

Steeple Aston

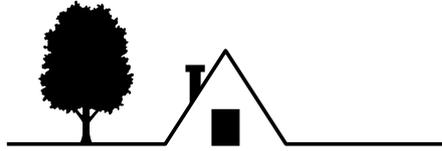
April 2026

Issue No. 632

Life



Dr Radcliffe • Brasenose Farm Windpump • Thatching



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Cover: The traditional craft of thatching. Photo by: Nigel Francis

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Steeple Aston Directory

Allotments (Church) SACAA		Amanda Rodgers	07793 553150
Angling Club		Antony Morley	tonyriver_83@hotmail.com
Archive (SAVA)	Chairman	Stuart Cummins	01869 349155
Baby and toddler group		Katy, Martha, Hilary and Lisa	steepleastonoddlergrp@gmail.com
Badminton (Tuesday mornings)		Barbara Brewer	01869 340423
Badminton (Thursday evenings)		Alison Moran	01869 347033
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Catholic Church - St Teresa's	Charlbury	Father Clive Dytor	07484 158642
Cherwell District Council	Castle Quay, Banbury		01295 227001
Cherwell District Councillor (Deddington Ward)		Cllr David Rogers	david.rogers@cherwell-dc.gov.uk
Oxfordshire County Councillor (Deddington Ward)		Cllr Gareth Epps	Gareth.epps@oxfordshire.gov.uk
Choral Society	Chair	Bev Davies	01869 347684
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	Churchwardens	Eileen Baglin-Jones, Graham Clifton	340099/347273
Church (Methodist) – Tackley		Rev'd Paul Carter	01865 243216
	Steward	Tim Bailey	01869 331516
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Deddington Health Centre	Appointments	Patient Triage	01869 338611
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	Out of Hours		111
Dr Radcliffe's C of E School	Headteacher		01869 340204
Fix My Street		Graham Porcas - grahamporcas@btconnect.com	01869 347240
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Garden Club	Chairman	Richard Preston	01869 340512
Golf Society	Chairman	Alan Brewer	01869 340423
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Village Emergency Telephone System			690691
Village Website	Editor Jenny Bell	steepleastonwebeditor@gmail.com	01869 943573
Volunteer Driver Service (North Oxfordshire)		livewell.oxfordshire.gov.uk/Services/2561	0300 303 0125
Walking Netball	Wed. - 10.15am	Merrill Bayley	01869 347802
WI	President	Julie Hillier	01869 349185



Editorial



“...folly is not always folly.”
Jane Austen

Steeple Aston *Life*

April 2026

Issue No.632

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As I write, spring has definitely sprung, bringing much needed sunshine to lift our spirits. By the time you read this, the spring horticultural show will have taken place, and will feature in the May issue. Hope you were a winner, but if not, that you enjoyed taking part in this annual treat.

We'll be going through the SAL survey results shortly, so thanks to all who contributed, and look out for some subtle changes to SAL in the coming months as we respond to your suggestions. It was heartwarming to find that so many of you enjoy learning about our local history. We are lucky to have Steeple Aston Village Archive (SAVA) in our midst, enabling access to so much historical data and fascinating photos of times gone by. This issue includes articles on the recently dismantled Brasenose Farm Windpump; the traditional craft of thatching; and the history of Dr Samuel Radcliffe – a character who features prominently in the village. His legacy provides some funds for the school and scholarships to help those in need, and there are events planned for next month to honour his contribution to our local community.

Finally, as we celebrate Easter, why not test your family's knowledge by tackling the Easter quiz. Happy Easter!

Carol



Steeple Aston *Life*

COPY

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

COPY DEADLINES

The copy deadline for the May 2026 issue is
Tuesday 14th April

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ADVERTISING RATES

¼ page - £10
½ page - £18
Full page (village events only) - £20.00



Frank Philip Damm 07.08.1952 - 18.02.2026

Frank lived in Grange Park, Steeple Aston, with his wife Sheila and two sons, Alex and Chris, for 40 years. Frank was an active member of the golf society and football club, playing in his earlier years and latterly being Secretary and Chairman.

Frank's funeral will take place at the North Oxford Crematorium and Memorial Park, Tackley, Kidlington, OX5 3ER on Thursday 2nd April 2026 at 12 noon (family flowers only). The celebration of his life will continue at The Deddington Arms, Deddington, OX15 0SH. If you would like to make a donation in Frank's name, the family have chosen the following charities to support: The British Heart Foundation or The Lymphoma Research Foundation.



Potholes update

It's that time of year just after winter, when we see the full effects of freezing conditions resulting in potholes and other defects on our roads. It has become fashionable to knock the local authorities who are working hard to repair our roads with minimal support from central government, so please be supportive of their efforts. Everyone involved is working hard to maintain roads in workable condition within very tight financial constraints.

So how does it work? In Oxfordshire we have the Fix My Street scheme which your PC was an early supporter of and as a result Steeple Aston is well looked after. I am the local FMS SuperUser, meaning that I can contact the repair contractors and directly action defects raised on the FMS system without a visit from an Oxfordshire Highways inspector. There are very strict criteria, most notably that the depth of any pothole has to be more than 40mm to be able to action. Most reports made on FMS exaggerate the depth, meaning I cannot proceed and they are left under review until deep enough. It would probably make more sense to fix minor defects before they become major ones, but the rules are decreed by our councillors, so please take it up with them rather than me, as I have to follow the rules or else my white paint spray can be confiscated!

Once I have actioned a report, it is marked with white paint and fixed within 28 days using a permanent repair method rather than the temporary patching previously used. Progress! However, we still have a problem in Steeple Aston where years of temporary patching has resulted in an uneven patchwork of bumps and hollows which need attention. Much of South and North Side are overdue for resurfacing which is outside the FMS scheme and we are proposing to Oxford Highways that they need to include this in their plans. Councillor Epps is very supportive of our efforts and we are hopeful of results this year.

I have been unable to do much yet this year being out of action for two months, but am now back in the saddle with the backlog actioned. By the time this is published, I hope that most of the repairs requested will have been completed. So please use the system, it does work. Either raise a report directly on the FMS website or simply contact me or the parish clerk. When reporting directly online, please keep your report factual and accurate. All reports will be inspected, but if they are inaccurate or don't comply, they will be left for further inspection and future review which causes more work for all involved. If any doubts or queries then please contact me.

