, and economies of scale. Details are available in OCC's One Oxfordshire proposal documents at <https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/council/local-government-reorganisation-and-devolution/one-oxfordshire>.

### *Two unitary councils*

Proposed by the four district councils

This proposal would create two new authorities: Oxford and Shires Council covering Cherwell, Oxford City and West Oxfordshire; and Ridgeway Council covering South Oxfordshire, the Vale of White Horse, and West Berkshire (bringing part of an existing unitary

authority into the structure).

This model aims to balance scale with local focus across the northern and southern parts of the county and is the only proposal that fully aligns with the government's stated criteria for reorganisation. Details are set out in the joint proposal submitted by the district councils, at <https://www.cherwell.gov.uk/info/5/your-council/1307/local-government-reorganisation>.

### *Three unitary councils*

Proposed by Oxford City Council

This proposal would split the area into three smaller unitary authorities: Greater Oxford Council focused on Oxford and the surrounding Green Belt; Northern Oxfordshire Council, comprising most of Cherwell and West Oxfordshire; and Ridgeway Council, covering South Oxfordshire, the Vale of White Horse, and parts of West Berkshire

This option places greater emphasis on local decision-making and more locally tailored services. Details are contained in Oxford City Council's reorganisation proposal, at <https://www.oxford.gov.uk/future-local-government/local-government-reorganisation>.

All three options would abolish Oxfordshire's current six councils and replace them with fewer, larger unitary authorities responsible for both district- and county-level functions. A formal consultation is underway to gather public views before the government decides which, if any, proposal to implement, with any new structures expected to take effect in April 2028.

Each of the three proposals claim eventual savings of approximately £50–60 million per year. However, when set against the current combined council budgets of around £1.2 billion, and the continuing growth in costs driven by inflation and rising demand for adult and children's social care, these savings are marginal, calling into question whether the reorganisation process itself delivers meaningful value.

CD



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## PARISH SHOW

Thanks to all your support, last year's Parish Show was such a huge success that we were able to donate a large slice of the profit to our library. Apart from the many digital services it offers, the library creates a social and creative hub for all ages. It needs urgent funding.

We were also able to donate varying amounts to Deddington Nursery, St Peter and St Paul's Church, Deddington Silver Band, Deddington and Adderbury Photographic Society and the Deddington Bridge Club.

We look forward to seeing you all again on Saturday 5 September 2026. Make a note in your diaries.

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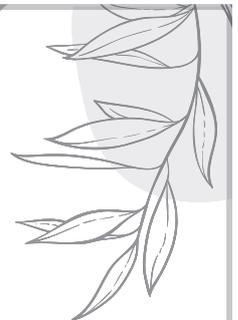
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We, at Granary Oils, run a family farm at the tip of South Warwickshire bordering on the Cotswolds. We first thought about diversifying into nut production over 15 years ago when we were regularly getting a glut of walnuts each year from walnut trees my father had casually planted all over the farm throughout the last 50 years. It's at this point that my brother and I started to plant the first of our 900 commercial variety walnut trees and 10 years ago they started to produce enough nuts to be commercially viable. Walnuts and cold pressed walnut oil are often referred to as a super food as they are packed full of healthy nutrients, antioxidants and rich in omega-3.

Alongside the walnuts and cold pressed walnut oil, we also produce cold pressed rapeseed oil from locally grown rapeseed. It has half the saturated fat of olive oil, is rich in a healthy balance of ohttps://tinyurl.com/59uwxurmegas and has a high smoke point meaning it can be used from salad dressings right up to deep fat frying.

Cold-pressed oil is mechanically produced using a screw press run at a slow speed without heat or chemicals, preserving its natural, nutty flavour, golden colour, and high nutritional value (omega-3 and vitamin E). In contrast, commercially produced rapeseed oil is refined using high temperatures and chemical solvents, resulting in a bland, colourless, and less nutritious oil. We even have the oils turned into a small range of cosmetics.

Our farm is a traditional mixed farm, mostly grassland and we have planted two permanent pasture fields with 900 walnut trees and over 70 different varieties under which sheep graze. With the weather these days being so unpredictable we have laid irrigation pipes and have watered at some time or other every year for the last 10 years, last year having proved particularly stressful with the prolonged drought.

We processed around five tonnes of walnuts last year from our own orchards and from a few sites around the country. We have found that the best nuts are always the ones that are shaken from the trees and then washed and dried as fast as possible. Any walnuts left lying on the ground for more than



a day or two rapidly start to degrade.

Up until 2019 every part of the process was done by hand, from collecting, washing, drying through to cracking and separating. We now collect the majority of the walnuts using nutbrooms and the occasional tarpaulin and tree shaker. (A nutbroom is

basically a wire cage in the shape of a rugby ball with a wooden shaft as a handle; this is rolled backwards and forwards over the ground and the walnuts pop between the wires into the middle of the broom. When it is full the wires are parted by hand and the walnuts are shaken into a bucket.) The nuts are then passed through a washing line that removes any remaining husk and debris. From the washer the walnuts proceed up a conveyor belt into a dryer.

We used to crack more than a ton of walnuts each year with an American made, hand cranked machine. It was tiring work, though a group of us sitting around the big kitchen table managed to separate shell from the kernel at the rate of up to 40lb an hour. Finally, fed up with cracking by hand, we took a flight over to Lyon in France and had a fascinating tour of AMB Rousset's factory, where they produce nut harvesting and processing equipment, and shortly afterwards put in an order for a nut processing line.

The processing line consists of a cracker and blower separator; an elevator then takes the nuts up to a fantastic machine that separates the rest of the shell from the kernel. The kernel and any remaining pieces of shell fall onto a moving sorting table for hand sorting and are then deposited onto a vibrating sizing sieve where the whole, halves and small pieces of kernel are separated.

