

The Baldons and Nuneham Courtenay Newsletter



September 2023

FROM REV TERESA STEWART-SYKES AND REV JANE WILLIS (TEAM RECTOR – DORCHESTER ABBEY)

I've just spent a day hacking back brambles in my son's garden, so it's nice to be reminded by Jane, the Rector of Dorchester Abbey, that gardening is a joy!
Rev Jane writes:

We arrived here in Dorchester in the dead of winter – it really was very cold! And whatever this summer may have been – the first year with a new garden is always a journey of discovery. The Rectory garden has some very real delights – especially a glorious herbaceous border planted by my predecessors. It also has some challenges – it's size in the first place, but also brambles and bindweed and nettles which are beyond us to eradicate – we can only hope to keep them at bay. And one of the trees has needed major surgery! The Japanese Pagoda Tree, we learned the second largest in the country, has needed a very severe pruning for safety's sake.

Arriving in this team of churches and their local communities is also an amazing journey of discovery. As with our garden I think I will need the full cycle of 12 months to begin to feel anything other than new. But I am past feeling brand new – experiencing a growing love for these churches and communities as I get to know them, with all their joys and challenges (just like the garden!) – and caring for churches often feels very like caring for a garden – sowing and planting and pruning and clearing the brambles – creating conditions for health and growth.

Gardens feature through the story of the Bible – from the Garden of Eden, to Gethsemane where Jesus wept before his crucifixion, to the garden of the tomb where Jesus was laid to rest and where the resurrection was revealed – through to the end of the book – the hope of a restored creation – not back to Eden, better than that: restored, re-created, re-imagined, more glorious than the first – with Jesus the gardener declaring 'Behold I make all things new'.

And for now we share in God's work of re-creation in his world. Our cold wet British summer, along with the heatwaves experienced elsewhere, are a sharp reminder of the urgent need for us to be caring for the world God has entrusted to us. Jesus said 'I have come that they might have life, and have it to the full.' (John 10:10) – it's a verse many church schools draw on for their vision statements, and expresses God's longing for each and every one of us. All of us who have encountered the transformation Jesus brings are entrusted with sharing this good news – this gospel – with others.

On the first Sunday of September we will be having a Team Service in Dorchester Abbey – a Confirmation Service with Bishop Gavin, where six people will be committing their lives afresh to follow Jesus, and the church will be affirming them, confirming them in their faith. Do come to support and encourage them – it will be a great service where I hope we will all be encouraged and inspired in our faith.

And for now I leave you with the collect prayer for that first Sunday in September – may we all be open to the work of God the gardener in our lives:

Almighty God,
who called your Church to bear witness
that you were in Christ reconciling the world to yourself:
help us to proclaim the good news of your love,
that all who hear it may be drawn to you;
through him who was lifted up on the cross,
and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.
Amen.



**HARVEST
BRUNCH**

**17 SEP
9.30AM** JOIN US FOR BRUNCH!

**Followed by
a simple
Harvest Service**

St Lawrence's Toot Baldon

The poster features a light yellow background with autumn-themed illustrations. At the top corners, there are clusters of leaves in shades of orange, red, and brown. At the bottom, there are illustrations of golden wheat stalks on the left and right, and a central basket of fresh produce including carrots, a red tomato, and green leafy vegetables.

Pet Service

Sunday 10th September 4pm



St Peter's Churchyard

Marsh Baldon

Pets! Bring owners

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 who lives in Berinsfield.

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



VILLAGE APPLE PRESSING

Sunday 24th September
Marsh Baldon Village Hall
10.00am - 4.00pm



Come and join in the village apple pressing, and take away some delicious juice. Bring your apples if you have any. Make a donation towards the upkeep of the village orchards and the village churches.

Bring screw top wine bottles for your juice (these fit in the pasteuriser); spare bottles available on the day if you're short.

