



**The Baldons and
Nuneham Courtenay
Newsletter**

December 2023

—

January 2024

FROM REV TERESA

A long time ago I lived in New York, right in the middle of Manhattan in an area called Chelsea Square. I lived in a building dedicated to Rev Clement Clarke Moore who owned most of the land in Chelsea Square and was the author of the famous poem 'Twas the night before Christmas'; so of course the community made a big thing of Christmas and we had a big gathering of families early in December with Christmas food and drink and we always had a reading of the poem by my neighbour Professor Corney (who looked like Santa Claus) with all the children, including mine, gathered on the floor at his feet and a roaring fire behind them. Very jolly and very Christmassy!

But not everyone enjoys this time of year or the season of Christmas. Some people miss family members, some people are lonely, some people just feel overwhelmed by all the demands of preparing for Christmas celebrations. It can feel like you are standing in the darkness around the Christmas Crib, while others are in the light.

This juxtaposition of light and darkness is in many religions and world faiths. In November Hindus celebrated Diwali, the festival of lights which celebrates the triumph of good over evil, and light over darkness. In December the Jewish festival of Hannukah is kept which remembers the miracle that happened during a dark time of Jewish persecution, where just a day's supply of oil allowed the Menorah (an eight branched candlestick) in the Temple in Jerusalem to remain lit for eight days.

For Christians the seasons of Advent and Christmas reflect on the coming of the light of God into our darkness. The hope that a better future will be ours, because God came to us as a child in a manger to bring all things to fulfilment.

So whether you are standing in the light or the dark this Christmas season, may you know the presence of Love in your life, and may you have Hope for the New Year.

The Revd Teresa Stewart-Sykes is Team vicar for *The Baldons with Nuneham Courtenay, Berinsfield and Drayton St Leonard.*

e-mail: RevTeresa@outlook.com and tel: 07823 809112

*Our current curate is **The Revd Sorrel Shamel-Wood.***

Our safeguarding officer is Sara McDouall: saramcdouall@gmail.com

A clergy person can always be reached in a pastoral emergency by ringing the Dorchester Team Office 01865 340007

THE BALDONS CAROL SERVICE

MINCE PIES NEEDED PLEASE!

The Baldons Carol Service 17th December at 6pm will be followed as usual by mulled wine and mince pies – if you can help by providing mince pies,

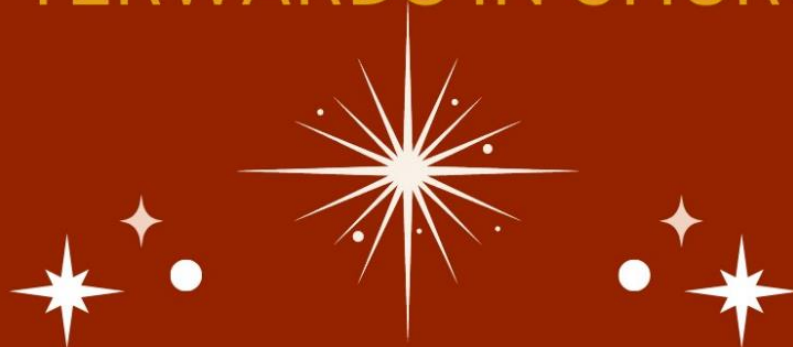
please get in touch with Catherine Mason on

catherinevmason@gmail.com / 07879 626828 / 01865 343503



Sunday
17th December 6pm
St Peter's
Marsh Baldon

EVERYONE WELCOME
WINE & MINCE PIES
AFTERWARDS IN CHURCH



CHRISTMAS WREATH MAKING



Now is the time to sign up for the ever-popular
Christmas wreath making workshop
Book now as places are limited!

It's always great fun, no experience is needed.
Everyone goes home with a beautiful wreath to hang on
their door.

As usual, there will be coffee, mince pies and mulled
wine.

Sunday 10th of December 10.30 to 12.00
...Marsh Baldon Village Hall.
£15 for basic materials and refreshments.

