

Steeple Aston

August 2025

Issue No. 624

Life



Church fete • Cartoon capers • Competitions

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Contributions are welcome. Please email editorialife@gmail.com

Cover photo: Graham Porcas with grandsons Oliver & Daniel Stewart enjoying the church fete, photo by Nigel Francis

Steeple Aston *Life*

COPY

All articles and letters to
the Editor
editorialife@gmail.com

COPY DEADLINES

The copy deadline for the September 2025 issue is
Thursday 14th August

READ STEEPLE ASTON LIFE ONLINE

<https://www.steepleaston.org.uk/sal-magazine>

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Thursday 14th August.

ADVERTISING RATES

1/4 page - £10

1/2 page - £18

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Steeple Aston *Directory*

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Badminton (Thursday - eve)		Alison Moran	01869 347033
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Oxfordshire County Councillor -Deddington Ward		Cllr Gareth Epps	Gareth.epps@oxfordshire.gov.uk
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Volunteer Driver Service (North Oxfordshire)		https://livewell.oxfordshire.gov.uk/services/2561	0300 303 0125
WI	President	Julie Hillier	01869 349185



"...folly is not always folly."
Jane Austen

Steeple Aston *Life*

August 2025
Issue No.624

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Editorial

August is a time to relax and recharge the batteries after a busy time, before returning to work, school and welcoming the new season. It can be gloriously warm, at times blisteringly hot, with fruit and veg to harvest and devour and new destinations to explore. In Greek mythology, August was associated with Apollo, God of music, poetry and the sun, so Cathy's poem on the 'Heatwave' is rather apt. The final flush of summer is an ideal time for picnics in our beautiful countryside, taking in the views at Rousham gardens or enjoying a canalside stroll. It is the month of the sandwich, invented in August 1762, when the Earl of Sandwich requested two pieces of bread with meat inside. As gardeners and farmers will no doubt testify, it is also Weed Month, aka 'Weod Monath' in Anglo-Saxon times, when weeds grow the fastest, and don't we know it!

We pay a heartfelt tribute to a village stalwart, Bob Bickley, former caretaker and Governor at Dr Radcliffe's School, who many of you will have known over the years, and send our sincere condolences to his family.

We are thrilled to include Henry's fascinating book review to whet the appetite of younger readers; SAVA uncovers the story behind the Bowls Club cartoon, and Pet Pawtrait introduces the delightful Douglas. Many local events are offered this month. Take a tour of Steeple Aston Open Allotments on the afternoon of Sunday 17th August to see what delights are being cultivated, enter the scarecrow competition or dip into the quiz and other activities. The 133rd Annual Flower Show and Fun Dog Show on Bank Holiday, Monday 25th August brings the chance to showcase your prize blooms, produce and pooches, and promises a fun-filled afternoon for all the family.

Enjoy the rest of the season!

Carol



Photo: A century ago, villagers take a break at Steeple Aston Flower Show in 1925. Note the early wheelchair. Photo courtesy of Steeple Aston Village Archive (SAVA).

Steeple Aston Noticeboard



SAVA grant for digitisation

Steeple Aston Village Archive (SAVA) is the latest local history society to receive support from Oxfordshire Local History Association (OLHA)'s small grants programme. The group has been awarded £500 to help make its archives more accessible. The collections are kept in the Village History Centre, part of the Village Hall, which opened in 2013. But increasingly documents are being digitised, so that they can be made more accessible to researchers – in the local community and beyond – through SAVA's website **steepleastonarchive.org.uk**

The Centre is open every Saturday morning from 10.00am until 12 noon, so do pop in if you are passing.

An important update on the Poppy Cascade!

Thanks to all the generous and enthusiastic knitters, crocheters and creators of poppies, we have now reached our target, so it's time to stop making! It's a magnificent total of well over 5,000, which are gradually being attached to the netting. This will hold them as they cascade from the church tower as a wonderful tribute from the village on Remembrance Day. We send warmest thanks to everyone who has made poppies – every poppy received will form part of the cascade.

Now there must be a big push to attach them to the netting. Please consider whether you might be able to offer some time to help with attaching the poppies. It's very easy sewing, anyone can do it, but there is a lot to be done, so we need your help! We shall be contacting everyone who has already offered, but welcome offers from anyone who can thread a needle. Please phone Merrill to arrange when you can join the sewing crew as follows:

Merrill Bayley: 01869 347802.

Hildy, Kay, Merrill and Eileen

New SAL Secretary Needed

The SAL Committee is seeking a new secretary following the resignation of Jenny Taylor, who has been doing the job for more years than anyone can remember. Jenny first joined the SAL committee some time in the mid-1980s. She has been an extremely reliable and efficient secretary, but much more than that, she has been a valued member of the SAL community. We will be very sad to see her leave the role, but understand that she deserves a rest after all this time. We hope she will stay on the SAL committee, so we can continue to benefit from her long experience.

The Secretary has two main tasks:

- To prepare the agenda for the monthly meeting and circulate it by email with reports from the editor and others.
- To take the minutes at the meeting which may be held in person or by Zoom.

If you're interested in this role, please email the editor initially - editorsalife@gmail.com

Jenny will be very happy to discuss further and, of course, to provide support during the handover.



Douglas – Cocker spaniel (of the showiest variety), almost 4 years of age

- **Do you have any nicknames?**

Many! Baby bear, Douglebugle, the list goes on.

- **Professional interests?**

Being Steeple Aston's chief meeter and greeter. A dog walk isn't complete unless I say hello to everyone I meet - dogs, cats, people, leaves etc.

Feet - I love licking, sitting and lying on them. My super power to fall asleep on feet whilst looking cute is why my mummy and daddy picked me to take home.

I'm keen to set up a Steeple Aston Paw Patrol and have a flashing blue light already.

- **If I ruled the world for a day:**

I would make morning and afternoon naps followed by tummy rubs compulsory.

- **One piece of advice I would give my younger self:**

Eat yellow snow.

- **Mortal enemies:**

My lil sister!

- **Best friend:**

Bo.

- **Things I am asked the most:**

How do you do it (look so cute)?

I'm also asked a lot about my eyelashes!



- **Local recommendation:**

I LOVE the Red Lion.

- **Anything else that's special about me:**

I enjoy a spot of gardening - digging up potatoes, removing dead branches, playing around in the mud.

WANTED Contributions to SAL

Do you have an article, joke, story, poem, review, photo or idea?

Would you like to feature in *Steeple People*, or nominate your pet for *Pet Pawtrait*?

All contributions welcome, regular pieces or once-only items

Please send to editorialife@gmail.com

Whatever is of interest to you is of interest to us

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Summer Sizzler

Midsummer evening in the village hall was an absolute sizzler, as the audience waited patiently for the SACS Summer Party Concert – *Curtain Up!* – to begin. There was not a singer in sight, but as Paul Herrington started to play, Shirley ‘Belle’ Palmer appeared, her clear soprano ringing out, as she sang of the boredom of living in her little French village. Then, bursting in from all directions, bearing baskets, baguettes, flowers and fruit, came her fellow villagers, *bonjouring* anything that moved. *Beauty and the Beast*, a medley specially arranged for SACS by Paul Herrington, introduced a concert of pieces from stage and screen. After the lyrical ending of *Beauty and the Beast*, Paul Herrington’s dynamic version of the *Raiders’ March*, from *Raiders of the Lost Ark*, raised the temperature a few more degrees, before the choir’s *Lara’s Theme*, from *Dr Zhivago*, cooled everything down, *soft as the kiss of snow*. The audience was then invited to hum along and provide the percussion effects for Guy Chamber’s classic, *Angels* and Carole King’s, *You’ve Got a Friend*. The response was excellent and the reward was more strawberries, popcorn, wine, beer and all things cold.

After the interval came three unmistakable Eva Cassidy songs – *Over the Rainbow*, *Autumn Leaves* and *Wade in the Water* (with more body percussion, led by conductor, Paul Badley), with the choir skilfully handling the shifting moods of these songs. Next, Paul Herrington played *The Dream of Olwen*, having first explained how this early piece (1947) by Charles Williams paved the way for film music to be so much more than just background music. The choir followed with *What a Wonderful World*, which in its film setting from *Good Morning, Vietnam*, again illustrated the power of music to add an extra layer to a film or stage performance.

It was finally time for the audience who, having warmed up humming, clapping and clicking, were now ready for their final sing-a-long challenge: *Raindrops Keep Falling on my Head*; *Moon River*; *My Heart Will Go On*; *Can You Feel the Love Tonight?* and *Hopelessly Devoted to You*, and they gave each song their all. Many thanks to Paul, Paul, Shirley, all the SACSers and our wonderful supporters, who came and sizzled their socks off, for such an enjoyable evening of music-making.