To avoid a 'bottle neck', if you're bringing apples for pressing please let us know if you can whether you're coming to the morning or afternoon slot:

10.00am – 12.30pm

1.30pm – 4.00pm

Contact:

1. Catherine Mason catherinevmason@gmail.com 07879 626 828
2. Diana Belli dianabelli@toucansurf.com 07779 537 765

HOMEMADE CAKES AND REFRESHMENTS

Available all day

Please bring **cash for donations and refreshments** as we cannot process electronic payments

All ages welcome. Make it a family event.



ARCh Reading Helpers needed in Berinsfield



ARCh volunteers work one to one with selected children in a primary school, close to their home or workplace, providing personalised support to boost confidence, build self-esteem and turn around negative attitudes to reading.

We are looking for more people across Oxfordshire to join us in making a real difference to children's lives.

All volunteers are vetted (including enhanced DBS) and receive initial and ongoing training and support as well as resources tailored to each child. [If you would like to get involved as a volunteer, please email info@archoxfordshire.org.uk](mailto:info@archoxfordshire.org.uk)

BALDONS PARISH COUNCIL NEWS

The village strategic plan

In response to suggestions from villagers and from councillors, a list of possible projects for the next four years was discussed at the July meeting. There is no doubt that not all these projects will be possible, given the council's finances, and will need grant-funding. In addition, the larger projects will not be undertaken without full consultation with the villages.

The list, in alphabetical order, is as follows:

- Clearing the village pond
- Clearing the west-side of the Green
- Electric-car charging points
- Hedgerow restoration
- Maintain the Green – an ongoing project
- Play provision on the Green
- Providing water to the allotments
- Replacement bridge over the east end of the ditch
- Tinny Lane

If you have any suggestions for projects that could be considered as part of the plan, or comments on the existing projects, please contact the Clerk at clerk@baldonspc.org

There has been ongoing work on the village plan projects and others:

- A new, wider, and more accessible bridge has been installed over the brook on the Green.
- The Council met with the OCC Countryside access officer to discuss improvements to Tinny Lane surface for users of the path. There is extensive work required and there is limited funding for this from OCC. However, several grants might be available from the Trust of Oxfordshire Environment and the Parish Council proposes to use some of its CIL funding for this project. There are new OCC signs at both ends of the path reminding drivers of vehicles that it is a restricted bridleway. We have written to potential contractors to obtain a quote for the works.
- The Council have applied for a grant from the Bupa Foundation Green Community Grants to contribute to funding for providing water to the allotments by the Village Hall.
- Given concerns regarding dog waste in and around St Laurence Church grounds in Toot Baldon, a new dog waste bin has been installed in the car parking area by the Church. Please can dog walkers respect the Church grounds and graveyard, keep dogs on a lead whilst using the footpath through it, and pick up after your dog.
- The Council met with Queen's College Land agents Savills to re-confirm responsibilities for the maintenance of the Green and Toot Baldon land owned by

the college.

- You may have seen that the area referred to as the 'peninsula' opposite the Seven Stars as been raised slightly. This is to help control vehicle access on the corner, and it is proposed to install a new bench facing the cricket pitch.
- At the July meeting, it was decided that, with the southern track, fully restored and now maintained by the Track Committee, the posts around the Green may no longer be needed. They were installed when the track was in a very poor state and vehicles were routinely driving over the Green. It was agreed that the far most posts would be removed, leaving a number to delineate between the area designated for pub car parking and the main green, where driving and parking is not permitted, except for special events. The posts will be stored in case vehicles revert to driving on the Green.
- We continue to investigate options for improvement of Broadband access and speed with OCC.
- A small repair has been made to the gully on the hill out of Toot Baldon to help with water build up by the farm gate.