Please bring extra foliage
Green/silver/variegated, berries and cones and
anything you would like to experiment with.
We will have some... But there is never too much

Remember to bring your own secateurs, wire clippers
and scissors

Wear warm clothes in case you want to work outside.

To book a place please email:
Dianabelli@btinternet.com 343 384
Proceeds will go to maintenance of the village orchards.

A note from Lindsey Hutchinson

I would like to extend my sincere thanks to everyone for all of their love, help and support over what has been and continues to be a very very difficult and sad time, not only for me but for many of you as well.

As you know Kevin was and always will be the absolute love of my life. He really was the kindest and most beautiful gent who gave so much and asked for very little. It has been quite overwhelming and a great comfort to know just how much Kevin was loved by so many.

Thank you all so much for your generosity and kindness, you have helped to raise money for Cancer Research, a charity dear to Kevin's heart, and also a memorial garden to be installed at New Farm House, something and somewhere he loved dearly.



In particular, I would like to thank the Baldon Wine Club for raising so much towards these at their summer party raffle. It is particularly at times like these that being part of a community such as the Baldons is truly appreciated.

Thank you all again and much love, Lindsey x x x

POPPY APPEAL 2023

My heartfelt thanks to everybody who gave so generously to the Poppy Appeal. This year we raised £927.55 in our villages, an amazing amount.

Thanks also to all the people who gave their time collecting donations.

Iris Wright

MARSH BALDON CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Meet our Marsh Baldon School Council



We are Christopher, James, Rylee, Lily-Grace, Neve, Maggie and Savannah and we are very kind. Everyone in school knows who we are and that we are here to help them.

Let us tell you about our school. We are a lovely community and we are very welcoming to everyone. What makes Marsh Baldon special is that we are all friends and we look out for each other. The teachers are all very nice!

Our school values are:

Courage, love, respect, cooperation, integrity and equality. We talk about these in assembly and through stories that we share. In Marsh Baldon CE Primary School you will see everyone display these values.

Learning at Marsh Baldon

Last term, the Red Kites (Class 3) went to the Ashmolean Museum and Ufton Court as part of our Egyptian topic. School trips really help us to learn new facts. They are also good fun.

The Swallows (Class 2) visited The Earth Trust for a Roman Day. This helped us imagine what it was like living a day in the life of a Roman person.

In Woodpeckers (Class 1) they did lots of Harvest activities, like popping corn, digging potatoes, grinding wheat and making bread. They also visited St Peter's Church to look for symbols.

This term we are all looking forward to the Explorer Dome coming to our school. We are also looking forward to all the Christmas activities that are planned. Did you know that we are having a Christmas Celebration after our school carol concert on Friday 15th December?

We had a visit from Ofsted last term. We all feel very proud that the inspectors saw how much we enjoy coming to school and that we behave well and are friendly and respectful. Would you like to read our report? Then visit our school website or the Ofsted website.

Thank you for letting us contribute to the village newsletter.

From, Marsh Baldon School Council



Free! Berinsfield Church **Free!**
presents

All ages welcome **EXPERIENCE CHRISTMAS** **Fun and interactive!**



Pet the live animals in the stable **Photo Booth!**



Saturday 9th December
11am-3pm

We would be delighted to have contributions of holly for decorating our Churches.

Both churches will be decorated on Saturday, 16th December in time for the Carol Service at Marsh Baldon the following day and the Crib Service at Toot Baldon on Christmas Eve.

Any holly can be left in the church by 10am on Saturday 16th and would be greatly appreciated.

BALDONS PARISH COUNCIL NEWS

The Parish Council met on Monday 13th November. Next meeting will be Monday 9th January 2024.

20 mph scheme for the Baldons

The responses to the recent consultation have been submitted. The final decision on implementation will be made by the County Council on the 14th of December.

Play Area Consultation

Many thanks to all Villagers who took the time to complete the 'Play Area Questionnaire' which closed on the 12th of November, this is a consultative process your thoughts and ideas are much appreciated.

