

# **The Baldons and Nuneham Courtenay Newsletter**



**March 2023**

## FROM REV JANE WILLIS, NEW RECTOR OF DORCHESTER

Hello! It's so good to be here. In one way the time since my appointment was announced has flown, and in another it's seemed a long time coming. But we are delighted to be moved in, and have been working very hard trying to get somewhere near ship-shape for when I'm licensed and actually functioning. We've walked up to Wittenham Clumps, but apart from that our experience so far of our new place has been DIY stores, supermarket and the tip! I am so looking forward to actually getting to know the people and places where I will be ministering.

Moving shortly after Christmas has been in some ways challenging – but in other ways wonderfully fitting. It's been a season of endings and beginnings – farewells in Sussex, and then a wonderful welcome as we've arrived.

In our early days here the snowdrops and crocuses have pushed their way through the frosty ground, we've turned from winter to early spring – just as Christians turn their focus from Christmas to Easter. Some may be surprised that for many Christians Christmas just begins on 25th December and continues into February, concluding with Candlemas when we remember the infant Jesus being presented in the temple and recognised and proclaimed as the Messiah by two elderly, faithful people of prayer: Simeon and Anna.

From Candlemas we do an about-turn and begin to face towards Easter as we journey towards the cross and resurrection. That journey, though the weeks of Lent, is a season of preparation. Traditionally it has been seen as a time of fasting or giving up something and for many people that is the right thing, though maybe sometimes we should take something up – such doing a Lent Course or reading a devotional book, trying a new prayer practice or giving in some way? As I take up a new ministry, I will be asking God what he wants to do both in my own life and among us during this new season.

It's an exciting time – and we look forward to all God has for us.

Every blessing

Jane

***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

***The Revd Jennifer Morton is Associate Team Vicar and lives in Toot Baldon:***  
*jennifer@morton8.co.uk.*

***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**



## BALDONS PARISH COUNCIL NEWS



### Jubilee trees

Two trees have been bought by the council to celebrate the Platinum Jubilee of HM Queen Elizabeth II. A lime tree has been planted with help from the school children on the west side of the green, the other, a yew tree, has been planted in Toot Baldon churchyard.

### Village Spring Clean Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> March

Please do not forget this important day in our calendar when we try to improve our village in time for spring by collecting as much rubbish as we can from our roadside verges, ditches footpaths and the village green.

Please come and help: the more the merrier but come with gloves and stout shoes or wellies. It only takes an hour or so of time. We will have

pick up sticks and bags as usual.

In Marsh Baldon: Meet on the village green at 10.00 am. The pub should be open for a coffee or something else when we finish.

In Toot Baldon: Meet at the Mole Inn at 10.00 am with Dawn McGiveron, tel 07774 940905.

### Parish Council Elections Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> May

SODC are expected to be announcing the elections for Parish Council and District Councils on 20<sup>th</sup> March which are to take place on 4<sup>th</sup> May, and SODC will be publishing all the information and asking for candidates nominations to stand. See also advert below from Tom James, Clerk to the Baldons Parish Council.

The Baldons Parish Council has had a very stable membership from a long time thanks to all your support, but change should always be welcomed to bring new ideas and contributions, and we expect some changes this time round. Have you thought about being a councillor? There are 6 councillors elected, 4 for Marsh Baldon and 2 for Toot Baldon. It involves you in the life of the village representing the interests of the community, managing and caring for our environment and facilities and reflecting the views and needs of the community to our district and county councils on matters of development that impact on us. It is not arduous, is non-political, but it is rewarding.

Your parish council needs a bit of refreshment: please think about it, as without an effective council the community has little voice or influence. SODC already have information on their website: follow links from homepage to Democracy and Elections. The Oxfordshire Association of Local Councils are also holding an online briefing for potential councillors on 15<sup>th</sup> March.

### Planning applications

*Penstemon House, Marsh Baldon P23/S0252/HH* An application for a single storey extension to an annex to create staff accommodation. The council has indicated no objection to SODC.

*Blue Cedars development, Toot Baldon.* Outline plans for a small 6 unit retirement homes development have been available on the internet for villagers to comment on in anticipation of a full planning application being submitted in the coming weeks.

*Land on the west side of the Green P22/S4323/FUL* The planning application for 6 houses on this narrow old orchard site is still with SODC whose Conservation Officer has raised significant concerns at potential damage to the Conservation area. We await a decision or amendments to the plan.