Please join us again for: SACS Autumn Concert – Sunday 23 November – Rossini – *Petite Messe Solenne* – 7.00pm in the Village Hall. The title is ironic. This is a glorious operatic work bursting with melody, colour and drama, written for chorus, four soloists, piano and harmonium.

Margaret Bulleyment

Photos by Nigel Francis



STEEPLE ASTON & MIDDLE ASTON

133rd Annual

FLOWER SHOW

AND

FUN DOG SHOW

BANK HOLIDAY
AUGUST 25th 2PM

Admission £2.50 Adults - Children U16 go free
Cash only event

Teas & Cakes Children's games Bowling
Hog Roast Bouncy castle Train rides Bar
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People of all ages and skills are
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For full details of how to enter follow
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www.steepleaston.org.uk/clubs-societies/gardening/

Steeple Aston & Middle Aston Horticultural Society 2025

As this edition of 'the Life' hits your doormat, there will be a truly scary three weeks until our annual show! How did that happen? There is a class for everyone, first timers or seasoned pros. Paper copies of the schedule of classes are available from the village shop or, alternatively, copies can be downloaded from Steeple Aston village website. If you need any help with your entry forms, or have questions about an exhibit, it's my role to help you, so please do get in touch: vmcstedman@btinternet.com or 07817025948.

But wait, there is more ... the Fun Dog Show will be hosted by the Dogs for Good charity. They have added a new class this year, so perhaps some practice may be worthwhile. Musical Sit (think musical chairs), or perhaps Waggiest Tail is your pooch's thing. All winning dogs leave with a bright red rosette, so what isn't to love.



And, if you weren't already brimming over with excitement, there is all the fun on the field to look forward to. Bouncy castles, raffles, trade stalls, ice creams and games galore. This is predominantly **cash only**, so please come prepared.

Our AGM is on Wednesday 24th September 2025 at 7.45pm - Please note in your diary, we want your feedback, but we'd love your support.

Spring Show 2026 - Plant stall

At this year's spring show, we had a plant stall that was extremely successful, and most people left with a bargain or three. We want to host the stall again next year, but are asking for your help now please. If you are taking cuttings over the next few months, please consider doing a couple extra for us, or if you have more seedlings than you need, please pot them on, as someone will love them.

Now - time to make my jams and Dundee cake. Good luck to everyone, and we can't wait to see you at the Annual Show on Bank Holiday Monday.

Vicky Clifton, Show secretary



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Book Review

***'He's dead.
She's deadly.
The bad guys don't stand a chance'.***

These words greet me as I look at the back cover of *Skulduggery Pleasant: The Dead Famous Bestseller* by Derek Landy. This is just one in a series of 17 excellent books for 11+ readers, starting with the classic *Faceless Ones* trilogy, and ending with the fresh, exciting, unfinished New Trilogy, which has graphic cover designs and dark subheadings. No.18, *A Soul Full of Shadows*, will be coming to bookstores soon, and I hope to get a signed edition. *Skulduggery Pleasant* is a mix of Thriller, Horror, Crime, and Fantasy blended together to make an awesome series. The series is about a girl named Stephanie Edgley. Her uncle, a famous horror writer, dies when she is young, and she inherits his mansion. She visits the house one day and doesn't know she is being followed by an assassin, who breaks in. The Skeleton Detective (Skulduggery) saves her and introduces her to a world of magic. Nineteen years later, she has saved the world countless times and has stopped many villains. The reasons I like *Skulduggery Pleasant* so much are the witty comments, dramatic plot twists, epic unmaskings, gripping cliffhangers, and storylines that make you get sucked in, hoping that the characters will find a way out.

☆☆☆☆☆ I give it 5 stars and I hope you will too.

"Doors are for people with no imagination"

"The sparrow flies south for winter"

"Embrace your inner lunatic; *Fun* times guaranteed" - *Skulduggery Pleasant*

Henry Monroe, aged 11



Scarecrow Competition - Allotments Open Day

As part of the National Allotments Day on Sunday 17th August, the allotments committee are running a 'Scarecrow Competition'. This is open to all villagers of any age in Steeple Aston, whether or not you have an allotment! We are encouraging people to put up scarecrows in their front gardens during the week leading up to the open day ahead of judging on the day. Two prizes are up for grabs: the best 'Hero' scarecrow and the best 'Villain' scarecrow. Keep a look out for more details on Facebook and on posters around the village.

Good luck!

Steeple Aston footpaths guide

Are you new to the village, or interested in exploring our beautiful countryside?

Why not pick up 'A Guide to the Footpaths in & around the parish of Steeple Aston' from the village shop, priced at just £2.00, to discover seven local routes. As the last Cotswold village, with the River Cherwell marking the end of the Cotswolds, the surrounding hills and valleys bring a pleasant air of tranquility. Footpaths vary in length from 2km to 5.2km with different routes available. This informative guide is produced by Steeple Aston Life, therefore, all sales help with production costs of the magazine. Thank you.

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Heatwave

We English got a shock this year
Because in the middle of June
There was a real heatwave
as rare as a blue moon.

Instead of cloudy skies
And scattered summer showers
It's been intolerably hot
For hours and hours and hours.

My clothes are sticking to me
My skin is hot and clammy
This cannot be the Cotswolds
It feels more like Miami.

Although we say we love it
That is a deceit
The truth is that the English
Can't cope with this much heat.

Our work rate slows right down
Nothing will get done
Things come to a standstill
When there's a lot of sun.

I've been staying in the shade
Since the heatwave began
Only an idiot would think of
Working on their tan.

It's 27 degrees now
That's as hot as Crete
This unexpected heatwave
Has really got me beat.

It's too hot at night
I'm seriously sleep-deprived
I don't drop off till after two
Then wake at half past five.

It's nearly time for lunch
I should get something to eat
But who wants to think about
cooking
In this scorching heat?

The garden's looking parched
I must give it a good soaking
But gardening in this heat?
You must honestly be joking!

I ought to do some cleaning
Dust dead flies off the windowsill
But the mere idea of housework
Makes me feel quite ill.

Instead, I fetch the paddling pool
We bought for our granddaughter
Then don an ancient swimsuit
And lie in the cool water.

I could do some of my coursework
I've an essay to complete
But I can't think of thinking
In this blooming heat.

My partner wants a cuddle
I say I'd rather not
It's not that I don't love him
It's just so flippin' hot.

Temper's rise with the temperature
All across the nation
Red faced, sweaty, vest-clad men
Engage in confrontation

The heatwave is all we can think
about
We're finding it quite a strain
We are all secretly wishing
For a heavy shower of rain.

But when the heatwave's over
And the climate is normal again
We'll be faced with the usual weather
And in true English fashion
we'll complain.

Cathy Lawday



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Morrells employees at the Lion Brewery, 1916

What a busy meeting! We welcomed four ladies wishing to join us, and each were handed our new member pack!

President, Julie Hillier, thanked Sally Cooper for hosting the WI BBQ in her garden and all our members were full of praise for the delicious fare cooked with skill and panache by Chris, enjoyed their delightful garden and, of course, the warm and pleasant weather!

Julie welcomed our speaker for the evening, Liz Woolley, a local historian specialising in aspects of the history of Oxford and the talk for us was 'Brewing in Oxford'. Apparently, as early as the 13th century, professional commercial brewers had begun to appear in Oxford, and brewing had become big business, both in the colleges and in the town. There was even a brewhouse in the Radcliffe Infirmary to cater for both patients and staff, with patients receiving 1.5 pints per day! By the 19th century, Oxford was awash with beer and in 1883, it was reported that there were 319 licensed premises in the city, and that more money was being spent on alcohol than on food! During WW1, as the men went off to war, women came in to replace them at Morrells Brewery in 1916 (see pictured). Morrells ceased trading in 1998.

Julie mentioned the up-and-coming events: the sign-up sheets for the Speaker selection day on 18th September, Cake Toppers for Christmas at Tackley, Fused Glass at Tackley, WI day at Tackley celebrating 110 years of the WI. And finally, Sally's Walk on 19th September will be around Broughton Estate followed by lunch at Four Stones at the Saltway Farm shop. Please contact Julie for more information on these.

Hildy Frenken was heartily congratulated on completing her gruelling 953km walk to the Camino de Santiago de Compostela, raising £1,105 for our WI chosen charity, Katharine House Hospice.

Competition: Create a Banner, 'Not in my Name' - campaign to end violence against women - an opportunity for our arty members to get creative!

The WI were helping to raise funds for the church roof with three competitions at the Church Fete on 13th July.

We will have our big gazebo at the Summer Show, selling our WI cakes, jams, chutneys and 'quality gifts'. Profits will go towards the cost of next year's programme of events, as well as our charity this year, Katharine House Hospice. Please do roll up and support us!

Our next meeting is on 9th September: a talk and demo from Beth Astle on Reflexology.