We received responses from 25% of households within The Baldons, with 68% in favour, 27% against and 5% with no preference regarding the possible installation of a play area.

The responses strongly supported a wooden, unfenced play area which included adult exercise equipment.

The Parish Council will progress to the next stage of this project, consulting with professionals in this field regarding suitable locations and designs with natural aesthetics to complement our rural surroundings. Once this information has been gathered, we will invite all Villagers for further consultation.

Tinny Lane clear up

Thank you to all the volunteers who helped with the first stage process to clear the overgrown foliage and saplings and to clear the drainage ditch. The day was a great success with lots of hard work. Thanks to all who loaned tools and also to those who provided coffee and cake for the workers! Special thanks to Martin Delafield, who arranged the disposal of the substantial waste material generated. The next stage will be in the Spring 2024 to upgrade the path further.

Village litter clear up

Thank you to everyone who turned out to help with the village clear up. We managed to clear up a lot of litter and also some fly tipped rubbish from the side of the road. The next clear up will be in Spring 2024.

Marsh Baldon Green

The peninsula opposite the Seven Stars is being damaged by the turning of large vehicles. We are making plans to reinforce the bank and hopefully prevent vehicles damaging the corner.

There are a number of timber posts along the road opposite the school which need replacing. This is in hand.

The Baldons Neighbourhood Plan

We have now formed a Steering committee and working group and are working with SODC Neighbourhood planning officers. The task of drafting an updated plan will commence during December 2023. A consultation on the proposed updates will be circulated. (date tba) The revision of the plan does not necessitate a referendum, but we will ensure regular consultation with villagers throughout the process. Timescales for the process to be completed would suggest that we will be ready to submit the draft revisions to SODC for consultation March/April 2024.

Toot Baldon Conservation area extension:

In tandem with the neighbourhood planning process, we will commission a comprehensive conservation area appraisal. The aim of this is to support the extension of the Toot Baldon Conservation area to include the Grade II* listed St Lawrence Church and the historic graveyard, and including the tree lined avenue that leads to it.

Planning matters:

At the time of writing the following applications had been received and are under consideration:

P23/S3778/HH Court Leys Toot Baldon

Single storey pool house, with flat green roof & attached pergola in association with swimming pool which is to be constructed in accordance with P23/S0949/LDP.

P23/S3687/HH Dovers The Green Marsh Baldon OX44 9LP

Conversion and extension of existing garage to form ancillary accommodation to main dwelling.

The Gallery and Picture Framing

Original Art, Ceramics and Fused Glass



Long Barn 2c, Little Baldon Farm, Little Baldon, OX44 9PU
We are open Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Fridays 10:30am - 3:00pm.

Please make an appointment.

gallerythe00@gmail.com / www.janeelsworthart.com

07841 590237

NUNEHAM COURTENAY PARISH COUNCIL NEWS

Former Cockadoo

Eleven members of the public turned out to hear local developer Oxana Scheers of Britannica Homes address the recent parish council meeting regarding possibilities for bringing the former Cockadoo/Harcourt Arms building back to life with options to create homes or hospitality facilities.

The site is owned by the Wellington Pub Company, which is in turn owned by the Reuben Brothers. She said she has received a floor plan but has not yet viewed the property. Residents said they thought it has probably suffered a lot of damage in the past few years while it was empty.

Oxana Scheers said residential and commercial uses represented completely different business challenges. A resident who works in the hospitality industry thought it might cost around £2m to turn the property into a boutique hotel – which was the kind of development many residents said they would like to see and for which they thought the site was ideal.

An immediate neighbour said he was concerned to see the building brought back into any kind of use as people are breaking in and stripping the copper piping.

20mph limit

The County Council approved the introduction of a 20mph limit on the A4074 through the village at a meeting on 12th October., but the bus company Go Ahead (which owns Thames Travel) objected that many buses use the route and any compromise to journey times would affect the viability of services. The company said this is especially true of the Oxford to Wallingford service, where customers have already commented on long journey times.