Graham Porcas - Tel: 01869 347240

Email: grahamporcas@btconnect.com

Editor's Letterbox

Dear Editor,

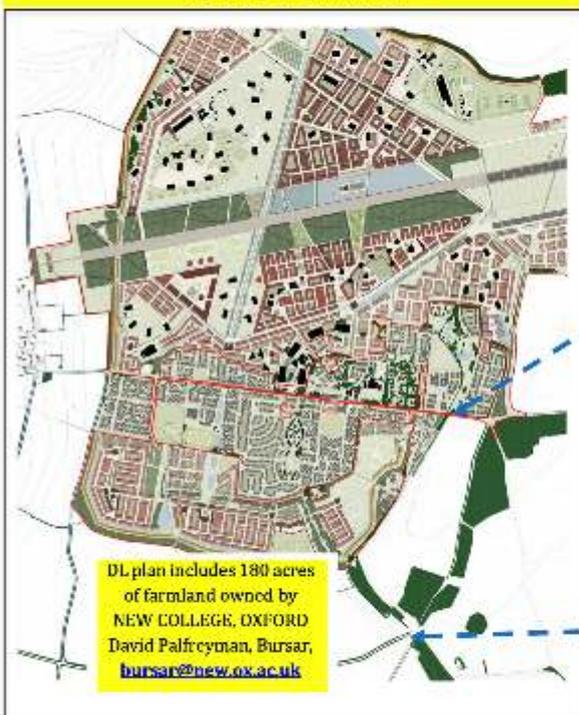
I would like to draw the village's attention to the opportunistic application by the developer, Richborough, to build a further 475 houses on top of the existing application by Dorchester Living to build 9,000 houses at Heyford Park. This is on farmland next to the Heyford Leys Mobile Home Park. Once productive farmland is built on, it is lost forever. Developers should be building on the brownfield site of the former airfield, NOT on fields. The countryside between Heyford Park and the villages is not 'spare land'. It provides separation, tranquility and identity to our villages. If this is approved, it sets a dangerous precedent for the farmland belonging to New College, Oxford in the Dorchester Living proposal. This land was deliberately excluded from allocation - the local plan should be respected.

Our roads are at breaking point. Alongside all of the five other massive developments proposed, this will contribute to a further 85,000 extra car journeys to our roads a day. The flood risk is real. Hard surfaces replace natural drainage. Engineered water systems manage water, they do not eliminate danger. The proposed development is on a field several metres above and sloping down to a branch of the Gallos Brook around which the Heyford Leys Mobile Home Park for the retired and semi-retired is situated. In extreme rainfall, which we are increasingly experiencing, the brook floods all around the mobile homes closest to the brook leaving the elderly residents trapped. The brook then continues down to the SSSI Weston Fen Nature Reserve and the village of Weston-on-the-Green both of which also flood. Therefore further construction on this site will only exacerbate already serious local flooding issues.

Lastly, there are serious concerns over contamination at the former airbase, including that of PFAS of toxic and carcinogenic 'forever chemicals' from historic use of fire-fighting foam on the airfield. There must be full site and water surveys carried out before any further building. We need as many of you as possible to object. The deadline has already passed, but you can still legally object by emailing the council with your name and address to: planning@cherwell-dc.gov.uk and quoting the reference no 25/03343/OUT.

Thank you, **Charlotte Harris**

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Steeple People



Linda Watkins

Which village do you live in, & for how long? Steeple Aston – 16 years.

Where did you move from and what brought you here and what do you like best about living here? We used to live in Upper Heyford, but had to move as our cottage was too small for three young children. Two were already at Dr Radcliffe's School so we looked for a place in Steeple Aston. The view over fields from our house, friendly people and the proximity to lovely countryside.

A potted history of yourself in 40 words or less: Born in Coventry, school in Warwick, languages at Exeter University, moved to Oxford, met husband, got cats, played guitar in bands (Death by Crimpers and Passion Play), had children, worked in publishing and then in schools once children started school.

How do others see you in five words? I asked my three children and husband and added one for myself and came up with: stressy (x2), kind, funny, hard-working.

What do others find most annoying about you? I still relentlessly attempt to get my now-adult children to get off their phones, get fresh air and exercise, etc. etc., which irritates them (and me).

Early bird or night owl? Cat or dog? Both – I don't sleep enough. Cats – I love the way everything has to be on their terms, and the miracle that they smell so nice when they wash themselves in fishy saliva.

Town or countryside? Gym or ramble? Countryside; ramble (the exercise classes I go to in Somerton are great too).

What did you want to be when you grew up? A teacher, but when I actually started training to be a teacher, it took me a couple of weeks to realise it wasn't for me!

What was your first job? And your current job? My first (and also worst) job was a Product Language Assistant at an electronic games company. My languages are French and German, so, bafflingly, they gave me instruction manuals to translate from English into Swedish and Portuguese. This was before the days of Google Translate, so I was armed with only a couple of dictionaries. I can only imagine what the manuals were like! I currently work as an administrator in a primary school near Oxford, plus freelance editing/proofreading work when time allows.

What's your guilty pleasure? Mochas from Costa.

Who is your favourite musician and track? I used to be a goth in my younger days and am still stuck in the 80s, so anything by Sisters of Mercy, Xmal Deutschland, Mission, Cure etc. *Favourite Track:* 'See You' by Depeche Mode, as it takes me straight back to village hall discos of the 80s.

What is your best loved book & your favourite author? I loved 'The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time' by Mark Haddon. Apart from that, I like anything gripping, e.g. books by Kate Atkinson, Elly Griffiths, Lucy Foley.

What do you like to cook/bake? I enjoy 'garlic cooking' as my daughter used to put it (i.e. savoury food rather than baking). I love researching recipes for curries, chillis etc. and spending time in the kitchen first thing on a weekend morning, then people can help themselves later whenever they want some. Eating is chaotic in our house as everyone is in and out all the time and so we tend to eat different things at different times.

If you could travel anywhere, where would it be? Somewhere peaceful and scenic, like the Norwegian Fjords or the Black Forest. I used to travel to Germany a lot as a child as my mum is German and we had relatives there.

What was your favourite holiday destination & why? Krakow. I went there with my daughter last year and it's a beautiful city with so much to see both in the city itself and the surrounding area. It has a huge market square with loads of beautifully lit heated outdoor restaurants, all serving amazing cocktails, which is a bonus.

If you were marooned on a desert island, what would you miss most? Apart from family, cats, friends, I would really miss routine. It would kill me. I would have to impose some sort of pointless schedule to fill my days.

Something surprising that you excel at? Parallel parking.