Date of next Parish Council meeting: 13<sup>th</sup> March, 7.30 pm in the Village Hall

Date of Annual Parishes Meeting of Marsh Baldon and Toot Baldon: 17<sup>th</sup> April 7.30pm in the Village Hall. This will be the last Annual Parishes meeting held by the current council prior to the elections for a new council in May. It is an open meeting and if you wish to raise items for discussion you can tell the clerk in advance no later than 7 days before.

## **The Baldons Parish Council**

### **Local elections and vacancies for councillors.**

The local elections take place on 4<sup>th</sup> May and the Parish Council expects there to be vacancies in both Marsh and Toot Baldon.

The Baldons Parish Council invites applications from members of the public interested in being a member of the Council, which meets six times a year.

This is an exciting opportunity to shape the area in which you live. For further information, please contact Tom James, the Parish Clerk on 07484 800277 or email [clerk@baldonspc.org](mailto:clerk@baldonspc.org).

There is a Nomination Pack which must be completed and returned, by hand, by 4<sup>th</sup> April 2023.

# NUNEHAM COURTENAY PARISH COUNCIL NEWS

## May 2023 elections

They're getting closer! The parish council and the whole of South Oxfordshire District Council are both up for election on Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> May, just two days before the Coronation.

The elections, when they happen, will be the first under the Government's new rules to deal with what appears to be the myth of voter fraud. You have the usual options of postal vote, proxy vote or vote in person. But if you want to vote in person, you now have to show the staff at the polling station a piece of acceptable photo ID and the list is pretty short: a passport, a driving licence, a concessionary bus pass or a Proof of Age Standards Scheme card.

By the way, your name has to be the same on your photo ID as it is on the Electoral Register and the member of staff at the polling station has to agree you still look like you do in the photo on your photo ID. If you do want to vote in person and you don't have acceptable photo ID, you can apply for one of the Government's new Voter Authority Certificates. You can do this in one of two ways:

- **Online**, if you have a recent digital photo of yourself and you know your National Insurance number
- **To South Oxfordshire District Council by post** with a recent photo of yourself and either your National Insurance number or various other possible supporting documents to prove your identity. The photo has to meet various rules.

## Deep Cleanse

I understand I owe South Oxfordshire District Council's contractors an apology. SODC has sent me dozens of photos with dates and times embedded that show their contractors did four solid days' work and shifted mountains of leaves back in November.

Why is it that the pavement on the eastern side of the main road has stayed fairly clear while the western side of the main road was soon such a mess? Wind direction?

## Speeding and Road Safety on the A4074

The Council is still waiting for that meeting it has requested with Oxfordshire County Council's Highways department about the speed and volume survey that happened late last year. But the County Council has confirmed there is also a permanent Automatic Traffic Counter on the A4074 between the Golden Balls roundabout and the village, just south of the lay-by. Apparently, it records pretty much around the clock, so the Council is also trying to get sight of the data from that.

## Meetings

The Council's next meeting is on Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> March in the Village Hall, starting at 7pm. You are, as always, welcome to come. If you would like to address the

Council, just have a word with John, who chairs the meetings, before the meeting starts.

Have you ever thought of becoming a parish councillor but can't imagine what is involved? The Oxfordshire Association of Local Councils (OALC) has arranged a free, one-hour, online session "So you want to be a councillor?" on Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> March at 2pm. You can find the Zoom details yourself on OALC's website or I can send them to you.

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

## **NUNEHAM COURTENAY VILLAGE HALL NEWS**

### **Not So Youthful Club**

Our fun Friday gathering will be on Friday the 3<sup>rd</sup> of March from 7:30. A nice relaxing evening of drinks and games in your local community. Come along! All are welcome.