Merrill Bayley

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The clunk of the ‘woods’

We’ve all passed by the Bowls Club in Lower Heyford, whose Facebook page describes ‘Birds singing, people laughing and hearing the clunk of the woods as they “kiss” the Jack.’ But did you know that for about 25 years in the last century, Steeple Aston had its own Lawn Bowls Club?

The first evidence of the Club is from a newspaper article of September 1915 (before conscription was introduced), which illustrates a match between the Conservative Club and Steeple Aston on the New College ground. Two of the village names listed as playing are Mr A E Bradshaw (of The Grange), and Mr W Bennett, skipper of the Steeple Aston team (who appears to have lived at Lockwells in Cow Lane – now known as Wincote). ‘Moses’ Bradshaw came from a sporting family with strong cricket connections, so it’s perhaps unsurprising that by the 1920s he had created in the extensive grounds of The Grange a new bowling green, in an area now occupied by The Court House. Photos from 1924 and 1925 show the green in active use by mainly older men from the village.

A few survivals from the Club have been handed down to SAVA – a membership badge, the Bowls Club Cup for 1936, and a ‘wood’ belonging to George O Porter, the village Headteacher until 1926. But most evocative of all is the Village Hall’s delightfully colourful cartoon of 19 characters from the Club, painted in 1931 by Fred Bennett, who was a well-known cartoonist of the time. We can surmise that he spent a day observing play on the green and sketching his caricatures, at the invitation of his relative William Bennett, who may still have been ‘skipper’. Attempts to put names to these characters have so far resulted in the definite identification of only a few. The artist has put words into the mouths of three of those depicted, all quotations from books or plays of the time.

The green, and presumably the Club, went out of use by 1939 when Moses Bradshaw (left of centre) died.

Martin Lipson, SAVA





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THE VALENTINE CLUB

For most of the summer, we have bathed in sunshine, high temperatures and, as a gardener, a bit too dry, but come the 15th July, the weathermen said rain! This is the day we arranged to visit Rousham House for a chance to view the magnificent grounds and enjoy a 'high tea' but, as they say, 'the sun shines on the righteous', and no rain arrived until it was time to go home. Sixty-seven members arrived to find very impressive shelter in the event of rain and a superb tea provided by Anne, Sue and Jane with the help of family and work colleagues. To cater for that many with such apparent ease is a credit to those wonderful people of Rousham and, as a club, we are all very thankful. It is an absolute joy to see members sit back, having a chat and taking in this wonderful parkland that is situated on our doorstep. It must also be noted that Charles and Angela Cottrell-Dormer allowed us all to, not only take tea on their grounds, but to not charge us for the privilege of visiting the gardens, which are described by Monty Don as his favourite gardens and one can see why. A couple of days later, we took a coach party to visit Hatfield House and, for this, I can better comment on next month. Two weeks after that we are off on a cruise. No, not Cunard, but a private charter on the Thames from Caversham. Again, more on that next month. For our August meeting, we welcome back Tony Hetherington, who went down so well last time.

The club is now gaining a reputation, good I think, as we were invited to give a presentation to one of Oxfordshire's leading voluntary organisations. With a membership of 100 and a growing waiting list, I guess we are doing something right. The suggestion has been made that TUI might learn something from us, as we now have three holidays in the waiting and maybe a fourth coming soon! What all this amounts to is the fact that we all value the companionship of each other, especially at a time when one needs friends and acquaintances around us. To find out more about The Valentine Club, simply visit our own website on valentineclub.wixsit.com/aston (easiest way to log on is go to the village website, go to 'clubs and societies', find The Valentine Club and click on the link), or keep up to date by looking on the village website steepleston.org.uk or use that old-fashioned thing called a telephone and call me on 01869 340512.

Richard Preston – Group organiser (for lack of a better description) Richard.preston5@btopenworld.com
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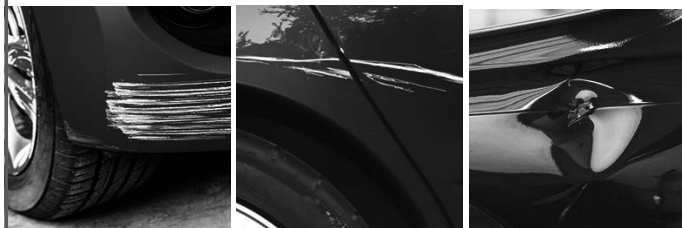
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Village Hall News



2026 Calendar - Get on the Front Cover part 2!

We are all set.... We just need your prize-winning snap for the front cover. We will be printing two sizes: A4 portrait style and a slimline one. Both will cost £10. More details on how to buy will be in the September SAL. This is a limited print run and interest is already high, so act quickly.

The rules to enter: photos must be of Steeple Aston; taken in landscape format; and max 5" x 7", (jpeg required if successful). Photos will be judged at the Horticultural Society's Summer Show on Bank Holiday Monday 25th August. To enter a photo, you'll need to enter the Show as normal for Division 10 Class 140 (more details about this in the show schedule, available at steepleaston.org.uk/) or a paper copy will be available from Harris Stores.

Summer holiday special offer - 33% OFF Fridays

We are offering a discount of 33% on all bookings made for Fridays during the school holidays, from Friday 18th July to Saturday 30th August. Check out rates on our website: savh.org.uk/

Plan a playdate have an impromptu family get together or find some peace and quiet.

Forthcoming events

Wednesday 5th November - Annual bonfire and firework evening

Sunday 7th December - Wassail evening

Saturday 17th January 2026 - Annual Quiz Night

Our letting agent is Mrs Angela Smith – Mob: 07734 112967. Please do not call this number between 6.00pm and 8.00pm unless urgent.

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Here's an example of the village hall hired out and enjoyed. Bouncy castle not included.

Parish Council Meeting Notes



30th June 2025 meeting

It is a sultry evening with three parish councillors, one district councillor, one clerk and me. Space is limited, so I will cut to the chase. District Councillor, David Rogers reported on the Cherwell Local Plan 2042. Consultation has closed, but a late submission has been received and is being processed. Hearings are anticipated in the autumn and a decision made in the middle of next year.

There has been bitter disappointment at the government's decision to axe funding for the neighbourhood planning support programme. At the June CDC planning meeting, another 55 houses were passed for Hook Norton. The highways, flooding and over-development arguments were overturned, with the age of the existing Hook Norton Neighbourhood Plan cited as a reason to discount them. Our neighbourhood plan, thanks to Martin Lipson, is up to date, with possible housing sites identified and there is still some funding left. Villages without access to funding for updates will struggle. As one councillor put it, *'It seems that the planning system is getting in the way of building houses'*, and it was suggested that we should all write to our MP, Sean Woodcock. David also reported that the Integrated Health Board has requested funds to support the expansion of primary care (enough doctors' surgeries and health facilities for the local population) on all the recent planning applications. This would be good news, but the Board has pointed out that the S.106 funding (money from developers) is hard to use for these purposes. This means that, unless money is requested, developers will have higher profits to the detriment of us all. David is pursuing this.

As part of the updating of the Emergency Plan, the PC has registered to be notified by SSE when power cuts occur. All vulnerable people locally are also urged to register. It turns out that the houses at Townend are not supplied by SSE, but by EPS (Electrical Power Services).

The contractor due to work on the play area is still playing (!) fast and loose on the cost involved and on when the work will begin. The baby changer, last replaced in 2020, is to be replaced again, at around £200. The PC was not aware of the baby changer in the Village Hall's disabled toilet, although if you are in the

play area clutching a smelly baby, that is not much help. The next independent inspection of the play area will be July 2026.

There have been 26 responses to date from those supporting the Blandford Fly Project, but this is ongoing, so more responses from its most recent victims are welcome.

The County Council is planning to turn off street lights wherever possible late at night (see village website for the details). Each community will have different needs and the PC will have the ultimate decision.

The survey of overhanging trees and hedges has been completed. The tree by the War Memorial is not the responsibility of the PC, but the County Council, which has been notified. Shepherd's Hill/Coneygar will be trimmed in September.

A surveyor is still needed to carry out a survey of the Village Hall and SRT roofs. The SRT is having a survey of Robinson's Close in regard to drainage and is having a kitchen upgrade, courtesy of S.106 funding.

There is concern over a derelict property on Paines Hill, where the wall/house is falling down. This is now with Building Control at CDC. My notes of exactly three years ago have the owner responding to them within six weeks, so I doubt this will be dealt with swiftly, especially as CDC is now seriously understaffed. There were some general comments on planning decisions that could also be attributed to lack of staff.

Finally, the new bin at the top of Bradshaw Close is already well-used. The latter sums up the responsibilities of the PC rather well – from decisions that will last for decades, to a humble bin.

Steeple Hound

Parish Council Meeting *Notes*



Monday 21st July 2025

I've been told I have to be brief this month, so I'll keep it punchy.