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What do you know about Easter? A quiz for all the family



1. What is the traditional flower of Easter?
2. Which country produced the world's largest Easter Egg?
3. In which century did the Easter Bunny originate - 16th, 17th or 18th?
4. Easter Island forms part of which South American country?
5. Which famous jewellery firm is renowned for designing jewel-encrusted eggs?
6. Which country produced the world's largest Easter egg hunt?
7. If you don't want bad luck, what should you not do on Good Friday?
8. What meat is traditionally eaten on Easter Sunday?
9. How many cream eggs does Cadbury sell each year - 200, 250 or 300 million?
10. How many marzipan balls should sit on top of a Simnel cake?
11. What is the Egg a symbol of?
12. When it comes to eating chocolate bunnies, what do 76% of people eat first?
13. What does the cross represent on the top of a hot cross bun?
14. Which Disney film does the rabbit Thumper appear in?
15. Alice attended a tea party with the Mad Hatter, the Dormouse and what other furry character?
16. What was the name of the book written by Richard Adams where rabbits flee their home to find a new colony, travelling farther than a rabbit ever has before?
17. Name one of Peter Rabbit's three siblings?
18. In the 2014 film 'The dog who saved Easter', what breed of dog was Zeus?
19. Which actor turned director, directed the 2004 film 'The Passion of Christ'?
20. What item does the white rabbit in Alice in Wonderland always carry with him?

(Answers on page 41)



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Letter from *Westminster*



SAL's regular epistle from our MP, Sean Woodcock

Working for You in Westminster: Much of my time has been dedicated to committee work and legislative scrutiny, including my work on the Finance Bill Committee ensuring that national fiscal policy remains robust and fair. On the Housing, Communities and Local Government Committee, we continue to look at the vital issues affecting local councils and the delivery of housing. The new Homelessness Strategy, backed by £3.6 billion, includes three pledges to be achieved by the end of this Parliament: to halve long-term rough sleeping, end the unlawful use of B&Bs for families, and prevent more households from becoming homeless in the first place. I attended a dedicated drop-in session to discuss the impact of social media on young people and how we can better protect children in the digital age. Lots of constituents have emailed their views on this, and I would encourage anyone who is interested to contribute to the national consultation. At a rural reception with the Royal Agricultural Benevolent Institution Farmers Charity, I discussed the unique challenges facing our farming community and how we can support them.

Across the Constituency: It was a pleasure to visit several schools and community hubs to see the incredible work being done on the ground, and to speak with students and staff about the challenges and triumphs in our local education system. I spent time at Banbury Sure Start, seeing firsthand the essential support they provide to young families in our community. I chaired a seminar on the Oxford to Cambridge growth corridor - a vital project for our regional economy, and how essential it is that we balance growth with the needs of existing residents. As always, if anyone needs my support, please do email my office at sean.woodcock.mp@parliament.uk

Sean



THE VALENTINE CLUB

Dare I say it? “Spring is here.” Well, that’s what my calendar said, so it must be true. With all that’s going on in the world, it’s nice to be able to report on the better things in life. Meeting up with friends and listening to some great music, enjoying the opportunity to see some of our more junior members of society singing and obviously enjoying the occasion. This is how the club spent a glorious afternoon in March, first by being serenaded by class five from Dr Radcliffe’s School with a variety of songs, some with a comical touch, then having the privilege of inviting Debi to the club to sing her way through songs of the 70s and onwards through the past decades. All this accompanied by homemade cake, freshly made sandwiches and copious cups of tea or coffee. At this point, I should point out that all the food is made and provided by club members and served up by an amazing group of volunteers, who assure me they are not eligible to join the club just yet. What a way to spend an afternoon!

Onto April and it all starts to happen. First, we welcome Mel Harvey to the club on 14th April, a week earlier than usual, to mesmerise us with his magical skills whilst telling us all about “My Life as a Member of the Inner Magic Circle with Gold Star”. The following week, 40 plus members and friends make their way to South Somerset for five days of relaxation. Well, I’m not sure about that, as we have a full itinerary of activities whilst away. I suggested to some members of the group, please, no axe-throwing this time as the nearest hospital is some distance away! Then, at the end of the month we are off to Sudeley Castle for a visit to this historic venue and, of course, a meal is included.

I can now confirm that, with the very generous grant aid provided by The National Lottery, we have booked The Holt for 1st December for a three-course meal with entertainment, all at no charge for members. Someone said to me when I retired, won’t you be bored with nothing to do? As if I could be bored when I have such an amazing group of friends who help make The Valentine Club the success it is today. To find out more, simply go to the village website steepleaston.org.uk; go to ‘clubs and societies’ find The Valentine Club and click on the link, or just telephone me.

Richard Preston – Group organiser (for lack of a better description)
richard.preston5@btopenworld.com – Tel: 01869 340512

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School News



There is a new chapter happening at Dr Radcliffe's. Due to ill health our Headteacher Rob O'Malley has made the decision to resign as our Headteacher and will formally leave at Easter. We wish him a speedy recovery and send him and his family our best wishes. Whilst we are saddened by this news, we fully support his decision to prioritise his recovery. We are immensely grateful for Rob's commitment, dedication and care to our pupils, the school team, and the community during his time at Dr Radcliffe's. We will miss his sense of humour, his passion for sport and his pride in the children achieving. When the time is right, we will acknowledge his headship and ensure that he knows how grateful we all were for his leadership.

Our priority is to ensure that the school stays in strong hands and continues to move forward. The key development areas in our School Improvement Plan are a priority and will be developed and driven forward to improve outcomes for all our pupils. We are fortunate to have an experienced and dedicated Senior Leadership team and our thanks to Sarah Goldsworthy and Becky Roberts, our Assistant Heads, in stepping up to lead and support the school in Rob's absence. Our whole school team, who are experienced and highly skilled, have been proactive, thoughtful, and responsive in their support. Our thanks go to each one of them for going above and beyond at short notice.

Supported by our Academy, Oxfordshire Diocesan Schools Trust, we acted quickly, thinking of our pupils and the school community and the fact that we are due two inspections this academic year – OFSTED and SIAMs (Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools) and were exceptionally fortunate in organising an Interim Headteacher. Mrs Lorraine Wood, an experienced Headteacher, currently leading in another ODST school, St Francis in Oxford, started on the first day of this term. She will be in Dr Radcliffe's for three days a week supported by Mrs Goldsworthy and Mrs Roberts. Mrs Wood is excited about supporting our school and has been made very welcome. The next step is for the LGB (Local Governing Body) to begin the formal process of recruiting a permanent full-time Headteacher. The process has begun and I look forward to letting you know who our new Headteacher will be, starting in September.

Lisa Boote, Chair of Local Governing Body

Invitation to join a Guided Tour of Rousham House

Thursday 4th June 2026 at 2.00pm

The response to my invitation in last month's SAL has been rewardingly enthusiastic, and we now have one tour booked, with a possible second in the offing! A few places are still available for a tour going ahead on **Thursday 4th June 2026 at 2.00pm**. Cost, set by Rousham, is £20 per person and includes the guided house tour at 2.00pm and access to the gardens for the day. Remember, you can ONLY go inside the house as part of an organised group, so this is a wonderful opportunity to be shown around this magnificent and historic building. To book your place, please contact me on 01869 347883 or email anne.haymes@btinternet.com If you can't make that date, but might be able to go on a Tuesday afternoon in early June, please contact me as above to express your interest, as I may have another group going on that day, subject to sufficient numbers.