### **Pay as You Can Meal**

On Saturday the 25<sup>th</sup> we will be hosting a "pay what you can" meal at the Village Hall. The Seven Stars will be catering for us! Menus to follow ( I will publicise these as soon as they are confirmed. They are giving us a real bargain here so they were still costing it all at the time I turned in this copy. ) There will be a vegan option and a meaty option as well as choice of two puddings. Here is how it will work:

- The suggested price for the meal is £29.50 per person, including mains and dessert.
- If you want to book, you take a blank envelop to the Old School House with your cash contribution inside and tell Jenny or John how many people you are booking for.
- They will give you tickets for that number of people. You will need to hold onto to your ticket for the meal. At this time tell them if you have any special dietary requirements.
- No one will know how much you have paid. If you can afford more than £29.50 and want to pay more towards someone else's meal, great. If £29.50 is over your budget, no worries- pay what you can afford. We do not want anyone to be left out of the event if they wish to attend
- On the night, all you will need is your ticket and cash for drinks. Water, squash, tea, and coffee are included in the cost.
- If you can't get to the Old School House, call and we will try and get a ticket to you. 01865 343459.
- Places are limited, so book early to avoid missing out!



### **Cleaner wanted**

We are still looking for a cleaner for the village hall.

### **Booking clerk**

There are a number of small roles available to help out the hall. We need someone who can look after the bookings for us. This is done mostly via email and usually involves less than a dozen inquires a month. Let us know if you can help!

### **Bookings**

Contact Nuneham Courtenay Village Hall

[nunehamcourtenay.villagehall@gmail.com](mailto:nunehamcourtenay.villagehall@gmail.com) if you want to make a booking.

### **Yoga**

Monday nights in the village hall at 7:30ish. Come along and give it a go, £3 a session

### **Thank you**

Our thanks to Brian for his continued repair work on the village hall. Those of you who attend luncheon club will know the damage the cold weather has done to our plumbing. Brian does not charge for his labour which is a really kind contribution. Thank you to Tom Long for his beautiful work on the sign over the door at the hall. Tom did not charge at all for this and it really looks amazing.



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## TIME IS NO LONGER STANDING STILL



Time is no longer at a standstill in Nuneham Courtenay Village Hall as the clock, which has not worked for decades, is now back in position and keeping excellent time, thanks to a very generous donation by Mrs. June Harris. Many of you will know June who, along with Pete Brooks, looked after the hall for nigh on 100 years between them, until they both retired last year. They are sorely missed.

The clock was taken to Steven Fletcher at Witney, specialist clock menders, for assessment and repair. Those of you who watch the BBC programme The Repair Shop on television will recognise the name. They fitted a German-made quartz movement (so no need to wind it) and new hands. It came back to us clean and gleaming, as you will see from the photographs.

A pleasant surprise was to be able to read the inscription on the small brass plaque and to learn that the clock commemorates 10 years (1935-1945) loyal service by Cecil B Thomas.

By that reckoning we owe June and Pete 10 clocks as well as our grateful thanks for all they have done for the hall over the years! Especial thanks to June whose generosity has ensured that a piece of the history of the hall has been saved and is back in its rightful place.







# Coronation Celebration on the Green

**Hold the date: Sunday 7th May**

*from 12.30 pm*

**Enjoy Free: Welcome drink, cake & live bands, fancy dress competition, welly wanging & more.**

**Available to purchase on the day: coffees & hog roast**

*Bring your own picnic, chairs/picnic blanket*

*& relax!*

Watch out for  
more information  
to follow



## OPPORTUNITY FOR FREE COACHING

My name is Sara, and I would like to offer free coaching to anyone who would like the opportunity to talk through aspects of life or work that might be feeling a bit 'stuck', or who would like to explore new ideas or possibilities for self-development.

I am currently qualifying as a coach to ILM 5 level and as part of this programme I am looking for people who would be willing to be coachees, to build on my current experience.

If this is something you might be interested in, please contact me on [sara@mcdouall.co.uk](mailto:sara@mcdouall.co.uk)

Many thanks!

# DON'T GET IN WITH A LOAN SHARK...IT WILL COST YOU AN ARM AND A LEG

Have you or anyone you know:

- Been offered a cash loan without paperwork?
- Been threatened when you couldn't pay?
- Had your benefit or bank card taken from you?
- Had a loan which keeps growing even though you are making payments?

If you can answer yes to the above you may have been bitten by a Loan Shark.

For confidential help and advice contact

the Illegal Money Lending Team

**0300 555 2222**

(local call rate, including inclusive minutes from mobiles)

Email: [reportaloanshark@stoploansharks.gov.uk](mailto:reportaloanshark@stoploansharks.gov.uk)

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Oxfordshire Libraries

# March events at Berinsfield Library

**Rhymetime – Wednesdays 10.30am**

Singing and rhyming fun with music, movement and bubbles for the under 5s



**Mad Hatter's Tea Party – Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> 3.30pm**

World Book Day celebration with stories and light refreshments. All ages welcome!