In reply, County Council officers said average speeds through the village are already only 23.1mph at the southern end and 26.4mph at the northern end, so the 20mph limit will only make a small difference.

There were three other responses to the public consultation: the Police re-iterated their usual concerns; Unlimited Oxfordshire, a charity focused on people with physical and sensory disabilities, supported the proposals but asked for advance warning signs, for zebra crossings at each end of the village and for a 40mph limit to the south between the village and the Golden Balls roundabout; someone from Rickmansworth wrote to say that the interests of the thousands of drivers who use the A4074 are far more important than those of the few people who live in the village.

County Council officers said they could see no immediate benefit for a 40mph limit south of the village and, unfortunately, the County Council is not going to provide advance warning signs. It is simply going to replace the 30mph signs with 20mph signs, so drivers approaching from the Golden Balls roundabout at 60mph will suddenly encounter the 20mph signs.

The parish council has since received this message: "I live in Kennington and work at Culham Science Centre, so I often commute through your village by car. It's always saddened me to see the difficulty of having a major A road divide a community. So, I'm glad to see your recent change to a 20mph limit which will

hopefully allow people to cross the road and encourage drivers like me to give way to people crossing/vehicles pulling out.”

X40 buses

The County Council is going out to tender for increased frequency of the X40 bus that runs through the village on its way between Oxford and Wallingford. The contract is to last until March 2028 and will cost over £1.5m. It will involve new, more reliable vehicles.

Buses will run every 15 minutes between Oxford and Wallingford, compared with every 30 minutes now during the day Mondays to Saturdays. Importantly, buses will operate half-hourly via the Abingdon Road in Oxford.

These changes will be made possible by using Section 106 money from developers and money from the County Council's Bus Services Improvement Plan (which is funded by Central Government).

The Parish Council has been pressing the County Council to act on the complaints people raised at a parish meeting in March 2022 and the re-introduction of an Abingdon Road service is good news for people who have been put off by the extra time the buses have taken to travel along the Iffley Road in Oxford.

Mandy Rigault is the Parish Transport Representative and liaises with Dave Harrison from the County Council's Public Transport Team. Achieving these changes has been a classic example of the steady work parish councillors have to keep up to get things done.

The only drawback is that Thames Travel has said it will only serve the Baldons Lane stop once the 20mph limit is introduced through the village. It says this is to offset the delay it says will be caused by the 20mph limit.

Motorcycle noise

Dorchester Parish Council has contacted this parish council and others in the area to propose forming a working group to develop a combined strategy to deal with the shared problem of motorcycle noise, hopefully with the involvement of the Police.

Dorchester Parish Councils feels there was some progress during the summer with the Police taking a more pro-active approach and local Speedwatch schemes being set up but feel it would be good to build on this excellent start as a group of councils to explore what more can be done.

Next meeting

The next meeting of the parish council is due to take place on Tuesday 9th January at 7pm in the Village Hall. Why not come along?

Geoffrey Ferres,

Parish Clerk - Nuneham Courtenay Parish Council

Tel: 07419 991623 - Email: clerk@nunehamcourtenay-pc.gov.uk

HO HO HO REAL MUSIC
A FESTIVE MIX OF ACOUSTIC ELVIS JOHNNY BUDDY AND MORE...



PLAYING LIVE
DECEMBER 9
8.30PM

THE SEVEN STARS
MARSH BALDON

SEVEN STARS UPDATE

- Christmas menu available for the month of December
- Quiz Nights on Wednesdays, Christmas Quiz in December
- Rock N Roll Night - Live music night in December
- New Year's Eve Celebration - Live music, Food, fireworks
- Village Community Night – January
- Lohri Festival – Winter Folk Festival from Punjab

Festive season important dates

- Open for Christmas Eve until 8 pm
- Open for drinks on Christmas Day - 12 to 4 pm
- Open on New Year's Day

BALDONS VILLAGE HALL

If you're hosting lots of people for a meal and are short of tables or chairs, Baldons Village Hall can help – for a small donation to hall funds, you are welcome to borrow tables or chairs.