Anne Haymes

Steeple Aston Online

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Guy Roberts Architect

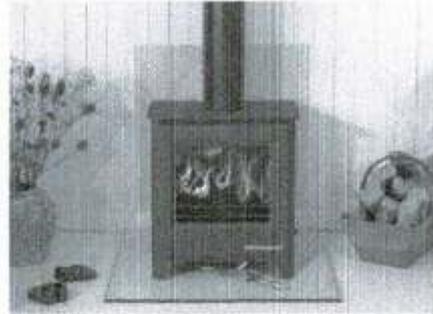
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Linda Needle had baked a delicious cake to mark the occasion of Steeple Aston WI's birthday this month. This branch has now been in existence, without a break, for 108 years and continues to thrive, as shown by the presence of two new members at the March meeting. Members were invited to sign up for a walk around Farmoor Reservoir; attend a talk about the Post Office scandal given by 'an insider'; to train as prospective Treasurers at OFWI; and to visit Rousham House. Those members who were going to take part in the Village Litter Pick on 14th March were promised coffee and cake as a reward for their community spirit.

One of the stated aims of the WI is to provide life-long learning and self-development opportunities for women. The March meeting gave a golden opportunity for learning and self-development, courtesy of the Wychwayz Morris troupe of Morris dancers. The dancers were dressed in black with colourful strips of fabric sewn onto their clothes to give a raggedy effect. They also sported hats adorned with feathers, bells on their shoes, and painted faces. They told us a little about the history of Morris dancing, which almost died out completely at one time, and followed this with an entertaining demonstration of their skills in a dance called 'Pea and Stick', a traditional dance which originated in Much Wenlock and was revived in 1949. WI members were then invited to 'have a go'. The invitation was enthusiastically accepted and members were soon performing heys, side-by-side heys, a U-shaped hey, one-hops, 1-2-3 hops, and enthusiastically clashing their heavy wooden sticks in a dance called 'White Ladies'. The Wychwayz Morris brought the evening to a close with 'Black Widow', a modern dance made up by an all-women group based in Oxford. Joining in with the dances was surprisingly tiring, but also great fun.

Next month, we will be voting for committee members, and will also hear from SAWI member, Alyson Jaycock, on 'Being a Celebrant'. If you are interested in finding out more about the WI, and perhaps joining us, contact Julie Hillier on 349185 or email j.hillier3@hotmail.co.uk

Cathy Lawday



Wychwayz Morris dancers and (right) Linda Needle with her cakes.





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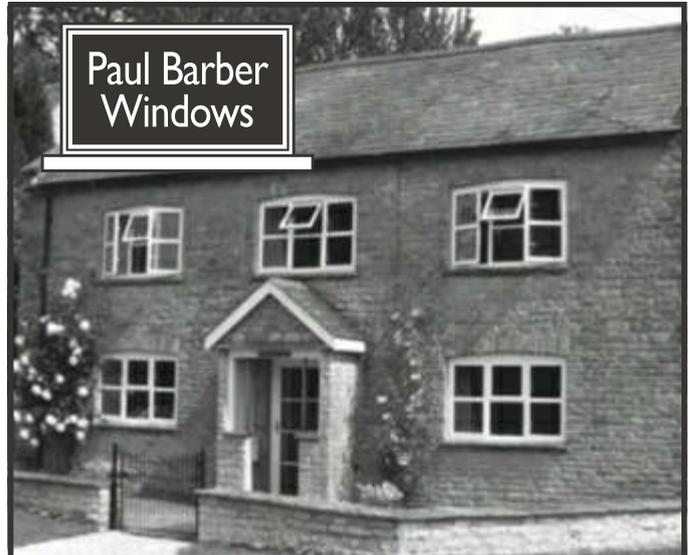
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The Dr Radcliffe's School Foundation Financial Awards

As many of you may know, our village school was first established by Samuel Radcliffe in 1640. He was an Oxford academic, Principal of Brasenose College Oxford and Rector of Steeple Aston. On his death he bequeathed property and money to support the school and fund the education of young people in the parish. Our village school flourishes today, in part, because of that very generous donation which has been managed by Dr Radcliffe's School Foundation Trustees over the centuries. Dr Radcliffe's School Foundation also awards money every year to scholarships in training and education for young people aged 16-25 years. It has been a real pleasure for me to chair the scholarship committee for several years and assist young people at the start of their careers. Over many years, we have helped support young people taking apprenticeships, at college or university. The Scholarship Committee always try to allocate money to those in greatest need. This has enabled some young people to stay in education or training, for whom, without this money, it would have been extremely difficult. This year, the Scholarship awarded a total of almost £23,000 to young people studying a range of subjects including veterinary science, construction, law, police apprenticeship, textile design, business management, social care and physics with astronomy. Some of the award recipients have written statements below, which it is my pleasure to share with you. If you are a young person aged 16-25 who would benefit from an award, please do consider applying for next year. Details and a link to the application form will be available on the village website from August.

'The scholarship has been incredibly helpful to me over the past few years of my studies. Knowing that this support was available eased financial pressure and allowed me to focus more confidently on my academic work. It has also opened doors to many different opportunities, for which I am very thankful.'

'I have been a recipient of the Dr Radcliffe's Scholarship over the past few years and am hugely grateful for the support it has provided during my Veterinary Science degree. The award has helped me to get the most out of my clinical placements, from formative first opinion clinics to referral practices. This year, I am particularly excited to put the scholarship towards an Official Veterinarian certificate recognised by the Food Standards Agency, an area I am enthusiastic about and a valuable additional skill as I begin my career.'

'I am extremely grateful to have received this award and can confidently say that my university experience would have been very different without its support. The award has played a crucial role in supporting my academic development by funding educational trips and essential reading materials for my dissertations. It has also significantly reduced the financial stress I was experiencing, particularly as my entire student maintenance loan is allocated towards rent. This relief has allowed me to focus fully on my studies and make the most of my time at university. Beyond its academic and financial impact, the award has also enabled me to maintain meaningful connections with my family. It has allowed me to travel home for important occasions such as Christmas and birthdays, moments that would otherwise have been out of reach. Being able to spend this time with my family has meant more to me than I can express and has provided invaluable emotional support throughout my studies.'

'I am incredibly pleased to have received the Dr Radcliffe's scholarship award for the past few years in support of the sport I have spent most my life doing - sailing. As you'd probably think, sailing isn't the cheapest sport, so having financial funding is very important in order to compete at the highest level, hence why the support by the trust is so important to me. It allows me to continue travelling abroad for training and competitions, and to keep the boat in ship shape order to perform as well as possible in these competitions. I am very thankful and hope that it helps me in the long run of achieving my goal of getting to the Olympics!'