The meeting started with chatter about the newly-mended outdoor table tennis table (before and after photos below) - and whether we can resurrect a few other tables from the (long) disbanded Youth Club – and even start a village tournament! Count me in!

4 Paines Hill was on the agenda (the one that's slowly disintegrating). With Cherwell Council saying it's not their concern because the latest collapse is at the back of the property, so isn't a public issue. The PC has written to the owner. Our very own Community Land Trust have even offered to take over the property and rebuild it - but the owner is not responding to anyone. It seems as though it's only the ivy holding it together now. What a shame and a waste!

There's an overgrown tree by the war memorial, which led to Cllr Gareth Epps showing us his "tree plotter" on his laptop – a national pilot scheme apparently.

Our Parish Clerk is now on the list of "vulnerable people" to contact by SSE in the event of an emergency. Not because she's particularly vulnerable you understand – it's all part of our new "souped up" Emergency Action Plan.

Cllr Gareth sent us a whole report ahead of the meeting – highlights being chat around whether the Parish Council will be getting more powers (time to start being nice to them all – I'll get baking); a proposed additional 6-8,000 new houses at Heyford Park (WOW!) and that the proposed speed limit reductions on the Banbury-Oxford road have received a high response and a lot of objections.

The refurb of the play area has been delayed until the end of August at the earliest, due to problems at the manufacturing end. There was quite a lot of huffing and puffing by a rather frustrated Chair at this point. I did wonder whether she could do with a pick-me-up, but I'd left my hip flask at home.

Sadly there's been some damage by users of the playground - involving a manhole cover, bollard and picnic bench. This is being investigated.

The topic moved onto the Toilet and the fact we need a new nappy changer as that's been broken. Someone suggested a simple table bolted to the wall might be the answer, and a PC site visit was suggested...

Onto Highways and whether we need any additional salt for the winter months. Another site visit to inspect supplies in the PC Shed looks to be on the horizon.

There's something of a long running saga regarding the "Deed of Variation" and the Village Hall. Sounded a bit boring and complicated - but the tale livened up when it was revealed that our expensive lawyers seem to be incompetent, and somewhere along the line have made an error in the Land Registry, and put the PC down as owning a small Montessori nursery somewhere in the village. What a nuisance!

Finally onto planning and various extensions that are being considered in the village (not to mention our poor Chair suggesting it was easier to get an extension approved than an EV charging point - I'm not surprised she wanted to get home. Record finish time of 8.58pm. I was impressed).

Until the next time (15th September)!

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Dr Radcliffe's *School Report*



We have had an exciting and very warm term at Dr Radcliffe's. Sports Day glory generally went to Isis House this year, their winning the KS1 and KS2 sports days. We also enjoyed our Summer Day of Dance, which was very well attended and great fun. Well done, also, to our Year 5 Cricket Team who reached the County Finals at St Edwards' in Oxford recently – a great day out!

We have had Cally and Gill in from Cotswold Arts through Schools, who did some excellent work with the children making patterned tiles (pictured here).

Our Summer Concert, led by Mrs Payne, was a most enjoyable evening, with a wide range of music on offer, including from instrument ensembles and the choir.

With regard to our Accelerated Reader initiative, children have to date passed almost 1,100 tests on reading books and have read 2.6 million words since it was introduced this summer. Thanks to all of you who have supported our JustGiving Page at **Dr Radcliffe's C of E Primary School, Steeple Aston is fundraising for Oxford Diocesan Schools Trust (ODST)** so that we can fund this initiative, which costs over £2,000 per year.

We have thirty children on roll for our Reception Class for September which is great. The children have been in school already, including for a Teddy Bears' Picnic and Stay & Play sessions. We wish all those Year 6 children leaving us all the best for the future. They have had an excellent year and are well prepared for secondary school.

We would like to thank the Friends (our PTA) for all their work this year (and last). Their fundraising has enabled us to replace six interactive whiteboards over the last two years at a cost in the region of £2,000 each. This is a remarkable achievement and of great benefit to the children. We would also like to thank Rev'd Harriet and the parishioners involved in our 'Open the Book' Bible story assemblies each Tuesday. Thanks also to Lisa Boote and our Governing Body for all their support this year.

Finally, thanks to all the children and families for all your work and support this year, and we look forward to seeing you all in September.

Rob O'Malley, Headteacher



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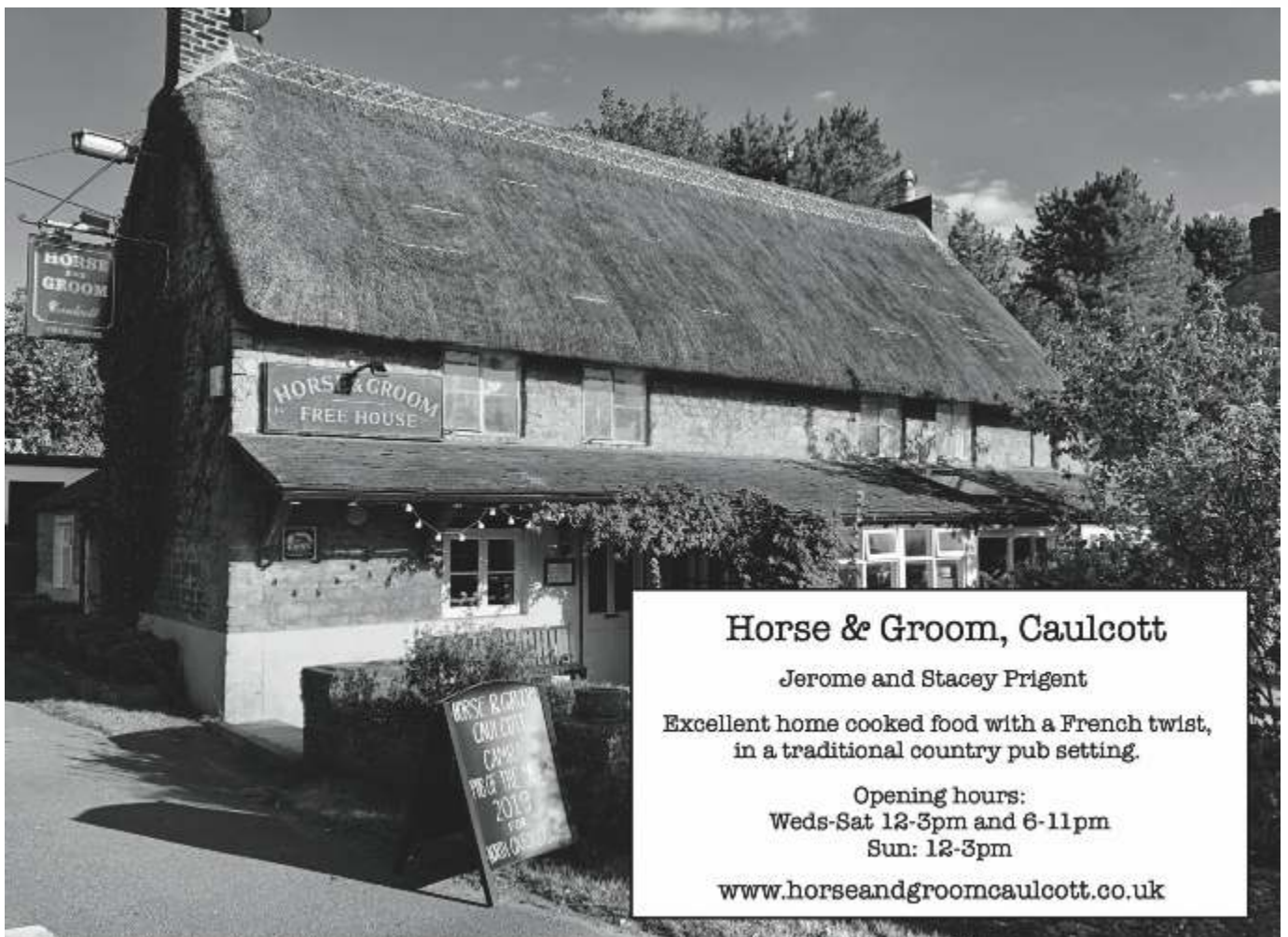
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Steeple Aston Golf Society held their second meeting of the season at Hearsall, Coventry.

If you are a fair-weather golfer, you would have enjoyed your day out at this exciting, beautifully manicured golf course. Sometimes it's not just the course you end up talking about over a drink and a bite to eat, it can also be the staff and friendliness of the members, which all adds to a good day out. Will we be returning next season? You bet we will.

In 1st place playing for the Cardale Trophy off 20 was Graham (I'm nearly 84) Lawrence with 34 points. Runner up was Tony Giles off 11 with 32 points.

Nearest the pin on the 17th was Graham Lawrence. Nearest the pin in two on the 16th was Nigel Mills.