Please contact Darren for more information: dbaber@rm.com or 340264.

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NUNEHAM COURTENAY VILLAGE HALL NEWS

Christmas Bingo and Lights

Let's all switch on our lights and get ready to Celebrate the season!

Christmas Bingo is Friday 8th December. Doors open at 7pm. All are welcome for a bit of a village social. Eyes down for 7:30. Be in it to win it - with a chance to win one of Shelia Brookes' amazing Christmas Cakes.



Yoga is every Monday, £3 a session. Message Jenny to join to the WhatsApp group.

The village hall is available for bookings!

Thank you to Caroline Duffy for all the work and energy that you have put into the hall. We wish you the best for all your future endeavours.

IS IT A SIGN?

Is it me, or did the leaves not change to their Autumn shades as early this year? Normally, September and October is when I become aware of the vivid colour changes, but truth be told, I didn't really seem to start noticing it until November. At the same time, I noticed a couple of Daffodils, with leaves already 6 inches tall, when I was visiting the village of Flore, in Northamptonshire. Meanwhile, at the same time again, locally here, in Oxfordshire, I noticed some spring 'weeds' already emerging, and even a number of Dandelions in full bloom, months earlier than they should have been. I remember when I lived in The Peak District, the fields there were often bright yellow with Dandelions in late Spring and Early Summer, so was taken aback to see so many in flower here in November.

Is this a sign of global warming, whether its man-made or not, or do you see these anomalies year on year? I'd be interested to hear what you are seeing at a time of year that maybe you shouldn't. Or what you are in fact not seeing that realistically perhaps you should. We're not likely to end the debate in these pages of whether man-made influenced global warming is real or not, but I'm interested to hear what's happening out there on the ground as it were.

By the way, I've been asked if I will be seen out and about less now I occasionally need to use a wheelchair. No chance, I'll be getting my wheels just as muddy as my walking boots, so I hope to bump into you in a greenspace soon. If you see me out and about, come say "hello".

Happy Gardening

Stuart Mabbutt - Wildlife Gardening Specialist

01865 747243 - www.wildmaninspires.co.uk

THE BALDONS FUEL CHARITY

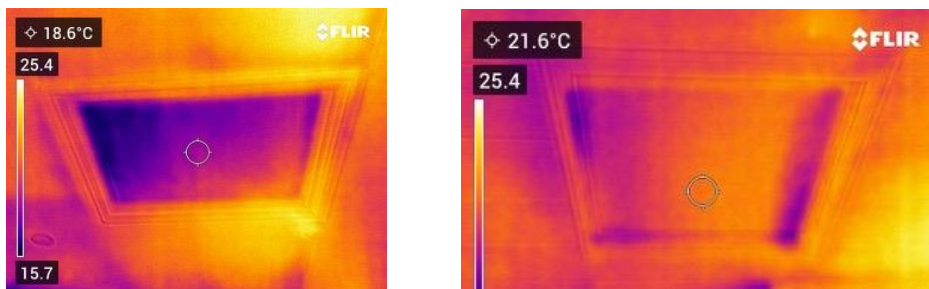
For the past 50 years, the Baldons Fuel Charity has been helping some residents living in Marsh, Toot or Little Baldon with their energy costs. Financial support has also been given towards personal alarm systems for the elderly, a new boiler, mobility aids, costs of education and in many other situations when financial help makes life a little easier.

If you are struggling with your fuel bills in these challenging times, or know anyone in the villages who is, please let us know. Either talk to one of us or obtain an application form for a grant from the Clerk, Emma Timms (341461). All applications are dealt with in the strictest confidence by the Trustees.

Reduce heat loss in your home

A reminder too that the Baldons Fuel Charity has bought a thermal imaging camera for village use. This is an easy-to-use camera which will help identify where your house is losing heat through draughts, insulation gaps etc.

As an example, the blue in the image on the left shows heat being lost through the loft hatch. The image on the right shows reduced heat loss after the loft hatch cover was insulated with a 50mm block of foam.