'The Dr Radcliffe's Scholarship has been instrumental in helping me further my education from teenage years and into the beginning of my career as a young adult. The scholarship has enabled me to establish myself as a junior graphic designer in a new city, facilitating my study on my dream university course. I am so grateful for the support the Trust has given me and would encourage anyone to use the scholarship to help them on the road to success.'

'The Dr Radcliffe's trust has benefited me in so many different ways and has helped me get through the academic year without having to worry about money all the time. Without it I would struggle to enjoy myself in ways I would ideally like. The Trust fund has helped me pay for extra-curricular activities to keep me busy, combined with paying for food and bills for the house. Once again, I thank you all collectively for this funding.'

Tina Ferguson - Chair of the Dr Radcliffe's School Foundation Scholarship Committee

Celebrating Dr Radcliffe - events in May in Steeple Aston

Fundraising Concert for Steeple Aston Church and Dr Radcliffe's Primary School

Saturday 16 May, 6.30pm at the Church

We are pleased to welcome the **Choir of Brasenose College, Oxford**, and pupils from Dr Radcliffe's Primary School, for a concert and readings, curated by Nicholas Cleobury, celebrating the life of the church's 17th century Rector, founder of the school, and Principal of Brasenose College, Dr Samuel Radcliffe.

The programme will include music from Gibbons to Wesley, Mendelssohn and Faure, and a setting of Thomas Traherne (Brasenose 1652 - 1656) by Philip Ledger.

Tickets for the concert (£15), or for the concert and a post-concert supper at the Village Hall (£30), are available (in the village) from Margaret Bullyment (ring 01869 347346 or email mtheb749@gmail.com) or online (at <https://www.ticketsource.co.uk/ss-peter-and-paul> or via QR code below).

Under 16s go free to the concert, and £5 for supper.

If you would like more information, or to volunteer to help with food on 16 May, please email Jackie Watson on jackiewatson05@gmail.com (or ring on 07994 756352)



Steeple Talk

**Thursday 14 May, 7.15 for 7.30pm
at the Church**

Charlotte Harris (Steeple Aston resident, Dr Radcliffe's school parent, and alumna of Brasenose College) will talk about Dr Samuel Radcliffe and his work in Steeple Aston

No need to book and no entry charge.
Just come to the church for the talk, drinks and nibbles -
donations welcome.

DR RADCLIFFE & BRASENOSE COLLEGE

On 16th May 2026 an important event will take place... The choir of Brasenose College, Oxford will sing in our church alongside the school choir to celebrate the life of Dr Samuel Radcliffe. Many of you will be familiar with his name from the school he founded in 1640, the trust he endowed to support the school and distribute his bursaries, or that he was Rector of our church and left money to build the almshouses.

But how many of you know what he also did for Brasenose College? Born in Rochdale in 1580, Samuel was the son of a grammar school teacher. He attended Middleton Grammar School, going on to Brasenose in 1597. In 1603 he became a fellow and was elected Principal in 1614. He was appointed Rector of Steeple Aston in 1616. Both of these posts he held until his death in 1648. The link being the living of the church is in the gift of the college.

He is regarded as the third Founder of the Brasenose because he did so much for the college: he remodelled the Old Quad in his lifetime and left money to build the chapel, library and cloisters in his will. Much of how the college appears today is thanks to him. He was Principal for an extraordinary 34 years, through the tumultuous times of the Civil War. He died, defending the Crown and the Church of England, with an armed guard of Parliamentary soldiers at his door. Buried in secret in the University Church, there is no memorial to him. Now, almost 400 years later, a memorial is proposed in the University Church later this year, making this concert in aid of the church and school all the more significant. Please come and support it!

Charlotte Harris



The original Dr Radcliffe's School in North Side (SAVA)



Painting of Dr Samuel Radcliffe by Gilbert Jackson – this picture hangs in the Principal's lodgings at Brasenose College, Oxford, as directed in his will.



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Village Hall News



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Our meeting room is available to hire for only £5.00 per hour. Great for one, or perhaps to share the space with a friend or colleague. Internet access, use of the kitchen and parking. It may be the solution you didn't know you needed. Talk to our booking agent for availability.



Murder mystery evening – Saturday 25th April



Hopefully you have already booked your table following the advert in last month's SAL. As I am writing this mid-March, I know we've almost sold out. It should be a great evening. Any queries, please contact Tina (01869 347439)

The new hiring charges and hiring agreement will be published next month, and effective from 1st May. Our aim is to simplify the charges, as well as keeping up with inflation. Members of our committee have gone to great lengths to standardise the fees and ensure fairness.

AGM 11th May – If you'd like to join us as a trustee, or are just interested to find out more, please do come along.

Our letting agent is Angela Smith – 07734 112967. Please do not call this number between 6.00pm and 8.00pm unless urgent. Email: steeple-aston-village-hall@hotmail.com Collect keys from 'Mijas' South Side, Steeple Aston OX25 4RU

Victoria Clifton (Chair) savh.org.uk/

Deddington Guides Report

What a busy few weeks we've had. The Phoenix Patrol made some super dough decorations, and organised a fashion show involving the whole unit watched by an enthusiastic and discerning audience. Earlier in the evening, the Panda Patrol treated us to a well-organised tea party with each Patrol member acting as hostess to their own table of guests - well done all - with teamwork being key. Charlotte and her team of Young Leaders organised a much enjoyed Pamper evening, and somewhere along the way we fitted in pancakes, of course. Thinking Day followed, with our thoughts turning to guides around the world which inevitably involved food again! This time, we sampled breads or equivalent from various countries and a selection of dips, and most guides tried something that was new to them. We are now busy rehearsing our annual entertainment for the end of term to raise money for charity. Never a dull moment.

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

Maggie Rampley 07957 600755

Parish Council Meeting Notes



The sunshine has put a spring in my step, not even dampened by the rather dull opening topic at March's PC meeting, involving 'gov.uk' email addresses, followed by a chat on wooden platforms in the playground, where apparently "the framing will need to be repositioned". I can't lie, I struggled to get excited by this discussion, or take many notes. But the evening did improve!

Moving swiftly on to Cllr Gareth Epps' report. His written report alarmed me with the news of the "first couple of Blandford fly bite reports in the last couple of days: they seem to be out early this year"! In person, Gareth gave us some upbeat news on potholes (a subject close to Mr Miggins' chest). He shared some punchy numbers around the volume of potholes being mended in our region – definitely something I can get excited by! Apparently, hundreds are being fixed week on week, which is excellent news. Staying with roads, and an idea to keep lorries out of villages, plus the fact there's a full public consultation on the horizon to examine any speed limits that haven't been looked at recently, as well as the opportunity to tweak some 20mph zones.