Planning matters

The following applications were received and are under consideration:

P23/S2542/FUL, for development work at the following location: Court House Toot Baldon

P23/S2544/FUL, for development work at the following location: Court House Toot Baldon

P23/S2092/HH, for development work at the following location: Highfield Park House Baldon Lane Marsh Baldon

P23/S2609/LDP, for development work at the following location: Cornerways Toot Baldon

Responses to these planning applications will need to be before the September Parish Council meeting and so if you have any comments on any of them that you want the council to consider, please send them to the Clerk at clerk@baldonspc.org

Classic Car Meet

There was a very successful Classic car meet held on the Green on the 18th July. The attendance provided lots of custom for the Seven Stars Pub and was a fun event for all. Another is (at the time of writing) planned for Tuesday 15th August. The last one for the year will be on the 19th September. Permission has been obtained from the Queen's College agents for these special events. The Council would like to thank David Greenaway for organising the events and look forward to future meetings.

Succession planning

The Clerk's role and contributions are critical to the smooth and efficient operation of Parish Council. Tom James has performed this role for nearly 5 years. However, Tom's wish is now that we plan for his successor. Working for the Parish Council,

the role involves the administration of all Council affairs, which includes maintaining the financial accounts, records of all meetings and ensuring the Council remains compliant with current legislation. The post is a part time position.

If you would be interested in exploring this opportunity and would like to know more, then please contact Tom: clerk@baldonspc.org or 07484 800277.

ITEMS FOR THE NEWSLETTER

Items for the October 2023 newsletter
by 16th September please

Any villager is welcome to send items for publication in the newsletter. Please send copy to Natasha Eliot: tashaandjames@btopenworld.com. Alternatively, I can be contacted on 343478 or at Baldon House East, Marsh Baldon.

For advertising queries, please contact Leanna Maggs on:
leanna.maggs@gmail.com or on 01865 340 521

COMPARED WITH LAST SUMMER

Compared with last summer, which seemed hot hot hot, with hardly ever a raindrop from the skies, this year the heat started earlier in June. Followed by sporadic cloud bursts in those lucky locations. Although lawns and a few other things dried and went brown quickly, other things responded to the heat and rain. In my courtyard garden, my Buddleia is a good 1 to 2 feet taller than during previous summers, easily reaching 15 feet and still able to retain lush green leaves, unlike previous years. My roses, herbs and vines have also grown prolifically, and this year we seem to have won the battle against aphids, which can often overwhelm the unopened rose buds.

Sitting in the courtyard, one could say all that lush growth can give a claustrophobic vibe. I agree, but what overrides that is a feeling of being embraced, cocooned, safe, in a womb-like place. In a cave-like place, surrounded by uncountable shades of green that nature provides for us to enjoy. All enhanced by the suncatchers, the subtle windchimes, arbours, bird feeders, table and chairs, hanging baskets and washing lines. All those are my contribution to this wonderous mosaic this year. It means even though on the other side of the wall I have one of the busiest and noisiest roundabouts in Oxford, with its constant car horns tooting the day away, my green courtyard remains an escape to retreat too. Even in the heat of the day the green growth seems to have a cooling effect, making the hot sun more bearable.

So, where is your retreat in nature? If you don't have one, it's worth hunting one out. The rewards are immeasurable and very grounding. Anyway, hope your garden is as lush as mine this year, and you are winning the aphid battle, or is that just me?

NUNEHAM COURTENAY PARISH COUNCIL NEWS

Housing Infrastructure Fund 1 Road

The County Council's Planning and Regulation Committee voted 7-2 in July to reject the County Council's own planning application for the proposed road connected with the so-called Didcot Garden Town development.

But Secretary of State Michael Gove "called in" the planning application seven days later and will appoint a Planning Inspector to hold an inquiry. This leaves the County Council in the uneasy position of having two conflicting roles at the inquiry: the organisation that submitted the planning application and the organisation that refused it.

The cynics among you may say politicians don't seem to find it difficult to face two ways at once, but believe me, it's once in a blue moon that a panel of county councillors turns down a planning application from their own officers, so this is uncharted territory.