We can show you how the camera works if you haven't used one before.

If you would like to borrow the camera please contact Bruce Don, Tel: 01865 343330 or email bruce@bdonconsulting.co.uk

Trustees:

Ali Barne – (343624)

Bruce Don – 343330

David Greenaway – 343496

Alan Johns – 343268

Jacquie Lake - 343006

Chris Nichols - 343388

Alison Porter – 340405

Merry Christmas from The Maple Tree!



This month we have some dates for your calendar as well as our ongoing programme;

9th December – Christmas Tree pick up, The Maple Tree Market, gift stalls, refreshments, with mince pies galore!
10:00–11:30am

16th December – Double Trouble at Twinnies Christmas!
10:00–11:30am

22nd December – Christmas Disco from 4:00-5:30pm

20th January – the return of our popular Silent Auction

Mondays: Messy Mondays at 10:00-11:30am and Twinnies at 2:00-4:00pm

Tuesdays: Once Upon a Time at 10:00-11:30am

Wednesdays: Baby and Bump Cafe at 10:00am-12:00pm

Thursdays: Little Explorers at 10:00-11:30am

Fridays: Little Chatterboxes at 10:00-11:30am

Family Fun at 10:00-11:30am, 3rd Saturday every month

Village Outreach: The Maple Tree at Forest Hill Village Hall on Thursdays from 11:00am-12:00pm.

Check out our Website and Facebook page for our opening times over the Christmas break and for more details.

Have you thought about becoming a Friend of the Maple Tree offering monthly financial support or volunteering at one of the sessions above? These are two ways that you can support our lovely charity. (Charity number:1174117)

Thank you so much to everyone who has supported us this year, and especially to our lovely volunteers, who go above and beyond helping us during and after every session. We wish you all a wonderful Christmas and a very happy, healthy 2024!

We are here to help if you need advice or support: 01865 236700 or 07849 466249.

Email: info@mapletree.org.uk

Website: www.mapletree.org.uk

Facebook: www.facebook.com/TheMapleTreeWheatley

Instagram: @themapletreecentre

Laura Spencer

The Maple Tree Centre Manager



Heal

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The Dovecote Hair Studio

Hello! My name is Karen, and I have opened a small hair studio in the dovecote in Little Baldon Farm.

My hours, prices and online booking is available via my website
www.thedovecotehair.studio

or you can contact me direct on 07538993460.

Tuesday Thursday and Friday are long days with late appointments, while Wednesday and Saturday are by prior arrangement and as required.

Hope to see you soon, Kx



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FROM JOHN HOWELL MP

I would like to take this opportunity to wish all constituents a peaceful Christmas and to send my best wishes for the year ahead. I know that for many life is not easy and personal and global struggles can weigh us down. Whatever your beliefs I do sincerely hope that the peace of the Christmas season may bring some comfort and joy.

May I also take this opportunity to pass on my sincere thanks to the army of volunteers who give their time to help others in their communities in many different ways throughout the year. Our communities are strengthened by this generous service. Thank you all.

Now to a local issue which is regularly raised with me, that of Royal Mail deliveries. In some specific post code areas across the constituency mail is not being delivered on a regular basis and indeed at times people have not received post for over a week.

I have challenged Royal Mail on this on a number of occasions and in September met with senior staff to pursue matters further. A number of issues were explained as I set out on my website at the time. In a recent follow up meeting I was advised that there have been some changes in senior personnel with someone specifically brought in to oversee improvements to delivery in this area. Whilst due to staff absence and shortages they are not able to guarantee daily deliveries in some areas as yet they have committed to every second day deliveries within the next month.

Where there are delivery problems in specific post codes Royal Mail has promised a local investigation if given the post code detail. Staff shortages remain and if anyone is interested do look online on the Royal Mail website where vacancies are advertised.