Gareth also told us about how the county has £500k to spend on a connectivity pilot. I confess I lost my way slightly with this, but it involves creating a digital twin (!?) and getting mobile phone companies to self-report their coverage to Ofcom – the bottom line being it's hoped the signal will be boosted in villages like ours. Yippee (I think). We were tipped off on Rachel Reeves' big announcement ... the Oxford-Cambridge corridor is apparently to become the UK's Silicon Valley.

Yet more from Gareth – a rather fascinating initiative to ensure the voice of young people in the county is clearly heard, with 'youth voice champions' being recruited. This expanded into a wider discussion on education and how only one secondary school in the whole of Oxfordshire is actually under direct county control, yet the council still has an important

co-ordinating and support role, not to mention SEN responsibilities.

Back to roads, and we were assured again that the speed notice in our village which is still congratulating drivers on driving at 30mph (10 miles above the speed limit) will soon be changed. The cost of 'gates' into the village is expensive, and when one in Deddington broke, the cost to fix it was the equivalent of 10% of the county's whole signage budget! Thankfully, a quick-thinking local parish councillor found a cheaper solution. But it got our Parish Council talking about signs in our village, and do we want a fancy 'gateway'? Would safety signs around Dr Radcliffe's be a better use of funds? Could we get a 'cost neutral' gate? Would it keep certain vehicles out of our village? We heard that some signs were particularly controversial. I feel this topic may run for a few more meetings.

Good news for cricket fans – our nets may be the recipient of a grant and be upgraded.

As a parish council, we have to comply with 'Assertion 10' – all about data protection, cyber security and website accessibility. Our Clerk said she didn't want five laptops, and one councillor said he was close to buying the Chair some Apple vouchers which she apparently had an urgent need for, before he thankfully realised it was a scam.

The meeting moved on to even more Highways chat. Apparently, the village consultation showed that footpaths are a hot topic, in particular the route between Steeple and Middle Aston. We have some S106 money, so how to best spend it? As one councillor wryly noted – with that money we can afford about 4.5 metres of new footpath, or we can improve what we have somewhere already.

The whole council was delighted with the spring clean that took place recently, with our WI suddenly deploying one weekend in a most effective manner, and all carried out in time for

Continued on p.25

Parish Council Meeting Notes



Continued from p.24

their helpers to be back for tea and cake. A big 'Thank You' to these 'village guerrillas'.

Next, we heard that any government announcement on 'new towns' (with an eye on Heyford) has been delayed as environmental assessments have probably been more complicated than expected. We also heard that Cllr Epps had done sterling work bringing the Chief Exec of the County Council to our local area to meet people and discuss the cumulative impact of so much new development (houses as well as theme parks and railway depots – see my previous reports). Apparently, this big cheese said he would "make things happen" (in a good way, I hope). Puy du Fou ('historical theme park') is on a mission to win hearts and minds, and by the time we go to print, they will have visited our friends in Duns Tew with their sales pitch.

There followed a wonderful discussion on our Emergency Plan. With all home phones now digital, and mobile phone coverage what it is, if we lose power then it is particularly difficult to contact people. It seems that vulnerable members of our community will get a phone call from the local electricity supplier once power is back on asking if they're OK. So, our lovely PC have decided to compile their own list (do contact our

Clerk to find out more), and will check in with residents to make sure they're OK during any emergency (not just after the event!). But how long should they wait before declaring an emergency? Some felt twenty minutes was long enough to be in the dark, while others favoured two hours. There is also an App that might prove useful that can function without power and bounces messages up to 100m. This new-fangled technology was slightly lost on me, and I suggested that if our bellringers were up for it, that we just ask them to organise a special 'emergency peal' or such like.

The meeting moved onto the subject of brown bins by the village hall, the size of our Chair's rake (industrial by all accounts) and the aesthetics of solar panels. Finally, we heard about the windpump being taken down at Brasenose Farm. At nearly 100 years old, it had been given 'local heritage asset status', but with it being removed without any notice, one does question the value of this list.

The next meeting is on 20th April.

Until then,

Mrs Miggins

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

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ALL IN GOOD TIME

There are many things I plan to do, to make life more sublime

Read books to my grandchildren, sing them nursery rhymes
Take them to the theatre and to the pantomime
These things will definitely happen, and I'm...
going to make these changes as soon as I've got time.

I'll tend to my garden, plant herbs like rosemary and thyme
And lots of lovely tulip bulbs to bloom in the springtime
Keep in touch with all my friends on Zoom and on Facetime
These things are in the pipeline and I swear that I'm
planning to get started once I've got the time.

I might learn a foreign language, learn to play piano, or how
to climb
Swap from drinking lager to more cosmopolitan gin and lime
Visit new and exotic places, like Newcastle-under-Lyme
These things will happen soon, it's simply that I'm...
going to implement the changes when I've got more time.

I'm going to start the new regime at once, to delay would be
a crime
I've said these things before, but I mean them this time
My life will be a model, truly a paradigm.
These things will definitely happen soon, and I'm...
planning to start as soon as I've got time.

Cathy Lawday

ON AGEING

the size of my toilet bag's doubled in size
pills, creams and potions are all on the rise
my youth is now over I've seen its demise
and old age is beckoning me

back in the day there was only one thing
a manual toothbrush to make my teeth zing
A dip in the bath where you had a good sing
But that was a much younger me

A toilet bag shows where you are in your life
If you think mine is large, see the bag for my wife!
The pair put together are larger than life
My body's grown old, but not me!

Vitamin D, Cod Liver Oil,
Things for my skin that would make you recoil
My morning ablutions are now such a toil
Thank goodness the tablets are free

Peter Wild

Let the train take the strain

Our nearest local train station is at Lower Heyford, but for more frequent services villagers often use Oxford Parkway, Bicester Village and Bicester North.

Oxford Parkway, Bicester Village and Bicester North: The trains at these stations are operated by Chiltern Railways. There are frequent services to London Marylebone via High Wycombe, to Oxford and to Birmingham via Banbury. Go to chilternrailways.co.uk for times, fares, and real-time running information. There is a minibus service between the two Bicester stations, but no bus service to Steeple Aston. There is a taxi rank at both stations: 001 Alpha Cars 01869 252 525; Bicester Cars Ltd 01869 908 908; Arora Cars Bicester Taxis 01869 247 247. The S4 bus from Oxford Parkway Station comes to Steeple Aston, but there is no taxi rank. Taxis can be booked in advance from: Kidlington Cars 07766 207 260; 001 Cars 01865 240 000; London Oxford Taxis (Oxford) 01865 406 070; Oxford Cars (Oxford) Taxis 01865 406 070.