**David Thame**  
[info@granaryoils.co.uk](mailto:info@granaryoils.co.uk)

*Nuts run in the family. David's brother, Tom, runs Warwickshire Walnuts, near Shipston-on-Stour, including a nut tree nursery. As one of the UK's expert's in developing a commercial nut growing industry, he appeared in December's issue of the RHS's Garden magazine in the Experts' Pick section.* CD

## FRIENDS OF CASTLE GROUNDS

The high and low paths around the Castle Grounds may be churned up and muddy and the winterbourne full of water, but the newly planted snowdrops and daffodils are braving the endless rain and pushing through. They're mostly on the north bank but you'll spot others elsewhere and they'll spread over the years. If you have any wildflower plants of your own that have spread too far, do drop us a line and we can dig and re-plant them in the Grounds.

The new goalposts have been installed! They

don't sag in the middle like their predecessors, so anyone under about six foot six is safe. Thanks to our parish clerk for organising it.

Our AGM is on Wed 11 March at 7.30pm in the downstairs meeting room at the Deddington Arms – all are welcome. Find out what we do, share your thoughts or get involved.

**Charlotte Holmes**  
[info@friendsofcastlegrounds.co.uk](mailto:info@friendsofcastlegrounds.co.uk)

## UKRAINE UPDATE

Convoy 55 will leave Deddington mid-March and, to celebrate International Women's Month and a first for Driving Ukraine, an all-female crew, under the motto of United Nations IWD 2026 #GiveToGain, will be delivering evacuation vehicles to female medics in Ukraine. Karen Watts, Harry Palin and Sian Westbury are three of those 14 brave women who will spend three days driving 1,318 miles across Europe to support Ukrainians by raising money to buy these much needed vehicles. The seven vehicle convoy arrives in Ukraine on 15 March, Mother's Day and, in memory of her Mum, Viv O'Donnell, Harry Palin is driving a bright purple truck with huge red lips on the front. Please donate to support this and forthcoming convoys. Ukraine, more than ever, needs more vehicles, aid and international support from volunteers.

Huge thanks must go to the brilliant Deddington Players and their support for DrivingUkraine: once again they raised £750 from the pantomime raffle in January. This fantastic sum is being shared by Driv-

ing Ukraine and our local Katharine House Hospice. Thanks also to the audiences who gave so generously. Oh, no you didn't – Oh, yes we did!

It has been nearly four years since Russia invaded Ukraine. The war continues to affect millions of people every day. Civilians have faced displacement, loss of homes, injury, trauma and disruption to basic services like power, water, and healthcare. It also matters because the war impacts global food supplies, energy prices, and international security, meaning its effects reach far beyond the region itself. Continuing to talk about Ukraine ensures that this information is in the forefront of people's minds and the human cost is not normalised and therefore support continues. Please let's keep talking about Ukraine, spread awareness to ensure that those who need help most are not forgotten and, of course, donate as much as you are able, at [www.drivingukraine.org](http://www.drivingukraine.org).

**Jenny Soddy**  
**07976 922558**

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## DEDDINGTON LIBRARY

Firstly, our Rhymetime sessions have been postponed until further notice. We are looking into this to see if anything can be done. I am looking for a new volunteer who could help out. Please come and speak to me in the library if you might be interested.

Lego club is going well every Monday 3.30–4.30pm and our children and dads make some great things which are on show for you to see.

There are still some parish calendars for sale if you have missed out, A4 £10 and desktop £7.50. You can pay by card or cash with the proceeds helping to keep the library open.

A big shout out to one of my volunteers, Helen Chapman, for our Love Our Libraries Tour 2025–2026 display. Helen is aiming to visit all 44 libraries in Oxfordshire, already having done 18. I have managed 21 so far, hopefully by the time this goes to print nearer 30. I have until the end of April to finish and Helen's deadline is later in the year. This is a fundraiser and there are sponsor forms in the library. We would love to reach £1,000 and are nearly halfway there. You can follow our tour on our Facebook page, Love our Libraries Tour 2025–2026. What a challenge it is turning out to be. The money goes directly to the Friends of Deddington library. Every little helps.

While on holiday in New Zealand I visited six libraries, one on Stewart island at the bottom of South Island, an hour's boat ride from the mainland and there right in front of me as I walked in was Jeremy Clarkson's book Diddy Squat on display. (Made me chuckle). I had lots of chats and exchanged ideas and stories, talked about our library and apps where you can download books and audio books, magazines.

Here is a new idea for all readers. Helen is hoping to start a group in the library called Talk Books. She

says, 'We love to chat to library visitors about their reading interests and challenges. Often people who've read something they've loved or loathed are keen to share their thoughts, but lack the opportunity as their friends and family are not interested in reading. So, we thought we'd nominate a book of the month and hold a monthly drop-in reading group in the library on a Thursday afternoon to 'talk books'. We can make good use of the refurbished room on the right of the entrance (the ex police office) to chat about the nominated book, (and other books people have enjoyed) over tea, coffee, biscuits and cake. If you would be interested in some book chat or some general chat and would like to meet some new people, please get in touch and we'll take it from there.' This is in its early stages and we would love to know if you are interested.

One last reminder, we are still after your ideas for the mural in the back yard – anything relating to your favourite characters from books and comics. The deadline is 30 April. We are also looking for paint for the mural – all shades of green, blue, black, red and yellow. It needs to be suitable for outdoor use. Spray paints and part-used tins are great. Please bring them along to the library. If it is closed you can leave them by the back door.

The library is still open while the Thames Water roadworks continue. If you have trouble getting here please let me know by phoning 01865 816010 or emailing [Deddington.library@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:Deddington.library@oxfordshire.gov.uk) and I'm sure I can help you out.

Many thanks for all your continuing support.