Your parish council continues to work with the parish councils of Appleford, Clifton Hampden, Culham and Sutton Courtenay to challenge the shaky arguments for these separate scraps of new road which look very like sections of the southern route originally proposed for the supposedly abandoned Oxford to Cambridge Expressway, that would have connected the A34 at Milton to the M40 at Wheatley.

Communicating With The Parish Council

The parish council discovered on 1st August that the private individual who owned the domain name for the Council's nunehamcourtenay.org.uk website had taken down that website. This means all the parish council's old email addresses stopped working then.

Fortunately, the parish council's new legally-compliant website had finally gone live in July. The parish council has followed other parish councils in also moving to a more secure gov.uk domain name and email addresses. The new website and email addresses are all connected with a new domain name: nunehamcourtenay-pc.gov.uk.

Audit 2022-23

The parish council's accounts for last year are currently with the External Auditor. You can view lots of information on the Finance page of the council's new website, but you also have the right to inspect the financial records and put questions to the External Auditor - which they will charge the parish council a fee for answering! The period when you can ask the External Auditor questions ends on Wednesday 6th September but you can contact the Parish Clerk at any time if you wish to inspect the council's financial records.

Next meeting

The next meeting of the parish council is due to take place on Tuesday 5th September at 7pm in the Village Hall. The parish council now has four members

following the co-option of Charlie Vicary at the last meeting. This still leaves one vacancy. If you're interested in becoming a member of the parish council, please speak to one of the existing councillors or contact the Parish Clerk.

Geoffrey Ferres,
Parish Clerk - Nuneham Courtenay Parish Council
Tel: 07419 991623 - Email: clerk@nunehamcourtenay.org.uk



OXFORDSHIRE SOUTH AND VALE **CITIZENS ADVICE NEEDS VOLUNTEERS**

Are you looking for a new challenge, and want to contribute something to your community? Oxfordshire South and Vale Citizens Advice is looking for volunteer advisers and IT specialists to work in our friendly offices in Abingdon, Didcot, Henley or Thame. Citizens Advice gives people the knowledge and confidence they need to find their way forward - whoever they are and whatever their problem. In a typical year our 127 volunteers support over 9,000 people.

We are currently looking for:

- **Advisers:** After comprehensive training you will be giving advice to clients in person or via the telephone or webchat. We advise on a broad range of topics including debt management, benefits, employment, housing and relationship issues. You will need good IT skills and a desire to help people in your community. A new adviser training course begins in early October 2023, so apply now!
- **IT specialists** to help to maintain our IT systems and support the service. Help staff and volunteers with day-to-day IT issues, for example with trouble logging on, connecting to Wi-Fi and locating files. We also would welcome support to maintain our local Citizens Advice website.

We would like you to be available for two sessions per week if possible, either mornings or afternoons or for a whole day. We offer a rewarding, flexible and supportive working environment. You'll also learn new skills and meet new people in the course of your volunteering.

To apply, please follow this link:

<https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/local/oxfordshire-south-vale/volunteer/>

Or, if you would like to discuss these volunteering roles, please email: recruitment@osavcab.org.uk and one of our team will contact you.



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Telephone: 01865 590800 Email: itstime@healoxford.co.uk
Dovecote Barn, Little Baldon Estate, Little Baldon, Oxford, OX44 9PU

www.healoxfordwellbeing.co.uk



Oxfordshire Libraries

September events at Berinsfield Library

Digital Helper: Thursdays 2 to 5pm

Help in using smart phones, tablets and laptops. Support for those less confident with technology. Booking essential



Saturday Craft session: 10.30am

Saturday 16 September

Join us for a fun drop-in craft suitable for ages 5+



Rhymetime: Wednesdays at 10.30am

Singing and rhyming fun for under 5s and their parents/carers. Every Wednesday morning during school term



Book Club: Friday 29 September 2pm

Contact the library for this month's book or turn up to say hello and help choose the next one. All very welcome



 @oxonlibraries  Berinsfield Library

Telephone 01865 340771

Email: berinsfield.library@oxfordshire.gov.uk



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EVENTS IN DORCHESTER ABBEY

Sat 9th Sept- 2pm-4.30pm Ancient Mariner (Shrine Chapel) Concert, Kubla Khan and The Ancient Mariner are poems by Coleridge Taylor which Tim Cook has set to music and will be performed by local singers and instrumentalists. Original artwork Illustrations by Adrian Brooks will be available for sale with a pop up tea room. Free admission.