Heyford: Heyford station is unmanned and is about a twenty-minute walk down the hill from Steeple Aston. The trains are operated by First Great Western. This infrequent service runs between Banbury and London Paddington, often requiring changes at Oxford, Didcot Parkway or Reading. Go to firstgreatwestern.co.uk for times, fares and real-time running information (N.B. key in Heyford, not Lower Heyford).

More information on rail services from nationalrail.co.uk or thetrainline.com

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The Brasenose Farm windpump



We thought we should mark the recent removal of the windpump with a brief history of its presence. Its purpose was to draw water from a well. There were two wells on the farm prior to its division and sale at the end of the last century. William Wing notes the death of two men in ‘an unfinished well, at Brazenose (sic) Farm’ on 8 June 1833.¹ I asked Tim Taylor when the windpump was erected, and neither he nor his brother remember the farm without it, and Tim’s best guess was that it would have been erected in the second decade of the last century. A windpump is marked on the 1919 Revised OS map of Steeple Aston.²

There was no mains water here until the 1990s. The north elevation of the farmhouse still sports a flexible pipe which carried the water pumped from the well into the house. Water was essential, not just for the human inhabitants of the farm, but also for their cattle. The pump became part of an intricate, some might say Heath Robinson, system of collection and storage developed by Bill Taylor, Tim’s uncle. Their few remnants are known as Billisms.

In the 1960s the Rays went into dairy farming. The windpump would have provided both drinking water and the water needed for sluicing stalls, sheds and yards. Since the abolition of the Milk Marketing Board in 1994, and the subsequent increased power of the supermarkets, the national dairy herd has fallen from 2.6 million cows to 1.4 million. Brasenose Farm is just one of 28,000 dairy farms to have ceased production in that period.³

The windpump was long since obsolete. It stood - at best - as a memorial to the slow death of the small family farm. It was, of course, a noted village landmark; traces of the red, white and blue paint which decorated it for the 1977 Silver Jubilee are still visible on the sails. And, unfortunately, it was a liability, creaking loudly in high winds and needing expensive maintenance and repair. We therefore we took the sad decision to dismantle it safely before it became dangerous. We will miss it, and are fortunate to have been its stewards for the last two decades.

We have salvaged the sails and hope to mount them at ground level so that something of the history of this place is preserved.

Carl and Kate Tomlinson

1. William Wing, *The Antiquities and History of Steeple Aston*, p 60
2. <https://maps.nls.uk/view/106016181>
3. *Private Eye*, 6 February 2026, p 16

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It's that time of year to polish your clubs and get down to the driving range for some practice in readiness for the start of SAGS first meeting next month. New members and guests are very welcome.

*Hearsall: Friday 15th May - 10.00am meet for an 11.00am first tee - one course meal.*

More celebratory don'ts if you win:

Do not stand still with both arms raised for more than three seconds.

Do not jump up and down, run to the cup (run anywhere for that matter), blow any kisses, look at your partners with a sort of 'take that' gesture, point at the hole, dive into any ponds, moonwalk, or wave the flag around in the air.

Last but not least, on no account start crying.

Happy golfing!

**Alan Brewer**



## Football *Focus*

While there are still two months before the end of top flight football this year (Arsenal fans may feel differently), we somehow find ourselves with only one more match separating Steeple Aston FC from our season end. Sadly, recent results have not been as good as our excellent mid-season, so I shall gloss over those in favour of looking to the future.

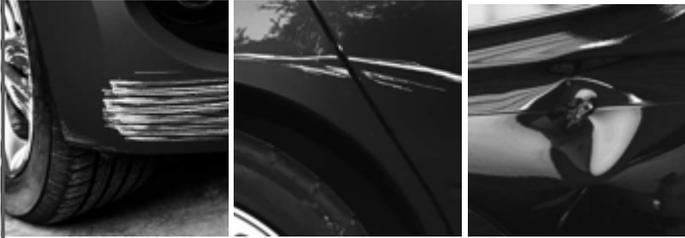
Firstly, it would be wonderful if any of you were able to come and support our final game of the season. Owing to the rather haphazard way fixtures are announced, I am unable to let you know when this will be, but I will ensure the village website is updated as soon as I know. Please do keep a look out there.

Secondly, we are in need of a couple of new committee members. So, if any of you are football fans and feel like you need an excuse to come down to the Red Lion once a month, do get in contact ([s\\_markesinis@hotmail.com](mailto:s_markesinis@hotmail.com)) and I can let you know what's involved. Lastly, we are always on the lookout for new players, especially from the village, so do get in touch if you fancy turning out for the mighty Steeple next year. And what a year that will be. 2027 marks the 130<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Club, of which more in the next edition.

**Spyro Markesinis** [s\\_markesinis@hotmail.com](mailto:s_markesinis@hotmail.com)

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## Ancient Traditions

It was wonderful to see a traditional craft still being practised in Steeple Aston recently, as work took place at 'Old Toms' on the north side of the village. The cottage, owned by Mary and Ben Lloyd, is one of only three remaining thatched homes still standing in Steeple Aston, making its careful maintenance especially important to preserving the village's historic character.

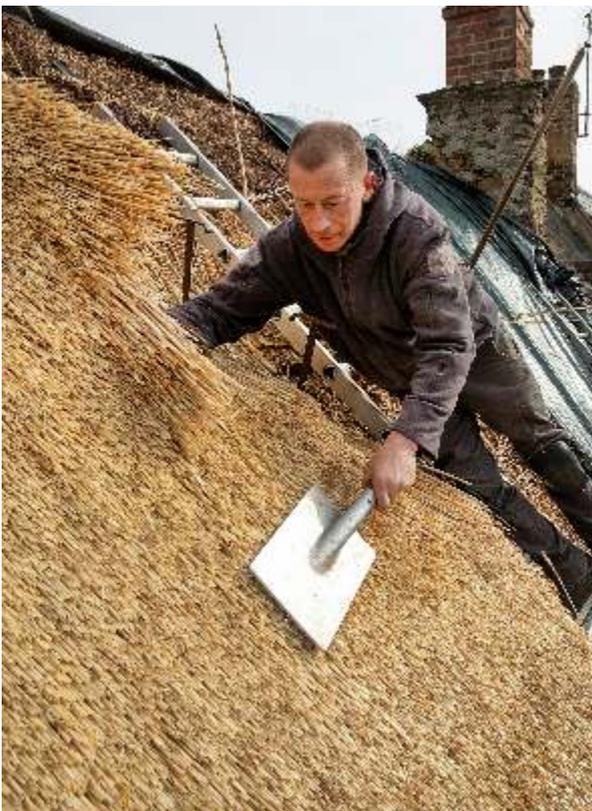
On our front cover, and in this article, thatcher Sam Turner can be seen carrying bundles of straw to the roof, ready to lay and renew the thatch. The wheat straw used for the work has been sourced from Chulmleigh in Devon and Staple Hay near Taunton, materials chosen for their quality and durability. When properly laid, the new thatch should last for at least another 30 years.