**Gail Cripps**  
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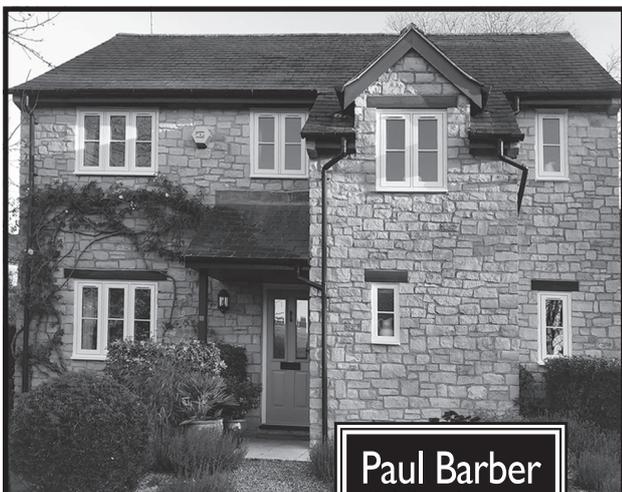
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# DH History Corner

[www.deddingtonhistory.uk](http://www.deddingtonhistory.uk)

## *The seal of Sir William de Dive*

The archivist at St George's Chapel, Windsor, chose this image of a fine 13th century wax seal, depicting an armed knight on horseback, as its image of the month in November 2025. The seal was used to authenticate a conveyance of land in Deddington. The name of the conveyancer, William de Dive, is impressed in the border encircling the mounted image. Considering the age of the title deed, which dates from between 1214 and 1261, the seal has survived remarkably intact and is now housed, still attached to its document by a parchment tag, in the St George's Chapel Archives.

Why is it at Windsor? Although the Deddington deed predates the foundation of the College of St George, Windsor Castle, it would have been acquired in 1348 as one of a number of muniments by the Dean and Canons of Windsor on their purchase of one third of Deddington Castle manor from Thomas Dive in the 1360s. Prior to the introduction of a central land registry in the 20th century, the possession of a full series of title deeds recording successive land transfers was considered necessary to prove legal ownership. At Windsor, the muniments relating to the College properties were stored in specially constructed wooden drawers in an aerary (or treasury), purpose-built in the 1350s for the safe storage of documents, plate and other valuables.

The property mentioned in the conveyance consisted of a messuage and croft in the 'new street' of Deddington, which were granted by William le Dive [alias de Dive], knight and lord of the Castle of Deddington, to Richard Sibes of Tackley for the consideration of 40 shillings. Sir William de Dive had inherited his lands in Deddington, from his father, Guy de Dive (d.1214), who had acquired them on his marriage to Lucy de Chesney. The estate included Deddington Castle which had been constructed by Odo, Bishop of Bayeaux, in the 11th century and was strengthened in the 12th century, almost certainly by William de Chesney during the 'Anarchy', the civil war which took place between King Stephen and Queen Matilda from 1139 to 1154.

William de Chesney, one of the principal supporters of King Stephen in Oxfordshire, was defeated near Oxford in 1153 by Henry, Duke of Anjou, but, on acceding to the throne as Henry II, the king allowed de Chesney to retain at least some of his Oxfordshire estates, his ownership of lands in Deddington being confirmed by a letter patent in 1157.

Deddington Castle no longer stands and the Dean and Canons of Windsor no longer retain their manorial holdings in Deddington, forfeited, along with all their other landed property, to the Ecclesiastical Commissioners in 1867. However, this 13th century conveyance, with its delightful seal, is a reminder of the extensive estates which were once owned in over 30 counties of England and Wales by the Dean and Canons of Windsor.



*Seal of Sir William de Dive*

Published by kind permission of the Dean and Canons of Windsor. More about the de Dives and the castle and grounds can be found at: [www.deddington-history.uk/deddingtoncastle](http://www.deddington-history.uk/deddingtoncastle). Prints of the Seal and the folded deed are in the Parish Archive and listed in its Register. They cannot be published without consent of St George's Archive.

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## NEWS FROM HEMPTON

I was recently given the opportunity to look back in time and form some insights into the life and concerns of Hempton residents in the 1960s, 70s and 80s in the form of the recorded minutes of Hempton's Residents Association (HRA) committee meetings.

The Association held its inaugural meeting on 14 October 1965. The minutes of AGMs and regular committee meetings are recorded in three volumes, the last entry dated 19 October 1981. I am not aware that any ongoing records exist. There may be a clue in that the last entry leaves a substantial number of unused blank pages; perhaps ongoing records exist elsewhere or have been lost.

The association addressed matters of concern to village residents and organised a vibrant community social programme. Committee meetings appear to have been extremely well run, avoiding any Handforth fiascos. One meeting was brought to a premature close as the hostess fell downstairs and broke her arm.

It is noticeable that the most important issue raised in committee continues to be a concern in the present day. Road safety in particular stands out as an ongoing battle between the concerns of residents and grinding inertia of the authorities excused by 'a lack of available funds'. The road was narrower and not constructed or maintained to current standards in those days. There were proposals to buy land on the verges to widen the gap, requests for improved warning signs, speed monitors and to address dangerous flooding in the gap.

During this period there was no footpath between Hempton and Deddington, no village name plates until 1972 and, incidentally, no traffic lights on the Deddington crossroads until 1973.

Development was a concern, with various planning applications being made including on land opposite St Johns Way both to the north and south of the estate. Residents' attitudes towards development appear to have changed little.

There appears to have been a significant cohort of children in the village, prompting concerns over road safety. There were 60 children of school age in the village in 1974. A play area was rented in the field below the housing in St Johns Way and a great deal of committee time was spent arranging maintenance and repair of the playing field. In 1977 access to the field was denied because of damage and the 'impertinence of the children'. A Youth Club was organised but was not notably successful.

The residents were somewhat prejudiced against pigs, based on olfactory concerns about proposals for livestock being kept near village properties. Provision and maintenance of fencing of the church grounds and a five-bar gate was a matter frequently occupying consideration by the committee. The lack of mains sewage was an issue with foul odours and public health concerns about the overflowing cesspit for the newly built St John's Way estate. The sewage works in Summer Ley, Barford, only became operational in 1969. Mains water was not yet installed in all village properties. It was suggested the village tap, situated

on the south side of the main road might be moved to the north side of the road for the convenience of the residents of the cottages at the crossroads.