In August, we shall be playing for the May Fu Two Trophy, and this will be our very last time at North Oxford, just off the Kidlington roundabout. If you would like to take part in this nostalgic happening due to its full closure in September, then please make a note of the date: Wednesday 13th August at 10.30am for 11.30am start. Call Alan on 01869 340423 or Chris on 01869 347173.

This is the final part of St Mellon's Golf and Country Club in Monmouthshire during the Battle of Britain in the Second World War: A ball lying in a crater may be lifted and dropped not nearer the hole, preserving the line to the hole, without penalty. A player whose stroke is affected by the simultaneous explosion of a bomb may play another ball under penalty of one stroke.

Happy golfing

Alan Brewer (Chair)

Listen In Exhibition

The Bodleian Libraries' exhibition ***Listen In: How Radio Changed the Home*** tells the story of the advent of radio, placing listeners - rather than broadcasters - at its heart. The exhibition looks at the period from 1922, when the BBC was founded and radio had 150,000 listeners, to 1939, as radio united households on the brink of war and its listenership reached 34 million. ***Listen In*** coincides with the centenary of the Daventry Transmitter, which, when it opened on 27th July 1925, vastly extended the reach of broadcasts and truly started the 'radio craze'. Drawing on books and ephemera from the Bodleian archives – including magazines, cartoons, educational pamphlets and advertisements - the exhibition explores how the arrival of radio affected family life, shifting – or failing to shift - dynamics between children and adults, and women and men. As the boom in audio-on-demand and podcasts continues to change our relationship with radio, ***Listen In*** will also consider how we 'listen in' today.

The exhibition is curated by Beaty Rubens, a BBC Radio producer for 35 years and now a freelance producer, presenter and writer. When searching through the Bodleian's archives, Beaty discovered two notebooks containing largely unpublished interviews with early radio listeners, providing rare first-person testimony about the impact of the new technology on ordinary people's lives. Initially, the BBC did not engage in any audience research at all. However, in 1938 it commissioned two women, Winifred Gill and Hilda Jennings, to conduct interviews in Barton Hill, a working-class area of Bristol. The research was published in a 40-page BBC pamphlet, but much material was not included, such as stories of male control of the wireless. The exhibition will share this material publicly for the first time, with actors voicing interviews from the notebooks to create a soundscape within the gallery. This will consist of motion-activated speakers and an alcove where visitors can listen to extensive extracts from the Gill research, including much of the excluded material.

Exhibition runs until 31st August 2025

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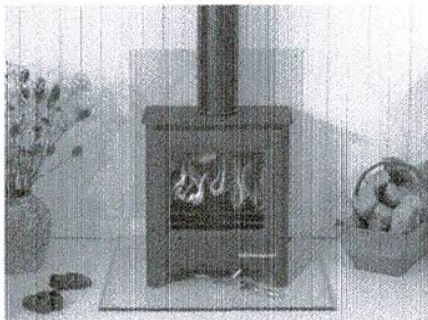
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Evening T20 against the King's Head – bring on the runners...

With Nige running himself out, the opening Doggett partnership was short lived. 6-1 soon became 17-4 and an early trip to the pub beckoned, before an excellent partnership of 42 between Nick Foster (who scored 5!) and Olly Doggett. When Olly retired on 50, Steeple's total score was 57-4, meaning he had scored 87.7% of the runs himself. A one-man batting line-up? Pretty much, although Phil Chesser hit a swashbuckling and technically incompetent 24 to help Steeple progress from 76-7 to a competitive 122 all out, with Olly returning to finish with 57 not out. Heroically, batsmen numbers 2-7 scored a total of 6 runs between them (4 ducks), and three of the last four batsmen required runners, including Tony Kelly, who actually could have done with a runner to get him to the wicket!

Steeple's opening bowlers began positively, with the extremely rapid Billy Hughes (2 for 8 off 3.5 overs) and Paul Longman (1 for 9 off four), restricting the opposition to 20-3. Some tight bowling from the almost mobile Tony Kelly (1 for 17 from three) meant that King's Head were 60-5 halfway through their innings.

Could Steeple pinch a famous victory? Sadly not – some big hitting from numbers 6 and 7 saw them home by 5 wickets with two overs to spare. But, with no shame in defeat, we retired to the pub in Bledington for refreshments.

Many thanks to Archie and team for a great game and wonderful hospitality.

A six-wicket haul brings victory in the wind against Ascott-under-Wychwood

Winning the toss and batting first on a blustery day at Great Tew, Ascott's openers started strongly with a partnership of 43. The outfield was like glass and there were boundaries aplenty, but eventually Adrian Downing (1 for 36 off 6 overs) broke through courtesy of the first of two rare catches behind the stumps by Phil Chesser.

A change of bowling brought on Ben Woods, who took a wicket on the first ball of each of his first three overs, to move the total from 66-1 to 96-4. Another strong partnership of 72, taking Ascott to 168-4 with 5 overs left, was broken by the ever-deceptive Nigel Doggett (1 for 14 off 3) and Richard Churchill (1 for 34 off 6), before a remarkable thing happened. Ben Woods bowled a triple wicket maiden to finish with figures of 6-24 off 6 overs, ending the Ascott innings on 187.

A splendid opening partnership of 79 by Nick Foster (37) and Nige (31) set the scene for a smooth run chase, and a fabulous unbeaten partnership of 103 by Arthur Higgins (57 not out) and the returning Merrik Baggallay (31 not out) saw Steeple home by 7 wickets with overs to spare.

Beers were then enjoyed at the Falkland Arms, including by man of the match, Ben Woods, despite regular reminders from his girlfriend that he needed to get back to London!

Phil Chesser



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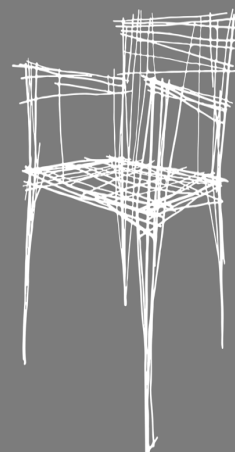
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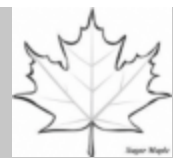
OCC plans to reduce streetlighting at night

Oxfordshire County Council has been consulting on plans to allow streetlights to be dimmed or turned off during the night. The council operates over 60,000 streetlights in the county. Some of these, such as the lights at major road junctions or towpaths, will have to stay on all night for safety reasons. The proposals are aimed at improving the night-time environment for residents and wildlife, as well as energy and carbon reduction. They could also reduce costs by more than £400,000 a year.

The introduction of such a scheme wouldn't be compulsory. In a village like Steeple Aston, the parish council would have to propose a change. Then, if this is approved by the county council, there will have to be a consultation with residents and other interested parties, such as the police and community groups. The standard timeframe for the reduction of lighting in rural areas will be 11.30pm until 5.30am, but there will be flexibility to deal with particular requirements of the area, such as a late running bus or train.

The parish council will be considering its response to these plans, following a recent survey, and a decision will be taken in September.

Steeple Aston *Garden Club*



On a hot, dry and beautifully sunny evening in early July, the Garden Club drove the relatively short distance to Bridewell Gardens. It focuses on mental health recovery, with most of their clients being recommended for what you might call 'gardening therapy', although the emphasis while they are there is very much on gardening! This was very evident as we were shown around by the Director, Ruth Madder, who had previously given a talk in February 2024 entitled 'Gardening for Mental Health Recovery', so we were very pleased that she was able to host our visit and show us their work. Bridewell is run by a small team of professionals and many volunteers, although they and their clients had all gone home by the time we arrived, so we had the place to ourselves!

We started with a walk around the vineyard and then toured different areas, such as fruit and vegetable beds, flowers for cutting and a large covered area where plants can be prepared for planting or produce sorted for use such as in their small kitchen. As this is an all-year operation, cover is necessary, although we needed it for shade rather than from the rain and cold they have on many days! At the end of the tour, we were offered tea, but everyone preferred cold water and to sit in the shade and admire the garden including the impressive topiary! If you want to visit Bridewell for yourself, they have a number of open days so please look at their website: bridewellgardens.org

Our next visit is to the garden of Caroline and Tim Edwards in Middle Aston on **Tuesday 5th August from 6.00pm**. If you would like to join us, please contact me.

Alison Llewellyn - Secretary
Steeple Aston Garden Club
alisonllew.home@gmail.com

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**Bob Bickley 14<sup>th</sup> October 1949 – 8<sup>th</sup> July 2025**

**The funeral will be held on 8<sup>th</sup> August at 12.00 noon  
at the North Oxfordshire Crematorium  
(between Tackley and Woodstock)**



Bob was brought up on a farm and, from about the age of eight, he would pick cherries from the farm and sell them beside the road on the A40. He loved riding on the farm's shire horse which, when he was small, he could get onto by himself but not dismount, so there were frequently shouts of "Mum, get me down".