**Knit and Natter – Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> 2.30pm**

All crafts welcome – bring along your current project & enjoy a chat and a coffee



**Story time & craft – Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> 10.30am**

Stories and a craft for Mother's Day celebrating the special people in our lives. For ages 3+



**Book Club – Friday 31<sup>st</sup> 2pm**

Contact the library for this month's book or come along, say hello and help choose the next one. All very warmly welcome



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OXFORDSHIRE  
COUNTY COUNCIL



# Wallingford Museum News



We are looking forward to Wallingford Museum's opening on March 1st for the 2023 season. Throughout the closure period the team have been busy creating not one but two new exhibitions.

## The Wallingford Historical and Archaeological Society

This year, 2023, The Wallingford Historical and Archaeological Society (TWHAS) is celebrating 50 years since its foundation. Our first exhibition reflects TWHAS's development from its early beginnings through to the establishment of the museum and the impact of the historical and archaeological research on the heritage of the town. All by volunteers, awarded in 2019 the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service.

## House Detectives: history behind the door

The houses in this second exhibition have been chosen to reflect the changing development and use of houses in Wallingford, from the medieval period to the 20th century, (Including a fictional fun mystery house.) On your journey through the museum you will discover how we became house detectives and how you could become one too!

## Look out for Wallingford's Guided Historic Town Walks starting again.

Each walk is led by an expert guide from The Wallingford Historical and Archaeological Society, exploring the backstreets and bringing to life the history of the town and its buildings from Saxon times to the present day. To find more information, request special group tours and find out about all museum events, please visit [www.wallingfordmuseum.org.uk](http://www.wallingfordmuseum.org.uk)

## Museum Bookshop

We have an excellent selection of good second-hand books (both fiction and non-fiction) at sensible prices. We look forward to seeing you - it's free to browse!

See [www.twhas.org.uk/meetings-programme.html](http://www.twhas.org.uk/meetings-programme.html) for the 2023 talks programme.

## DORCHESTER ABBEY EVENTS

**Saturday 11th March OSJ 7pm Grieg Piano Concerto** Tickets £5 to £30 from [www.osj.org.uk](http://www.osj.org.uk)

**Saturday 18th March Benson Choral Society** - performance of Elijah by Mendelssohn. Tickets £15- £18 from [www.bensonchoralsociety.org.uk](http://www.bensonchoralsociety.org.uk)

### ITEMS FOR THE NEWSLETTER

Items for the April 2023 newsletter

**by 16<sup>th</sup> March please**

Any villager is welcome to send items for publication in the newsletter. Please send copy to Natasha Eliot: [tashaandjames@btopenworld.com](mailto: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](mailto:leanna.maggs@gmail.com) or on 01865 340 521



## ***John Howell MP writes...***

As readers may know I lead the UK Parliamentary Delegation to the Council of Europe on behalf of the Government. Whilst this does take me away some of the time it also enables me to steer a positive contribution for the UK as well as all other Member countries. Whilst on the subject of Europe there has been talk of the UK leaving the European Court of Human Rights. I am a firm believer that we should stay a member of the Court and of the Convention on Human Rights. The Court is not a foreign court but is an international body in which we share responsibility with the other countries who are members. I believe that leaving the Court would be disastrous for the UK. I am sure we will hear more on this in the coming months.

Much more locally I have been pursuing issues relating to our GPs. I fully appreciate that some constituents have been frustrated at issues around access and face to face appointments. At the same time many of our GPs are feeling under huge pressure. Towards the end of last year I met with some of our GPs to listen to their concerns and this month I called together a meeting with other Oxfordshire MPs and the Chief Executive of the local Integrated Care Board (ICB) which oversees primary care provision. Among the issues raised was that of some GP practices closing their books to new patients. My view is that this is an unfair move for other Practices and for residents who cannot register locally. Further it does not solve the problem. The senior ICB team agreed to meet with local GP teams and pursue the this and other issues with them. I will be following up on this in due course.