The association organised extensive social activities including carol singing to senior citizens, carol services, Father Christmas visits for children, buffet suppers, jumble sales, bingo, bonfire nights and fireworks displays, coach outings, visits to the theatre and car treasure hunts. There was a cricket club and tennis lessons were available on a private resident's court.

Refreshments served at a bonfire celebration in 1975 included hot potatoes at fourpence, beefburgers eight pence, sausage rolls five pence, soup was free and beer 15 pence a half pint.

A summer fair was organised with a soap box derby as its premier event on Snake Hill. The event was cancelled at the last minute due to bad weather and proximity to the Deddington Festival. In August 1976 a game of dwile flunking was organised, a pub game played by two teams. One team dances around in a circle while a player from the other team attempts to hit them by throwing a beer-soaked cloth. Hempton Harvesters were narrowly beaten by the more experienced Pheasant Pluckers at the Great Western Arms. Based on the discovery in 1966 of a manuscript of that period, detailing the rules leading to a revival of the game by apprentice printers in Beccles, Suffolk, it has been alleged that dwile flunking, also known as nurdling, originated in or before 1585. However, there is no evidence for the game prior to 1966 and it is thought the game was invented for the 1966 annual fête at Beccles and that the manuscript is a hoax. Though generally I disagree with this abuse of the amber nectar, there are brews I have sampled that are fit only for such sacrilege. The game was popular for a while and has been included in the Cotswold Olimpick Games and is still played annually in Ufford, Beccles and Lewes.

**Stuart Oldham**

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## AGAINST THE RULES

In 1977 I had the privilege of commanding HMS Sceptre, a nuclear powered (but conventionally armed) submarine specifically designed to conduct cloak and dagger Cold War ops against the Soviet navy. I joined her in build, in time to do the first sea trials. She was the latest of the 'S' class and could dive deeper and go faster than any



other western submarine at the time. At a city block long and about eight storeys high from periscope to keel, clearly the greatest challenge was going to be avoiding collisions with land, ice, ship or submarine.

She was also the first Royal Navy boat to be equipped with an all-digital system for detecting and tracking these hazards. There was just one problem; in their parsimony (no change there) the MOD had not yet built a simulator on which we could be trained on how to use this entirely computer driven system. The poor substitute was to inject simulated targets into our onboard equipment, using a laptop, at the same time as dockyard 'mateys' (workers) were still installing equipment all round us. Hardly ideal. Come the day we took her out into the Irish Sea and did our first dive. It was quite apparent that this inadequate training scenario had not properly prepared us for the real world. An urgent signal was sent, calling for a solution.

Fast forward a few nervous weeks, largely spent doing surface tests and trials, and the solution arrives by boat from Portree, Isle of Skye, in the form of six young Women's Royal Naval Service ratings (WRNS, so affectionately known as Wrens) who boarded us, equipped with Hewlett Packard hand held computers, to continue our training for a week in the secluded

waters of the Sound of Rona. At that time women were not allowed to serve on ships or submarines and so overnight hotel accommodation had been booked for them ashore.

During that first day's dive the Wrens injected up to six simulated targets at a time into our computer system and helped us become more familiar with our ground (sea?) breaking system. Free from real world hazards or dock-

yard workers, good progress was made. At 1700 I prepared to surface to disembark the team. At this point their leader approached me, 'Could I ask what you are going to do tonight, sir?' Having established she was not propositioning me, I said we would go back to sea, dive, and try to find some fishing boats with which to practice our developing skills at tracking targets. 'Well, we are willing to stay on board, if you are willing to have us', she said. Thinking quickly and remembering that to the best of my knowledge women had never been embarked on a submarine overnight and that Navy rules expressly forbade this, I decided that, as Nelson had taken women to sea, so could I and ordered some of the stokers (nuclear propulsion engineers) to clear their bunk space and proceeded to dive the boat.

By the end of the week there was a marked improvement in our operational skills – and a marked transformation in the personal appearance of my ship's company. We all swore ourselves to secrecy at having pre-empted women being allowed to serve on RN submarines by some 37 years. It seemingly remained our secret until author Iain Ballantyne referred to it in his book *Hunter Killers* in 2013.

**Rob Forsyth**  
*Robert.s.forsyth@gmail.com*

## NEWS FROM CLIFTON

The flowers are begging to 'spring to life' and love is in the air. Sha got engaged using the old proposal ring trick with the intention of upgrading it if the verdict was positive. He proposed on the ski slopes a stone's throw from the Winter Olympics but was somewhat disheartened when Kate said, 'You'll need to save a bit for the real one'. This correspondent likes that style and we wish them both well.

Talking of spring, we enjoyed a wassail event this month at the community orchard, planted in 2021, with fifty or more wassailers. Heidi and the Golden Dentes played for us and sang in the coming spring. Last year's apples were picked mostly by the wassailers otherwise known as the orchard committee. Toast was 'planted' for the robin orchard guardians and apple

juice poured on the apple trees.

Another sign of coming spring is the Six Nations rugby tournament. To aid Clifton enjoy this as a community, Max has installed the most incongruous TV ever in the bar: it shows Monet's Poppy Fields when no rugby is on. When 'other nations' play the game they can be watched here but, when England play, a second larger screen is hung in the restaurant where 20 plus villagers enjoyed England beating Wales slightly less than they enjoyed the complimentary oysters that Max served. There was a charge for subsequent match seafoods.

**Martin Bryce**  
*Martindnbryce@gmail.com*

If you've been in the Windmill Centre recently, you'll know that we've put a lot of work into improving the facilities there. The Hall is now being used regularly for private parties, both children's and grown-ups. The Hempton Lounge is now hosting the community lunch once a month to a capacity crowd (next one: Friday 27 March). The Clifton Room is being used for regular baby clinics and the Studio is in demand for regular dance, yoga, Pilates, fitness and other classes. Now we are looking to make further improvements and at the same time to widen the range of events we offer at the Windmill.