Bob had a varied career. He went to agricultural college, got a job at Grange Farm, in Middle Aston, then a children's home, then at Nicholson's Nursery and finally for 13 years as caretaker/manager of Dr Radcliffe's School. He was blissfully happily married to Brenda for just over 50 years. When they met, Brenda was going out with someone else who unexpectedly took her to see his friend, Bob, working in a lambing tent at the time. Bob's first words to Brenda were "You are wearing stupid shoes". Despite this tactless comment, they were married on 15<sup>th</sup> March 1975.

Initially they lived in Kenilworth, where they had all the family over for Christmas Day in 1975. On Boxing Day, they packed up the house and on 27<sup>th</sup> December moved to Somerton with Bob having a job at Grange Farm. Bob described his farming day for the Steeple Aston Village Archive, saying he started work at 5.30am with bringing in the 120 cows, milking them and returning them to the field. Then there were three hours of other jobs, three hours to himself, and at 2.30pm he repeated the milking process. By 6.30pm he was finished as long as there were no problems when he checked the cows. If there were problems, it could be after midnight before he got to bed.

Bob and Brenda had their son, Andy, in 1977 and their daughter, Sam, was born two years later. In 1983, Bob's overwhelming desire to help others meant they started fostering. In all, they took in 27 children, one or two at a time for between one night and two and a half years. They lived in a three-bedroom house and, as Brenda explained, "everyone mucked in". Bob was brilliant at making things fun for the children. There was one Christmas Eve when Bob told the children he was taking them out, and instead took them with him to his work on a plantation. They played happily at being reindeer using the spirals for the trees as pretend horns. On another occasion, Bob was making 'punch' for the Youth Club and put empty alcohol bottles by the 'punch'. The children were delighted, because they thought they were drunk.

Sam remembers Bob putting her on the back of a cow for its walk back to the field after milking. If a lamb was orphaned, it was given to one of the children but with names such as Lamb Chop or Mint Sauce, they had no illusions about what would happen to it. Bob adored his three grandchildren who, most improbably, called him Grumpy. This started when Andy said to Bob "I hear you are going to be a Grampy". Bob misheard and said he wasn't grumpy. The name stuck.

Bob's overwhelming desire to help others, especially children, is the memory we all have of him. What could be a better summary of a life than that?

**Julia Whybrew**

## Steeple Aston Parish Councillors

Angharad Lloyd-Jones (Chair)

Martin Lipson (Vice Chair), Planning,  
Mid-Cherwell Neighbourhood Plan Forum

Peter Dammermann

Greg Elphick

Charlotte Powell, Sports & Recreation Centre,  
Environment

Mathew Watson

Cathy Fleet – Parish Clerk

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# Share your wildlife sightings!

## The value of contributing wildlife records

Everyone can play a part in submitting wildlife observations to local Environmental Records Centres – the ‘official record’ consulted by planning authorities and other parties to track changes in distribution and abundance. Keeping a systematic note of what you see on your walks and in your gardens adds interest and depth to the experience, and can help you to improve your identification skills.

## How: using iRecord

A great way of easily logging records is iRecord website/app, from which Records Centres like Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre (TVERC) can extract data, or you can send records direct to TVERC. Local groups can provide focus by setting up an ‘Activity’ within iRecord, whereby all records submitted by participants within a designated geographical area or specified timeframe, will combine to form an easily accessible overview of what has been seen and where, including a species list. You can, of course submit via iRecord observations from beyond the activity area, and historic observations. For greatest efficiency, we recommend that anyone interested in contributing, or who already records observations but has not shared them, creates their own iRecord account to record their sightings; to do this, go to [irecord.org.uk](http://irecord.org.uk). There is an option to start in ‘training mode’, which allows you to submit records without risk of causing any damage! And even in live mode, iRecord uses a system of checkers to assess records, so that the risk of erroneous records getting on the official record is minimised. You can also attach photos to records. Once you have an account, you can find your group’s Activity by searching Activities and the name of your group/parish. If it is a ‘member-only’ Activity, your application to join will need to be approved by the group’s administrators before you can access the activity.

## Other methods of submitting observations

If you do not have the means to use iRecord, then record your observations in a field notebook for someone in your group to upload or submit to TVERC. They will need key pieces of information: species name, observer’s name, location name (name of the site, ideally from OS map; do not enter postal address as this will be visible to others), grid reference and date of observation. If you have multiple observations to report, you need to upload records as a spreadsheet. Please provide information either in a spreadsheet with headings as described above, or otherwise so that we can easily transfer it into a spreadsheet. You can also download TVERC’s spreadsheet template. Find out more information on how to submit your records, including links to video guides, at [tverc.org](http://tverc.org)

## How your records are used

Your records are first validated (checked for location errors) and verified (checked for species identification errors) before being entered onto the TVERC database. This ensures that the data passed onto decision-makers is as accurate and informative as possible. Records are shared with local authorities in Oxfordshire and Berkshire, BBOWT and the Environment Agency. They are also available to local groups, parish councils, ecological consultants and researchers as follows:

- by planning authorities and developers to make informed decisions on the design and location of sustainable development;
- to help farmers, landowners and conservation organisations manage land in the best way to enhance biodiversity;
- by nature partnerships to direct wildlife conservation work;
- by teachers, students and scientists for education and scientific research.

The database currently holds over 5 million records, including over 1.1 million records of Protected and Notable species, i.e. those that should be taken into account in planning applications. The vast majority of records in the TVERC database are collected by volunteers and local wildlife groups, showing just how vital your efforts are. So please, make your nature spotting count and submit your records to TVERC.

**Joanna Higson, TVERC Biological Recording Co-ordinator,**  
[joanna.higson@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:joanna.higson@oxfordshire.gov.uk) [tverc.org/](http://tverc.org/)



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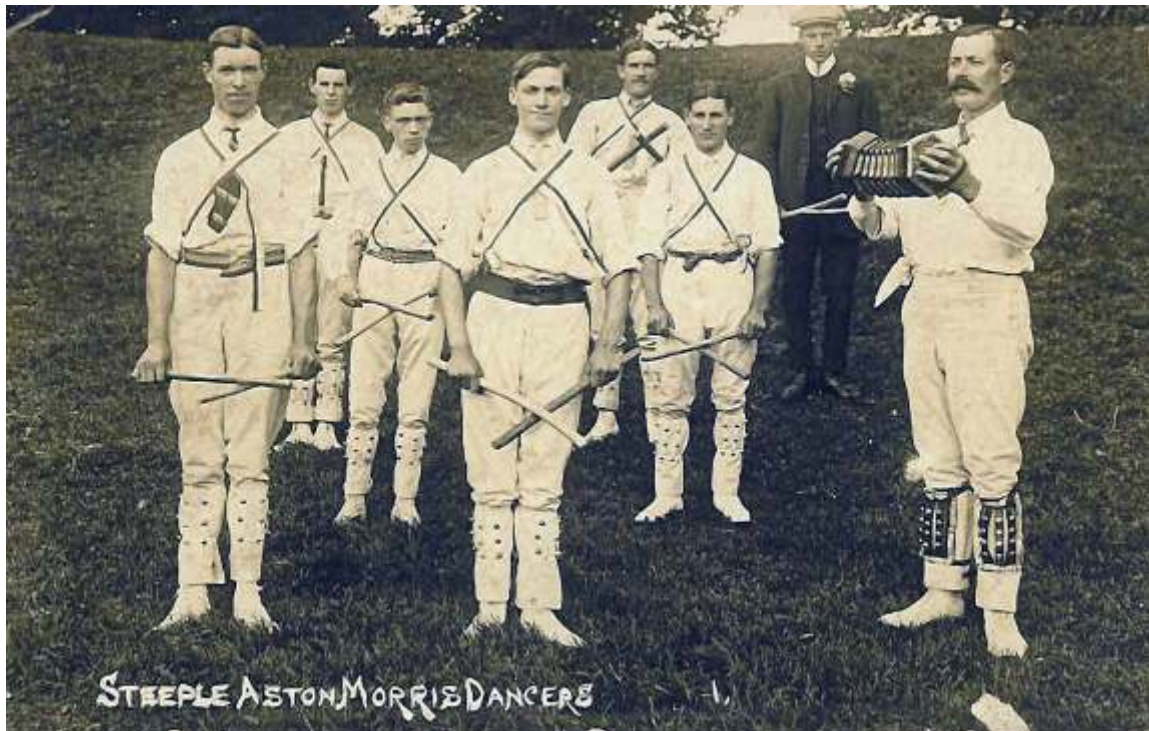


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## BLAST *from the past*

Morris dancing has long been a tradition throughout Oxfordshire, and Steeple Aston was no exception. The photographs here depict Steeple Aston Morris men showing how it was done back in 1912. *Photographs courtesy of Steeple Aston Village Archive (SAVA).*