It was also interesting to learn that some of the delays are with distribution via third party carriers before mail gets to Royal Mail itself for delivery. With sight of the envelope the team at Royal Mail can use the codes to track the precise journey of a letter to see where the delays are coming from. It was interesting to learn that organisations such as the NHS use these carriers which may explain why some important letters offering appointments are delayed. The situation will remain under review with Royal Mail.

On other matters, if there is a particular issue that concerns you, please do share your thoughts. If you would like to know more about my work on behalf of the Government, and in the Constituency, please do look at my website. The address is www.johnhowell.org.uk. My contact details are also on the website.

Oxfordshire Libraries

December Events at Berinsfield Library

Christmas colouring competition & Christmas craft table

1 December to 23 December,
library opening hours

Festive fun for all the family throughout the month



Clay Christmas decorations

Saturday 9 December, 10.30am – 12pm

Choose from a selection of clay Christmas tree decorations to decorate and take home.

Easy craft session for ages 4+ with a parent/carer



Christmas story time

Thursday 21 December, 3pm

Enjoy a selection of our favourite Christmas stories and choose some of your own!

Suitable for ages 3+ with a parent/carer



Monthly Book Club

Friday 22 December, 2pm

Discussion of this month's book over a coffee and mince pie, plus a review of our favourite books this year. New members very welcome!



@oxonlibraries



BerinsfieldLibrary

Telephone 01865 340771

email berinsfield.library@oxfordshire.gov.uk



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Unit 19 Wheatley Business Centre, Old London Road, Wheatley, Oxford, OX33 1XW

EVENTS IN DORCHESTER ABBEY

Sat 2nd Dec 10:00 am – 5:00 pm Dorchester Abbey Christmas Market

Come and enjoy our lovely Christmas Market in the beautiful surroundings of Dorchester Abbey. Loads of stalls full of gifts and Christmas food, with Wreaths to order or take away, all surrounded by the smell of Bratwurst and mulled wine and Christmas music. As always, the highlight of the Market is the Tea Room stall packed full of home made Christmas cakes and food to take away!

Sun 3rd Dec-7.30pm to 9.30pm A Jazzy Christmas at Dorchester Abbey

A feast of festive favourites and jazzy Christmas classics performed by singer Jo Harrop and pianist Paul Edis alongside a world class nine-piece band. £22 - £27
<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/a-jazzy-christmas-at-dorchester-abbey-tickets-717968602417?aff=oddtcreator>

Mon 4th Dec- Church Conservation Trust- 7pm-9pm Gregoriana Concert-

Join the Churches Conservation Trust for a glass of wine before listening to a performance from the Gregoriana choir. Tickets start from £17.50 per person and include a wine reception. All proceeds from this event will go towards supporting vital roof repair work to the nearby St Bartholomew's Church in Lower Basildon. Tickets can be purchased from: www.visitchurches.org.uk/DorchesterAbbeyChoir

Saturday 9th Dec- 7:00 pm – 9:30 pm OSJ- Britten Saint Nicolas Cantata-

Written in 1948, Britten's captivating Cantata conjures the adventures of St Nicholas, depicting the exploits, magic and miracles of this most beloved character. With its inclusion of popular hymns, OSJ Voices will join together with the audience to raise the roof in song, ensuring that the Christmas gift of music is delivered in perfect harmony. We start with a Sequence of Carols orchestrated by Jeremy Lubbock. Free tickets available for NHS workers and for the disabled. Please email admin@osj.org.uk. Tickets £5 to £30 from www.osj.org.uk

Thu 14th Dec- 6pm- 9.30pm- The Coming of Christmas 2023

Home Farm Trust's festive celebration event, returns for its 27th year. See the historic Abbey bathed in the glow of candles and Christmas lights at this special evening of festive music and readings. Featuring: The Donaghue Choir and guest speakers. Tickets £20 to include a programme and festive refreshments. Or treat yourself to an extra special experience with a VIP ticket: enjoy pre-reserved priority seating and VIP refreshments. www.hft.org.uk/coming-of-christmas