*Improvements*

Last year we repainted the outside of the building and completed our programme of improving the acoustics in the hireable spaces: the Hempton Lounge, Clifton Room, Studio and main Hall. We also replaced our upstairs kitchen with a proper commercial grade facility matching the main kitchen downstairs.

Our next project is to bring the changing rooms up to modern standards, with new showers, wall tiling and floors. We have been aware for some time that these need updating. Now we are able to take advantage of Section 106 money (the community benefit funds paid by the builders of the new housing developments in the village). Work won't start until after the end of the



football season but we expect the result to be much smarter changing areas and showers that are a lot nicer to use.

*Events*

As you read this, we will have held the first of our new programme of events at the Windmill. A quiz held last month saw the beginning of regular functions being run by the Windmill committee to bring the community together and raise funds to refurbish the Hall and support Deddington library. In April a projector and screen will be installed enabling us to set up a community cinema and run other events such as the Race Night on 25 April (put it in your diary). We already have sponsors for the seven (filmed) horse races that will be shown on the night and are starting to find owners for the horses that will run in these races. If you would like to be an owner, then email [events@thewindmillededdington.org](mailto:events@thewindmillededdington.org) or simply come along and have a bet on the night. Future events will include films, live music, drama and more quizzes with a special family quiz in the summer to celebrate the library's 80th anniversary. Watch this space for more details.

Check our website [www.thewindmillededdington.org](http://www.thewindmillededdington.org) to find out about events, classes and other activities or visit our Facebook page. If you'd like to book our facilities for a party, meeting or other event please call our bookings secretary, Julie, on 07720 834006.

**Vaughan Jones**  
*chair@thewindmillededdington.org*

**BLISSFUL THINKING**

Apropos of nothing, there was a period of time in the late Triassic era where it rained relentlessly for over a million years. Ancient sea creatures were mostly unperturbed as you can imagine, roaming the prehistoric oceans, snacking on plankton and such. Little did they know that the plankton they didn't scoff would perish unmolested and sink to the seabed where millions of decades later their remains would be excavated by mechanical wonders dreamed up by curiously hairless primates, for reuse as fuel for ever more mechanical wonders. As part of the processing, a byproduct called bitumen was found to be ideal for the construction and maintenance of roads, for transit of horseless carriages.

Somewhere in the intervening period, we seemed to have decided that the 'maintenance' part is kind of overkill. I mean, you'd think it would be fun to drive on the surface of the moon, until you realise that full gravity hurts and you don't get to drive a moon buggy. A journey to Banbury or Oxford is now worked out by how many axles you'll need to replace. Seriously though, the cumulative gouges in the roads around Deddington are voluminous enough to turn the Clifton Everglades into a desert. They're so deep there's a rumour HS2 is in there. The potholes are so defined that they're being charged council tax and sent polling cards. Are these the traffic calming measures we were warned about?

**Aaron Bliss**  
*aaronjbliss@hotmail.com*



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## CALLING ALL CLUBS

### Photographic Society

On a dark and rainy February evening, we welcomed photographer Roger Hance, joining us virtually from Colchester, to share insights into the wildlife that visit his garden. Roger explained that the key to successful garden wildlife photography lies in using a well-camouflaged hide or setting up discreetly in a summer house or shed. A good zoom lens is essential for capturing activity across different areas of the garden without disturbing the animals.

Roger has developed several creative setups to attract birds. One of his favourites is a moss-covered log with small holes filled with peanut butter, suet and seeds. Another is an additional perch beside his standard bird feeder, allowing birds to queue naturally while he photographs them. Roger camouflages parts of his house exterior with camouflage sheeting and wooden panels painted in earth tones that helps the structures blend seamlessly into the background of his photographs, ensuring the wildlife remains the focal point. He has a specially adapted pond in his garden that includes a shallow, plant-rich edge which attracts frogs. Roger emphasised that the secret to photographing frogs is to get down low and adopt a 'frog's-eye view' rather than shooting from a standing position. He also showcased his moth-attracting setup consisting of a blue fluorescent light, a cardboard box and egg trays placed outdoors overnight. By morning it often contains a selection of moths which he then photographs against carefully chosen natural backdrops. His neighbour's garden attracts jays and newts, offering him further opportunities.

Roger highlighted his successful YouTube channel where he shares detailed explanations of his various setups and techniques. His content is freely available for anyone interested in garden wildlife photography.

We're delighted and honoured to welcome the super talented Nicholas Posner to our March meeting talking about 40 Years of Celebrity Portraiture. Make it your 2026 resolution to join us. Come along and enjoy inspiring talks from our wonderful guest speakers.

**Courtney Killpack**  
[www.addphoto.co.uk](http://www.addphoto.co.uk)

### Hempton Book Club

Our most recent book was Amanda Craig's *The Golden Rule*. Without wanting to spoil the plot of this very enjoyable book, anyone who has seen Hitchcock's *Strangers on a Train* will immediately recognise elements of the story. A young woman, forced into poorly paid work to support herself and her daughter after her husband leaves her for a richer woman, meets another equally abused and angry woman on a train journey to Cornwall where they strike up an unholy alliance.

There are many twists and turns throughout the novel, most of which are based in a near idyllic Cornish landscape during a long hot summer, although there are darker sides as the book is shot through with instances of domestic abuse occurring in several of the relationships. The question is, does she stick to

her side of the bargain? Read on.

Would we read another book by this author? Yes. Would we recommend it to a friend? Absolutely.