Sun 10th Sept- 6.30pm onwards. An evening with Ukrainian friends: sharing music and food together Please join us for this free event which we are running in partnership with our Ukrainian friends. An opportunity to share each other's music and food in a relaxed setting in Dorchester Abbey Please do come at 5pm for Choral Evensong if you wish! Bring some food for the buffet to share. Please get free tickets from the ticket link so that we have some idea of numbers! <https://www.ticketsource.co.uk/dorchesterabbey/t-ojzIndl>

Sat 23rd Sept- 7:00 pm – 9:30 pm OSJ- Bach Orchestra of St John's Autumn season opens with an evening of sublime music from J.S. Bach. We are delighted to welcome back young violinist Poppy McGhee who, alongside Michel Tirabosco, will join the Orchestra in conjuring all the musical richness and joy of one the world's most seminal composers. 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

Abbey Concert Managers Required- Are You Interested?

The demand for Events to be held in the Abbey has been steadily increasing this year and we need to increase the number of volunteer Concert Managers who play a vital part in helping to make the events run smoothly. For further details please contact the Events Administrator, Dorchester Abbey, Samantha Turner; admin@dorchester-abbey.org.uk and 01865 340007 (Mon, Wed and Fri mornings)

Team Events

Save the Date- 10-14th October- Many of you may recall that about 5 years ago we had a visit from a group of four ladies who ran the Burning Bush Soup Kitchen in South Africa. This group is officially known as our K&K and Oxford Dioceses Link project partner. That official name doesn't quite trip off the tongue, so we usually just talk about the Burning Bush Soup Kitchen project. What you may not know is that there are several Link projects between the K&K and Oxford Dioceses. This is the website that talks about the different Links: <https://www.oxford.anglican.org/mission/world-mission/diocesan-links/kimberley-and-kuruman--oxford-link> This October there will be a four-day Link Summit meeting. You will start to see notices about this meeting (including the notice above) where we give you information about the meeting and how to participate in the Summit. If you would like more information, contact Amy Herlihy at a.herlihy@btinternet.com – or watch for additional notices in the pew sheets!

CHURCH SERVICES FOR SEPTEMBER 2023

3rd September	10.30am	Dorchester Abbey	Team Confirmation Service
10 th September	4.00pm	Marsh Baldon	Pet Service – Pets, please bring your owners!
17 th September	9.30am	Toot Baldon	Harvest Brunch followed by a simple Harvest Service
	4.00pm	Nuneham Courtenay	Evening reflections for Harvest with the Dorchester Abbey Choir
24 th September	10.30am	Clifton Hampden	Team Service

CHURCH FLOWERS

Date	Marsh	Toot
3 rd & 10 th September	Iris	Vanessa, Linda & Tracey
17 th & 24 th September	Veronica	Ann and Heather



Wednesday 13th September
7.30pm

Marsh Baldon Village Hall
OX44 9LL

All are welcome to come and join us at our September meeting of the South Oxfordshire Filling Station. We are a group of Christians from various churches, and none, who come together once a month to celebrate our faith in an informal way.

Coffee and cake from 7.30pm, informal worship at 7.50pm, a talk starting at 8.15pm, finish 9.30pm. You are welcome to come and go at any point in the evening.

If you are interested just come along or contact Catherine Mason (southoxfordshire@thefillingstation.org.uk, 07879 626828).