Sat 16th Dec- 7:00 pm – 9:30 pm OSJ- Handel Messiah-

Christmas wouldn't be complete without Handel's great oratorio. This seasonal classic will be performed by renowned soloists and backed by the full forces of the Orchestra of St John's and OSJ Voices. Free tickets available for NHS workers and for the disabled. Please email admin@osj.org.uk. Tickets £5 to £30 from www.osj.org.uk

Wed 20th Dec- 7:00 pm – 9:00 pm- Nadia Eide – Winter Light A Classical Christmas Concert. This truly is a show for the whole family, featuring well-loved classic songs sure to bring the festive cheer! Tickets £25 (£20 concessions) <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/winter-light-a-classical-christmas-concert-dorchester-abbey-tickets-746103213797?aff=oddtcreator>

Sun 31st Dec- 6pm- 8pm OSJ- New Years Eve Concert –

Get ready with the fizz! We welcome in 2024 with our ever-popular New Year's Eve concert – a highlight of our orchestral year. Full of toe-tapping favourites, this much-loved event with orchestra and choir is always a delightful way to usher in the New Year. Free tickets available for NHS workers and for the disabled. Please email admin@osj.org.uk. Tickets £5 to £30 from www.osj.org.uk

THE LAST SUPPER INSTALLATION AT THE ABBEY FOR THE NEXT 6 MONTHS

A sculpture made up of 50,000 keyboard keys, depicting one of Da Vinci's most recognisable paintings, has gone on display at Dorchester Abbey.

The keys create a mosaic effect on the artwork and also make up verses from the Bible as well as single words for visitors to discover. The sculpture, which took Peter Barnes five years to create, will be available during daylight hours at the abbey for the next six months.

Revd Jane Willis was delighted to welcome the artwork to the abbey. She said: "It is slightly larger than life size. The outline is the shape of Jesus and his disciples sitting round the table. It's quite dynamic – the way they are all moving and responding to one another in it. It is very rounded, very flowing in its appearance so it leaves your imagination to fill in the detail. It brings together the ancient and historic right into the here and now. When I saw it in real life it blew me away – quite surprisingly."



CHURCH SERVICES FOR DECEMBER 2023 AND JANUARY 2024

| | | | |
|---------------------------|---------|--------------|---------------------|
| 3 rd December | 10.30am | Toot Baldon | Holy Communion |
| 10 th December | 4.00pm | Toot Baldon | Evensong |
| 17 th December | 6.00pm | Marsh Baldon | Carol Service |
| 24 th December | 10.30am | Toot Baldon | Crib Service |
| 25 th December | 10.30am | Marsh Baldon | Christmas Communion |
| 31 st December | 10.30am | Toot Baldon | Team Service |
| 7 th January | 10.30am | Marsh Baldon | Holy Communion |
| 14 th January | 4.00pm | Marsh Baldon | Evensong |
| 21 st January | 9.30am | Toot Baldon | Holy Communion |
| 28 th January | 10.30am | Culham | Team Service |

CHURCH FLOWERS

| Date | Marsh | Toot |
|--|---------------------------------|----------------------------|
| ADVENT | No Flowers | |
| 16th December | Decorating for Christmas | |
| 7th January | Laura Martin | Vanessa, Linda & Tracey |
| 14th January | Iris Wright | |
| 21st & 28th January | Veronica Sandilands | Ann & Heather |



Wednesday 13th December and Wednesday 10th January
7.30pm

Marsh Baldon Village Hall
OX44 9LL

Wednesday 13th December, 7.30pm, in Marsh Baldon Village Hall

Come and join in our Christmas cheer at Filling Station - mulled wine and puddings followed by a Christmas carol jamming session! Come and bring an instrument if you play; sheet music provided, and chords, lyrics. Parts transposed for trumpet and saxophone. Or just come and sing.

Wednesday 10th January, 7.30pm, Marsh Baldon Village Hall

Our popular speaker Will Stuart Lee, curate at St Aldate's Church Oxford, kicks off our new year at the South Oxfordshire Filling Station. Come and hear Will sow the seeds of hope and Godly vision for your life in 2024.