**Jo Churchyard**  
[jochurchyard@hotmail.com](mailto:jochurchyard@hotmail.com)

### Royal British Legion

We are very pleased to welcome Richard Freeman from Croughton as a new member. The 51 Poppy Appeal tins and other donations have been counted. The grand total is £4,056 of which the largest collections were: Farmers' Market £660; Church £567; Duns Tew Coffee morning £382; PO and Co-op £281; Deddington School £256; Adderbury School £241; all pubs £192; Eagles £151; Seacombe Care Home £134; Adderbury Stores £125. We are most grateful to everyone who hosted a tin.

**Rob Forsyth Chairman**  
[Robert.s.forsyth@gmail.com](mailto:Robert.s.forsyth@gmail.com)

### Local Vocals Community Choir

I finally managed to see Gareth Malone, the TV choir-master, recently, in his Sing-along-a-Gareth show which was, as advertised, 'an immersive celebration of iconic music and the joy of singing together'. Gareth was the inspiration to start Local Vocals back in 2018, as well as my recollection of being in a school choir and finding immense enjoyment and new friends. A plethora of recent research tells me my recollections were well founded but, more extraordinarily, it has also found that singing is particularly beneficial for improving breathing, posture and muscle tension. Listening to and participating in music has been shown to be effective in pain relief too, as well as some evidence to suggest that music can play a role in sustaining a healthy immune system. Who knew? Thanks Gareth.

To find out more about our choir, which meets at 7.30pm in the primary school each Monday during term time, please go to our website [www.localvocalscc.co.uk](http://www.localvocalscc.co.uk). New members are always welcome.

**Alison Grieve**

### History Society

In February, Trevor Jackson, who had a 29-year career in the RAF, gave a detailed account, illustrated with impressive photographs, of the establishment and development of RAF Brize Norton over the past eighty years. With the threat of war imminent in the mid-1930s, a massive expansion programme of airfields in the south and east of England took place and work started at Brize Norton in 1935. The airfield, with grass landing areas, opened in August 1937 for Hawker Hart training aircraft and the Number 2 Flying Training School arrived in September. Airspeed Oxfords were introduced in 1939.

In 1940 German reconnaissance flights flew over Brize Norton and in that August, 46 planes were destroyed by a Junkers JU88 attack. Three more bombings took place but no further planes were lost. To deflect the enemy away from Brize Norton a decoy air-

## CALLING ALL CLUBS

*Continued from p25*

field was constructed at nearby Chimney and a Q-type night decoy at Tadpole Bridge. After glider operations began in 1942 concrete runways were constructed in 1943. Airspeed Horsa gliders deployed troops and equipment into enemy held territory particularly in the 1944 D-Day and Market Garden operations.

After World War II the base was in full use by the US Air Force during the Cold War, operating Boeing B-29s, B47 Stratojets and B52 Stratofortress bombers from an extended runway. The RAF took back Brize Norton in 1964 and in 1976 the Parachute Training School arrived. The Tactical Medical Wing was established in 2012. Brize Norton played a key role in various conflicts including the Falklands War, the Gulf and Bosnia/Kosovo, Iraq and Afghanistan. Major infrastructure developments have enabled it to handle large aircraft such as the Boeing C-17 Globemaster III, Airbus A400M Atlas and VC10s. It has become the primary Joint Air Transport Hub for the UK Armed Forces integrating strategic/tactical air transport and aerial refuelling to support global operations, including training, airborne assault, and humanitarian missions including repatriation of dead and injured personnel, support for NATO resupply missions to Ukraine, the 2023 earthquake in Turkey and the airlift of British nationals from Sudan.

On 12 March, Christopher Hotten will be speaking about James Lees-Milne who worked for the National

Trust from 1936 to 1973. He was instrumental in saving such places as Snowhill, Hidcote and Charlecote for the nation.

**Jean Dipper**  
*jean.dipper28@gmail.com*

### Book Group

We enjoyed Andrew Miller's *Now We Shall Be Entirely Free*. Set in 1809 during the Peninsular Wars, it is a combination of an historical novel and a thriller. From the first chapter there is a great sense of time and place, with an increasing touch of menace.

Captain John Lacroix returns home physically and mentally broken after the desperate retreat from the battle of Corunna. He is nursed back to health but is secretly troubled by his knowledge of a massacre which occurred during the retreat. Under pressure to re-join the army, he decides to flee to the Hebrides, unaware that two men are on a mission to track and kill him for his alleged role in the massacre.

We thought the writing was excellent. The main characters are complex and memorable, fleshing out themes of desperation, courage and conscience. Vivid descriptions of people, towns and landscapes are enhanced by traces of social history. We had varying reactions to the ending but found it a really gripping read.

**The Book Group**

## SPORT

### Deddington Tennis Club

Even the most enthusiastic of our members have had tennis interruptions over the last few, very wet weeks. Despite the weather, our winter season is in full swing. We've teams in both midweek and weekend leagues and fixtures have somehow been going ahead. I'll report on the team results at the end of the season.

As well as our usual offer of social and competitive tennis, and group and individual coaching, the club has recently introduced a cardio tennis session on Saturday mornings. This is available to non-members. It's a fun and high energy way to keep fit while also practising a few tennis skills. You don't have to be a good tennis player to take part. If you'd like to know more contact Ed on 07901 688013.

If you'd like to find out more about the club and what we have on offer, check out our website [www.deddingtontennis.com](http://www.deddingtontennis.com). We also post tennis club news on Facebook Deddington Tennis Club and Instagram @deddingtontennis.

**Becky Jones**

### Deddington Town FC

#### First team results

17.01.26	Blockley (a) (CUP)	D 2-2 (won 5-4 on pens) Fountain (2)
24.01.26	Hardwick Res (a)	W 2-0 Ringys, Arnold
31.01.26	SWIS 313 (h)	W 4-0 Hardy, Atherton, Thornton J (2)

#### Reserve team results

17.01.26	FC Kayi Res (h) (CUP)	W 13-1 Newton (5) Henn (3), Jackson (2), Lewis, Caro, Warman, Devine, Jones
----------	-----------------------	---

More sensational results for both teams as we move into 2026, as the Humbugs blew away Hardwick and SWIS 313 without conceding, while progressing on penalties in the Lord Jersey Cup. As for the Latics, they were definitely unlucky for some when plundering THIRTEEN goals against the hapless Kayi Reserves. Ciaran Newton stole the show with five goals, while Aedan Henn netted a hat-trick and Matt Jackson helped himself to a brace in an utter annihilation in the Geoff Wilson Cup quarter finals. The teams are first and second in their respective divisions and progressing in cups, what more could you ask for? Where will you be when silverware is ready to be claimed at season's end?