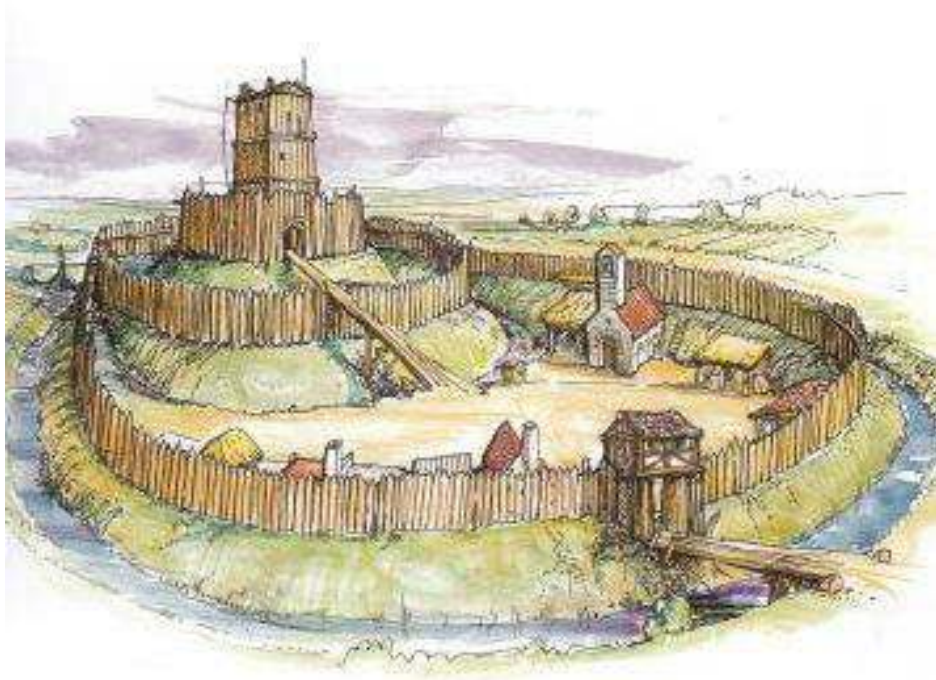


*Steeple Talks August 21<sup>st</sup>*  
*In the Church - 7.15pm for 7.30pm*

*Canon Charles Chadwick*

# William I

## More than Conqueror?



## The impact of the Norman invasion

*Refreshments from 7.15pm*  
*Donations are welcomed for church funds.*  
*All Welcome*

# All the fun of the Church Fete

Sunday morning on 13<sup>th</sup> July dawned cloudy and overcast. To be honest, considering the heatwave, it was a lovely surprise! The team, who had begun setting up the night before, really appreciated being able to work in cooler weather, and finished building the stalls for another amazing fete! By the time Mat Watson opened the fete at one o'clock, the sun had reappeared, but a nice breeze meant that no-one overheated, though that might also have been thanks to the ice-cream bicycle, which had to be restocked mid-afternoon, as well as the teas and cakes in the hall and on the field!

With wonderful performances from the Jubilee Brass Band and the Joanne Mills School of Dance, as well as a steam train, a new shopping village and a delicious burger and beer tent from the Red Lion, there was so much to see and do, excitement cresting over the field like a wave. Towards the end of the afternoon, the children's races were a real highlight, with sprints, sack races and bean-bag-on-heads races. The kids had great fun, and the grown-ups also enjoyed cheering them on. As the afternoon drew to a close, Mat Watson drew the highly anticipated raffle, with prizes ranging from a hamper put together by the church, to a family annual pass to Blenheim Palace. Prizes were also given for the various games across the field, such as the WI's mystery cake ingredient (vegan basil pesto!) and the various throwing games.

The Steeple Aston Church Fete committee would like to take this moment to say thank you to everyone who helped out, and to those who came. We couldn't have done this without each and every one of you, and we hope you had as great a time as we did. Together, we raised over £4,000 to help maintain St Peter's & St Paul's Church! Thank you once again, and we hope to see you all next year!

## Top Ten Lucky Raffle Winners:

- |                                    |                                        |
|------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| 1. Luxury Hamper                   | - Steven Gumbs                         |
| 2. Gin Hamper                      | - Mr Brett, Hunters End, Steeple Aston |
| 3. Atrium Voucher                  | - Mary Rushworth, Steeple Aston        |
| 4. BEAT sweatshirt & voucher       | - David Fry, Middle Aston              |
| 5. Sole Pilates voucher            | - Kate S                               |
| 6. Sole Pilates voucher            | - Mary White, Steeple Aston            |
| 7. Polka Dot Gift & voucher        | - Liz Hite                             |
| 8. N/Aston Pet Supplies Gift Bag   | - Polly Taylor, Westcott Barton        |
| 9. Oxford Playhouse Tickets        | - Becky Alcroft                        |
| 10. Red Lion Voucher -Dinner for 2 | - Gareth Johns, Steeple Aston          |

*Photos by Nigel Francis*



# Church *Matters*



We have this summer been blessed with wonderful weather here in the UK, and our garden's grass has, as the summer has progressed, turned decidedly yellow. As I write this, we have just finished 'Fete' season in the benefice, with three wonderful events across three weekends. Thank you to everyone who has helped create such fantastic afternoons, from the organisers, stall holders and visitors, without whom the fetes couldn't run. Thank you.

As schools break up, we begin the summer holidays, hopefully with the weather continuing to be glorious throughout the whole of August. Personally, I'm looking forward to our holiday, and lots of fresh air out on our bikes.

Taking time to stop and rest is a biblical principle, written into the story of creation. On the seventh day the Lord rested.

*By the seventh day God had finished the work he had been doing; so, on the seventh day he rested from all his work. Then God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it he rested from all the work of creating that he had done.*

*(Genesis 2:2-3)*

When we go on holiday, it is very tempting to rush around trying to see all the sights, try out lots of new activities, and read as many books as possible. This is a trap I can easily fall into, making the most of not being sat at a desk, I'm keen to ride as much as possible. I also usually take a big pile of books that I want to read, which only seems to grow between holidays.

Swapping activities is not the same as resting and, if we are not careful, we can return from our holiday in need of a holiday to recover! As I attempt to get better at cycling, one of the things I have had to learn is the importance of rest, so that my body can recover and adapt, growing stronger and therefore hopefully faster. It is a concept that is counter cultural, as we all strive to improve. Yet rest is important, so that we can move forward. None of us would seriously contemplate not sleeping, as we know that our body needs sleep to repair itself ready for the next day. The same principle applies to the whole of our lives. In fact, God commanded us (Exodus 20:1-17) to take one day in seven to rest, the Sabbath, making it a Holy Day (separate, a cut apart).

This summer, I wish everyone a wonderful holiday, enjoying time with family and friends, visiting new exciting places. I pray that you also have Holy days, taking time to rest and relax, allowing your mind, body and soul to recover.

God bless,

**Harriet**

---

## **\*\*COME TO A PICNIC\*\***

IN THE COMMUNITY ORCHARD ON WATER LANE

**On SATURDAY 9<sup>TH</sup> AUGUST from 1.00PM TO 3.00PM**

BRING CHILDREN AND LUNCH!

BUY SOFT DRINKS AND CAKE!

*Steeple Aston Community Orchard Group*



# Local Information

## Church Services August 2025

| Date                                     | North Aston                                   | Steeple Aston                                 | Tackley                                       |
|------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| <b>Sunday<br/>3<sup>rd</sup> August</b>  | 10.30am<br>Benefice Service<br>Holy Communion |                                               |                                               |
|                                          |                                               |                                               |                                               |
| <b>Sunday<br/>10<sup>th</sup> August</b> |                                               |                                               | 10.30am<br>Benefice Service<br>Holy Communion |
|                                          |                                               |                                               |                                               |
| <b>Sunday<br/>17<sup>th</sup> August</b> |                                               | 10.30am<br>Benefice Service<br>Holy Communion |                                               |
|                                          |                                               |                                               |                                               |
| <b>Sunday<br/>24<sup>th</sup> August</b> | 10.30am<br>Benefice Service<br>Holy Communion |                                               |                                               |
|                                          |                                               |                                               |                                               |
| <b>Sunday<br/>31<sup>st</sup> August</b> |                                               |                                               | 10.30am<br>Benefice Service<br>Holy Communion |

[www.sntchurch.com](http://www.sntchurch.com)

Our church buildings are also open every day. Do feel free to visit at any time.