Also working with other Oxfordshire MPs, I have been looking into the issue raised with me by a number of parents of the decision by the County Council to withdraw its 'spare seat scheme' for school transport on some services. This is essentially a scheme where any unallocated seats on school buses could be offered to parents of children not eligible for free school transport for a fee. Removal of this scheme inevitably leads to a negative impact for working parents, but it also puts many more cars on the road. The latter flies in the face of the County Councils own environmental ambitions where they have promised to reduce car journeys by 1-4. There are also safety implications for those children who would have to walk along busy roads not served by footpaths to get to school. The County Council said that as it did not have a statutory duty to deliver such a scheme it did not need to involve parents in the decision making. We have urged them to reconsider this decision as a matter of urgency as it is causing huge stress to many families.

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](http://www.johnhowell.org.uk). My contact details are also on the website.



THE SEVEN STARS  
at  
MARSH BALDON

### QUIZ NIGHTS

Our famous Seven Stars quiz is back! So gather your team of eggheads and challenge the quiz master! Events will be happening every last Thursday of the month and include a half time meal! £12 per person – book direct with the team.

### VALENTINES

Tuesday 14th February

Treat someone special to an evening of indulgence. Let our team serve you delicious food and drinks while you sit back and enjoy an evening with your favourite person. Pre-booking essential.

### MOTHER'S DAY

Sunday 19th March

Spoil your mum this March and bring her for a delicious Sunday lunch and drinks at our beautiful village pub. Pre-booking is essential.

### EASTER EGG HUNT

7th – 10th April

Join us for our annual Freespirit Easter Egg hunt! With colouring competitions and lots of chocolatey prizes too! This is a free event but we advise booking a table if joining us for lunch or dinner.

### KING'S CORONATION

Saturday 6th May. Raise a glass as we toast to His Majesty King Charles III and celebrate his coronation. Follow our social media pages to find out more about how our pub will be participating.

### FATHER'S DAY

Sunday 18th June. Take your dad out to celebrate Fathers Day with one of our famous Sunday lunches and a pint of something

Contact us on  
[sevenstars@freespiritpubs.co.uk](mailto:sevenstars@freespiritpubs.co.uk)  
01865 343337

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## CHURCH SERVICES FOR MARCH 2023

|                                      |                     |              |   |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------|--------------|---|
| 3 <sup>rd</sup> March                | 2.00pm              | Berinsfield  | World Day of Prayer – everyone welcome                  |
| 5 <sup>th</sup> March                | 10.30am             | Toot Baldon  | Holy Communion  |
| 12 <sup>th</sup> March               | 4.00pm              | Toot Baldon  | Evensong  |
| 18 <sup>th</sup> March<br>(Saturday) | 10.00am –<br>4.00pm | Dorchester   | Team Quiet Day Cuddesdon<br>College (sign up in church) |
| 19 <sup>th</sup> March               | 9.30am              | Marsh Baldon | Mothering Sunday<br>Holy Communion                      |
| 26 <sup>th</sup> March               | 10.30am             | Warborough   | Passion Sunday<br>Team Service                          |

## EVENTS DURING LENT

**Every Monday in Lent: 8pm Compline at Drayton St Leonard Church** - a short service of reflections and music

**Every Wednesday in Lent: 'Art in Lent' Course** 2pm at Berinsfield Church - using well known paintings to reflect on the events of Lent and Easter

**Every Thursday in Lent: 4pm Meditations for Lent** at Berinsfield Church

**Sat 18th March 10am-4pm Team Quiet Day at Cuddesdon College** 'I have called you to bear fruit', to explore how God is calling the Dorchester Team of churches to grow its mission and ministry in our communities. It will be led by Rev Jane Hemmings (Director of Ordinands - Oxford Diocese). We are eager to see our congregations grow. We have ideas how our churches can reach out to our village communities. We would like to share these ideas with you and hear your ideas too! So make sure you sign up for the day on the sheet that will be in the back of all the churches! For further information email [revteresa@outlook.com](mailto:revteresa@outlook.com).

## EASTER LILIES



As in past years we would like to decorate the churches for Easter with lilies in memory of loved ones who have died.

If you would like to buy a lily in memory of someone, please let us know. £5.00 a stem

Veronica – 343367 or [vsandilands@btinternet.com](mailto:vsandilands@btinternet.com)

**If you are able to help with decorating the churches for Easter, please contact Veronica for Marsh (343367) or Jane Brook for Toot (343457).**