**Aaron Bliss**  
 07909 642882

### Deddington Town FC – Youth

The Under 15s who play in the B League of the Oxfordshire Youth Football League had a 0-6 home defeat to Thame United, followed by 2-1 home win over Chadlington and 1-1 away draw at Kidlington Youth. The Under 14s playing in the Witney and District Youth League had a 0-8 home defeat to Banbury Irish, a 1-11 home defeat to Combe, 1-3 win at Chesterton



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## CLUBS

and 4–1 away defeat at Chadlington. The Under 13s playing in the C league had a 2–1 defeat at SWIS, and 3–7 home defeat to Moreton Rangers. The Under 12s playing in the C League had a 2–1 win over Stonesfield and 3–7 home defeat to Longford Park.

We will have our presentation day at the Windmill on Sunday 7 June to celebrate the achievements of all our players and the work put in by managers and coaches through the season. We are looking for two sponsors this year – one to sponsor our presentation day programme and the other to sponsor our player award trophies. If you are a local business who is interested, get in touch now.

If you want to get involved with the club as a volunteer or a sponsor, contact Roger Sykes, Club Development Officer, 07899 914425 or carsykes@btinternet.com. Further information about the club is on our website – [www.deddingtontownfc/](http://www.deddingtontownfc/) or visit us on Facebook [www.facebook.com/DeddingtonTownFc](http://www.facebook.com/DeddingtonTownFc).

**Roger Sykes**

### Deddington Cricket Club

Winter nets began on Tuesday 10 February at Heyford Park School from 7.00–8.00pm. They will run every Tuesday up to and including 24 March. New players of any abilities are always very welcome, please contact us for more details if you are interested. Outdoor nets will start at the Windmill in early April, assuming it ever stops raining.

Over the summer, the club competes in the Cherwell League divisions 7 and 9. There are games every week at the Windmill through to early September. The men play on a Saturday and the ladies on Sunday. Fixtures for the summer have now been announced: the men's 1st XI start on Saturday 9 May at home to

Chipping Norton, while our 2nds travel to Swinbrook. Full details are available on the Cherwell Cricket League website.

We're also planning to run All Stars and Dynamos sessions at the club through the early summer for children aged 5–11. These sessions will run on a Friday evening – further details of this will be on our website and Facebook page once confirmed. Spaces are normally booked very quickly so please keep a lookout for this if you are interested.

We're always on the lookout for new players, supporters, scorers and umpires. If you'd like to get involved with us in any capacity, then we'd love to hear from you.

**Richard Munro 07917 208190**

**[richardmu.ssl@gmail.com](mailto:richardmu.ssl@gmail.com)**

**[www.facebook.com/DeddingtonCricketClub](http://www.facebook.com/DeddingtonCricketClub)**

**[www.deddingtoncricket.co.uk](http://www.deddingtoncricket.co.uk)**

### Deddington Original Golf Society

Your committee is putting the finishing touches to the golfing programme for 2026 and can announce the following venues:

Monday 11 May Newbury & Crookham GC

Monday 8 June Northwood GC

Tuesday 11 August Leamington & County GC

Friday 4 September TBA Plus BBQ Evening

Friday 11 December Tadmarton Heath 9 Hole Alliance plus Christmas Dinner and party.

If you're new to the area and play golf, you would be most welcome to join the Deddington Original Golf Society.

**Tony Low**

**[dogsgolf23@gmail.com](mailto:dogsgolf23@gmail.com)**

## YOUTH

### 1st Deddington Scout Group

#### Cubs

The Cubs have had a fantastic start to the new year. They've enjoyed learning about Burns Night, taking part in Scottish-themed games and deciphering traditional phrases. They also created their own shadow puppets and performed plays, which were hugely entertaining. We held a paper plane derby where the Cubs designed and tested their planes for speed, skill, and precision.

**Tina Deacon**

**[deddingtoncubs@gmail.com](mailto:deddingtoncubs@gmail.com)**

#### Scouts

Started the new year off with a bang, or rather a splat, by designing and building an outer covering to protect an egg from a heady drop from a window. We used hard boiled eggs for the project, not as much fun as raw ones but a lot easier to clean up. Then on to a topic much appreciated by boys and teenagers – sleep. We looked at the sleep cycle, things to avoid for a good kip and made worry dolls that are designed to take away your problems as you sleep.

We took two teams (eight Scouts) to the District Swimming Gala for the first time in years. What a success; not only did they win an individual race, one of the relays and get two seconds and a third, but they also managed to end up as joint overall winners. So proud of them all.

**Pete Churchyard**

**[deddingtonscouts@gmail.com](mailto:deddingtonscouts@gmail.com) 1st Deddington**

### 1st Deddington Guides

These few weeks have flown by! The tea party hosted by the Panda Patrol was very enjoyable with a variety of cakes and drinks served by the hostess for each table.

We had quite an audience for the fashion show presented by Phoenix Patrol. They organised all the girls on the catwalk with a variety of outfits. Well done, all. We will be rounding off this half term with pancakes.

All girls 10 and over are welcome to come along and see what we get up to.

**Maggie Rampley**

**07957 600755**

## DEDDINGTON PRIMARY SCHOOL

At Deddington Church of England Primary School, our vision, Inspire, Believe, Achieve ... let your light shine, is at the heart of everything we do. We believe every child carries their own unique light: their strengths, their character, and their potential. Our role is to nurture, encourage and celebrate this. Rooted in the words from Matthew 5:14 & 16, 'You are the light of the world... let your light shine before others', this message reminds our children to recognise their value and to use their gifts to make a positive difference within our school and wider community.