## BUS TIMES

### STAGECOACH S4 BUS SERVICE

*This timetable is effective from 10th March 2024*

#### From Steeple Aston (outside Post Office) to Oxford (arrival time in italics)

##### Mondays to Fridays (except public holidays)

0619 0721 0831 0931 then hourly to 1531 1645 1754 1849 1937 2037 2216  
0703 0817 0920 1020 1620 1737 1840 1932 2022 2147 2253

##### Saturdays

0721 0821 0931 then hourly to 1531 1641 1746 1849 1937 2037 2216  
0809 0909 1019 1619 1729 1834 1932 2022 2147 2253

##### Sundays and most public holidays

0907 1037 1207 1337 1507 1637 1806  
0953 1123 1253 1423 1553 1723 1852

#### From Steeple Aston (outside Post Office) to Banbury (arrival time in italics)

##### Mondays to Fridays (except public holidays)

0758 0910 1008 then hourly to 1508 1624 1732 1835 1933 2025 2113 2213 2341  
0837 0947 1045 1545 1703 1809 1909 2006 2053 2142 2242 0009

##### Saturdays

0758 0908 1008 then hourly to 1608 1718 1828 1927 2025 2113 2213 2341  
0837 0945 1045 1645 1755 1905 1958 2053 2142 2242 0009

##### Sundays and most public holidays

0917 1044 1214 1344 1514 1644 1814 1944  
0956 1122 1252 1422 1552 1722 1852 2022

Times subject to change. Before starting your journey please check the timetables at  
[www.stagecoachbus.com/timetables](http://www.stagecoachbus.com/timetables) E&OE

### OURBUS BARTONS

OurBus Bartons offers services through Steeple Aston to and from Lower Heyford Station (Monday to Friday), to and from Chipping Norton (Wednesdays) and to and from Bicester (Fridays).  
See <https://ourbusbartons-org-uk.stackstaging.com/> for details and times.



Visit Our Open Day !

11-17 AUGUST 2025

A NATIONAL ALLOTMENT SOCIETY INITIATIVE

NATIONAL  
ALLOTMENTS  
WEEK

Allotments  
and Wellbeing



Steeple Aston Church  
Allotment Association

# Steeple Aston Open Allotments

**Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> August**

**2 - 6pm**

**Free Entry**

Produce and gardening stalls

Allotment tours

Refreshments

Children activities

Scarecrow competition





## Local Info



### STEEPLE ASTON VILLAGE HALL

[www.savh.org.uk](http://www.savh.org.uk)

#### Our hall is available to hire:

- Ideal site for parties, receptions, seminars, exhibitions and workshops
- Full width raised stage and well-equipped kitchen
- Main hall can seat around 100
- HD projector and retractable screen
- Meeting Room to seat 20, with separate access
- Off-Road Car parking

**For hire charges and bookings** see our website or call Angela on 07734 112967

### Steeple Aston and Middle Aston Rubbish bin collection day is THURSDAY.

#### August 2025

7<sup>th</sup> Blue and brown  
14<sup>th</sup> Green  
21<sup>st</sup> Blue and brown  
28<sup>th</sup> Green



#### September 2025

4<sup>th</sup> Blue and brown  
11<sup>th</sup> Green  
18<sup>th</sup> Blue and brown  
25<sup>th</sup> Green

#### Food caddy is collected weekly

Batteries and small electrical items packed in clear plastic bags and placed on the top of any bin lid are collected weekly.

## Steeple Aston Sport & Recreation Centre and Field

| Letting charges                                                                                        |              |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| Social Function peak times<br>(Daily up to 6 hours from 6pm)                                           | £55          |
| Social Function off-peak times<br>(Daily up to 5 hours before 6pm)                                     | £27.50       |
| Meeting of represented clubs<br>(Daily per session up to 2 hours)                                      | £11          |
| Caution money for private lettings                                                                     | £100         |
| Block bookings for social events<br>15% discount for 6 or more bookings in advance                     |              |
| Contact us if you wish to hire the field or use the changing facilities                                |              |
| Letting Agent – Angela Smith<br><a href="mailto:rec.trust@googlemail.com">rec.trust@googlemail.com</a> | 07734 112967 |
| Chair – Torquil McLusky                                                                                | 01869 347914 |
| Treasurer – Chris Cooper                                                                               | 01869 347173 |

- The Sport & Rec is available to hire
- The "Friendly" space - the ideal venue for smaller parties, children's parties and get togethers
- Need more space? Hire the Sport & Rec and Village Hall together
- Fantastic playground just outside
- Internet
- Full disabled access, toilets, showers and changing rooms
- High quality grass playing field with power supply for football, marquees, events etc. (contact us for details and availability)
- Small kitchen and separate bar
- Room for around 50 seated
- Brand-new projector with retractable screen
- Car Parking
- Regular events include Home Education, Babies & Toddlers, Brownies, After School Club, Bridge and of course the Football Club (it's been going since 1898!)
- Next event Race Night  
...more details to follow!





# Steeple Aston *Calendar*

Check the village website at [steepleaston.org.uk/home/calendar](http://steepleaston.org.uk/home/calendar) for any changes.

Please send details of events for September and October to [editorsalife@gmail.com](mailto:editorsalife@gmail.com)

| Month                        | Event                                                            | Venue              | Time                      |
|------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| <b>August</b>                |                                                                  |                    |                           |
| Sunday 3rd August            | SACC-v-Great & Little Tew                                        | Great Tew CC       | 2.00pm                    |
| Tuesday 5th August           | Garden Club visit - Caroline & Tim Edwards' garden, Middle Aston | Middle Aston       | 6.00pm                    |
| Wednesday 6th August         | Valentines: Coach trip and river cruise                          | Caversham          |                           |
| Saturday 9th August          | Picnic at Community Orchard, Water Lane, Steeple Aston           | Water Lane, SA     | 1.00pm - 3.00pm           |
| Wednesday 13th August        | SAGS match                                                       | North Oxford       | 10.30am for 11.30am start |
| <b>Thursday 14th August</b>  | <b>SAL September copy &amp; advert deadlines</b>                 |                    |                           |
| Sunday 17th August           | Steeple Aston Open Allotments                                    | Steeple Aston      | 2.00pm - 6.00pm           |
| Tuesday 19th August          | Valentines: Tony Hetherington sings                              | Village Hall       | 2.30pm                    |
| Thursday 21st August         | Steeple Talk in the Church: William I: More than Conqueror?      | SA church          | 7.15pm for 7.30pm         |
| Saturday 23rd August         | Farmers' Market                                                  | Deddington         | 9.00am - 12.30pm          |
| Monday 25th August           | Summer Horticultural Show & Fun Dog Show                         | Robinsons Close    | Gates open 2.00pm         |
| <b>September</b>             |                                                                  |                    |                           |
| Tuesday 9th September        | WI: Reflexology - talk and demo from Beth Astle                  | Village Hall       | 7.00pm                    |
| Wednesday 10th September     | Valentines: Coach trip to Wells Cathedral & Bishop's Palace      |                    |                           |
| Friday 12th September        | SAGS match                                                       | Wrag Barn, Swindon | 12 noon                   |
| <b>Sunday 14th September</b> | <b>SAL October copy &amp; advert deadlines</b>                   |                    |                           |
| Monday 15th September        | Garden Club Visit                                                | Chalgrove          | 2.00pm                    |
| Monday 15th September        | Parish Council meeting                                           | S&R Building       | 7.30pm                    |
| Tuesday 16th September       | Valentines: Advice on scams                                      | Village Hall       | 2.30pm                    |
| Wednesday 24th September     | Horticultural Society AGM                                        | Village Hall       | 7.45pm                    |
| Saturday 27th September      | Farmers' Market                                                  | Deddington         | 9.00am - 12.30pm          |

**Choral Society Rehearsals.** Village Hall - 7.45pm - Mondays  
**Badminton.** Village Hall - 10am -12.30pm - Tuesdays  
**Bell Ringing practice.** Church Tower - 7.30pm - Tuesdays  
**Walking Netball.** Village Hall - 10.15am - Wednesdays  
**Brownies.** Sport & Rec Centre - 6pm - 7.30pm - Wednesdays  
**Toddler Group.** Sport & Rec Centre - 9.30am -11.30am - Thursdays  
**Badminton.** Village Hall - 8pm - Thursdays  
**Village History Centre (SAVA).** 10am - 12 noon - Saturdays

Steeple Aston Life is published by Steeple Aston Life Committee

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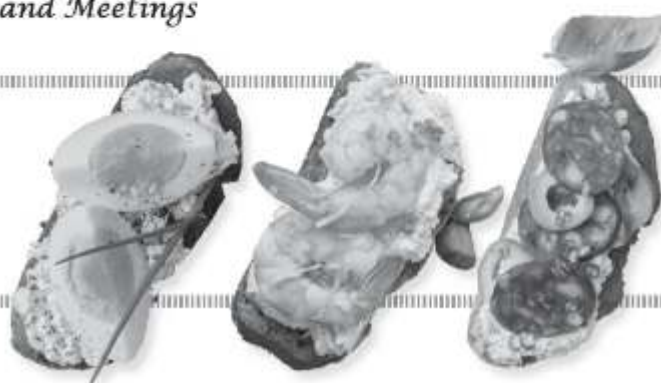
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