To mark Children's Mental Health Week, one of our Year 5 pupils wrote a poem at home:

This is my place, wild and free and I belong here.  
This is my place where my imagination grows.  
This is my place where I believe in anyone.  
This is my place where everyone is included in our school community!

We are also delighted to be working in partnership with Oxfordshire County Council on their Green Infrastructure in Schools Pilot Study. This initiative



uses nature-based solutions to create healthier learning environments by reducing exposure to air pollution, minimising road traffic noise, and increasing biodiversity across our outdoor spaces. Some of you may have spotted the yellow wire cage surrounding the air quality sensor on Banbury Road. Phase one has begun with the collection of data both outside the school and within the school grounds.

Over half term, new planters will be installed in the car park area next to the astroturf. In April, children will help plant them up, supported by staff, parents and the county council. Although the plants will start small, they will soon grow to provide additional shade on the astroturf and enrich biodiversity with a variety of species that support wildlife and pollinators. Year 5 pupils will also take part in an air quality workshop during April.

To read more news from the school, our newsletters are available on our school website. Simply visit the Parent section and select Newsletters.

**Clive Evans**  
[cevens@deddington.oxon.sch.uk](mailto:cevens@deddington.oxon.sch.uk)

## DEDDINGTON ENVIRONMENT NETWORK

### *A Year of Action and an Invitation to Get Involved*

It's easy to feel that climate action has gone backwards recently. With political shifts in the US and elsewhere — including Donald Trump once again pushing against climate policies — it can seem like the world is losing momentum. But the climate hasn't improved just because politics has changed. The floods, heatwaves, biodiversity loss and rising energy costs are still with us and the need for practical local action remains as urgent as ever.

That's why the Deddington Environment Network (DEN) continues to focus on what we can do here in our villages to build a healthier and more resilient future. The good news is that a great deal has happened over the past 12 months.

Over the last year, DEN has supported and organised a wide range of events and activities. We held two litter picks to tackle rubbish hotspots. We ran market stalls and outreach events, including one at the Deddington Festival, where we offered an electric bike for people to experience what low-carbon travel can feel like in real life.

We hosted a home energy information session in the church, exploring how home heating and energy systems are changing and what the future of energy could look like locally. We supported the annual Clifton orchard maintenance day and wassail, a wonderful mix of heritage, biodiversity and community spirit. In July we ran the ever-popular Swift Walk.

The well-attended visits and talks included a fascinating tour of the North Aston organic market garden led by head grower, Mark Stay, and our Hungry for

Change film screening and discussion with local experts in food, farming and conservation. The long-established annual Fenemore farm tour was once again sold out. Other events included a talk by a local vet on sustainability and animal health and a session with Liz Nicholson on greening RHS gardens, full of practical ideas for anyone wanting to make their garden more wildlife-friendly. We also helped host a community engagement evening in January.

Alongside events, we have continued discussions with the parish council about biodiversity policy, and assisted with coordination of successful opposition to a planning application in Hempton, where environmental concerns were an important part of the local response.

We'd love to do more — but we need more people to get involved. The help we need is often small but important: assisting at events, helping with set-up and clear-up, supporting litter picks, helping organise talks or film nights, or contributing ideas and local knowledge a couple of hours now and then can make a real difference. You don't need to be an expert, and you don't need to take on anything major.

As a side note, we also host a friendly monthly People, Planet, Pint gathering in Deddington and surrounding villages, which is a relaxed way to meet others interested in these topics.

If you'd like to get involved or find out more, please contact me.

**Nick Smith**  
[nick@thesmiths.co.uk](mailto:nick@thesmiths.co.uk)



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# DEDDINGTON DATA



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CITIZENS ADVICE	03330 383221
HEALTH CENTRE DEDDINGTON	01869 338611
<b>HOSPITALS:</b>	
Churchill	0300 304 7777
New Foscoate (Private)	01295 252281
Horton General	0300 304 7777
John Radcliffe	0300 304 7777
Oxford, The Manor (Private)	01865 307777
Nuffield Orthopaedic Centre	0300 304 7777
Katharine House Hospice	01295 229940
NHS Non emergency	111
PARISH CLERK	01869 337447
(Monday 9.00am–12.30pm, Wednesday 9.00–5.00pm, Thursday 9.00–12.30pm)	
POLICE (non-emergency, 24 hrs)	101
PRIMARY SCHOOL (C of E)	01869 338430
PFSU	01869 337484
VILLAGE NURSERY	01869 337383

DEDDINGTON LIBRARY	01865 816010
Monday	2.00–7.00pm
Wednesday	9.30am–1.00pm
Thursday	1.00–5.00pm
Saturday	9.30am–1.00pm

<b>TRAVEL:</b>	
Pulham & Sons (Coaches) Ltd	01451 820369
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National Rail Passenger Enqs	03457 48 49 50
OurBus Bartons	01235 849410
Oxford Bus Company	01865 785400
Oxfordshire Comet	01865 323201
Stagecoach Bus Company	01865 772250
Traveline (Public Transport)	0871 200 2233
<b>UTILITIES:</b>	
Gas Escapes (24hrs)	0800 111 999
Electricity – any supplier	
Emergency/Power cut	105
Careline (over 60s)	0800 833 408
Ofgem	020 7901 7295
Thames Water (24hrs)	0800 316 9800
WARRINER SCHOOL, Bloxham	01295 720777
WINDMILL CENTRE	07720 834006
OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL	01865 519800

**DEDDINGTON CLUBS & SOCIETIES:** The full list of contacts is available from the Library and Deddington OnLine website at <http://www.deddington.org.uk/directory>.

**DEDDINGTON CHURCHES** See section inside



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