The work has been carried out by Stuart Viggers, Master Thatchers of Banbury, who estimate that around 1,500 armfuls of straw bundles have been used on the roof. Each bundle is carefully prepared by apprentices at the company's yard before being delivered to the site. Once on the roof, the bundles — each covering roughly a square foot — are laid and dressed individually using a traditional tool known as a leggett. They are then tied in securely and finished with hazel wood pegs and small handfuls of straw called bonds. It is heartening to see such time-honoured skills still being used in our village, helping to preserve not only the buildings themselves, but also the craftsmanship and character of bygone times.

### Nigel Francis

*Photos below: Nigel Francis*

*Right: SAVA*



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## Blast from *the Past*

A Senior school for children from Steeple Aston and neighbouring villages opened in 1921, housed in hatted classrooms behind the Technical School (which became the Village Hall). Further classrooms were built in 1927 when schools amalgamated into a central Church of England school for 15 villages with 192 pupils. In September 1932, John William Bodenham was appointed headteacher at Dr Radcliffe's School, and enlivened extra-curricular activities in the arts and sport. Hockey and football were particularly prominent with results of matches appearing in log books showing that the hockey team beat Kidlington 3-0, and the school football team outplayed Fritwell by 10-0. The opposing teams were always entertained with tea after matches. The teachers were also included, with a tennis tournament and dance for them in July 1933. In March 1934, Mr Bodenham could not contain his pride over his football team's success when the School XI beat an Oxford Central Select team at Cowley 3-2, claiming "Our most important match yet. Performed very well considering our captain was not playing". Sport flourished throughout the 1930s with regular Saturday morning fixtures arranged as far away as Charlbury and Brackley. Sadly, this all ended with the onset of the war.

*From Steeple Aston Village Archive (2014) 'Our Village School – Four centuries of education in Steeple Aston'*



## Steeple Aston Garden Club



Our March Garden Club talk was a joint talk with Tackley Garden Club in their village hall with the ever-popular Tim Walker, former Head Gardener from Oxford Botanic Garden who gave his latest in a series of talks entitled 'Blades of Glory' which was an intriguing title! If you want to know more, please ask one of the Garden Club members who attended.

Our final indoor event of spring will be the Garden Club's Annual General Meeting on Tuesday 7th April at 7.00pm for 7.30pm in the village hall. This is not nearly as boring as many AGMs, with little time spent on the annual formalities and most of the evening on a garden-focussed quiz and a plant and book swap and sale, all helped along with wine, soft drinks and nibbles!

We start our programme of summer visits with a trip to Waterperry Gardens, near Wheatley on Tuesday 12th May 2026 at 2.00pm. The entrance fee is £11.50 pp. The calendar of events for this summer is on the village website [steepleaston.org.uk/](http://steepleaston.org.uk/) If anyone is interested in joining the Garden Club or coming to one of the garden visits this summer, please do get in touch with either myself (Alison) or Richard Preston using the email addresses below.

**Alison Llewellyn** [alisonllew.home@gmail.com](mailto:alisonllew.home@gmail.com)

**Richard Preston** [richard.preston5@btopenworld.com](mailto:richard.preston5@btopenworld.com)

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# Church Matters



This coming weekend we celebrate Easter, and Jesus' resurrection and his gift of new life to us all. During March, we have seen the weather begin to warm up, and there were even days when I could venture outside without a coat! Another of the wonderful signs of spring has been the plethora of flowers, especially the bright yellow daffodils. During the winter the weather is grey and dull and there are times when life can be like that too. The wonderful burst of colour that comes with all the new growth in spring brings us joy, brightening our lives. There are times when we can feel that we are living under a cloud, that our world and personal lives feel grey and dull. On Easter Sunday morning when Jesus rose from the grave, he gave us the gift of new life. Washing away all the dirt and grime, the greyness and revealing the beauty of what was hidden underneath in all its glorious technicolour.

Years ago, as we were furnishing a student house, we went to an auction to buy a table. There was a lovely pine table that we decided we would bid for, and unsurprisingly, it actually ended up going for far more than we'd been wanting to pay for it. However, earlier in the auction there was another table, which the Auctioneer had started at £20, dropped it to £10, then £5 and eventually £2, at which point Mum put in a bid. It had been hidden under a pile of chairs, and was so scruffy and marked that we had dismissed it. Once home as we cleaned it up, sanding it down and varnishing it we discovered how well it was made, and that it could be extended seating from 4 to 10 at a squeeze. We have shared so many wonderful meals and celebrations around that table, it is part of our family's history, and is still our dining table today.

Thanks to what Jesus did at Easter, dying on Good Friday and rising again on Easter Sunday, we have life! Life in vibrant colour. We don't need to be ashamed of our scratches and marks, because God has washed them away and made us whole again, giving us new life. This Easter, as we celebrate life, I pray we may all know the gift of life in full colour, vibrant and joyful.

Happy Easter!

**Harriet**

## Easter Quiz Answers

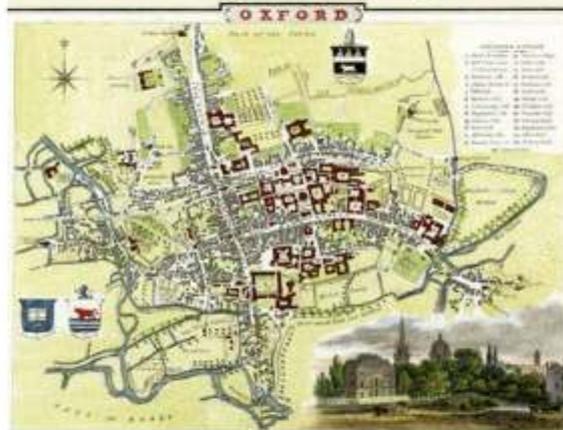
1. Lily
2. Italy
3. 17<sup>th</sup> century
4. Chile
5. Faberge
6. United Kingdom
7. Washing clothes
8. Roast Lamb
9. 200 million
10. 11 - representing the 12 disciples minus Jesus
11. New life and rebirth
12. Ears
13. The crucifixion of Jesus
14. Bambi
15. March Hare
16. Watership Down
17. Flopsy, Mopsy & Cottontail
18. Labrador Retriever
19. Mel Gibson
20. Pocket watch



Steeple Talks 16<sup>th</sup> April  
 In the Church, 7.15pm for 7.30pm



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# Local Information

## Church Services April 2026

| Date                                                  | North Aston                            | Steeple Aston                  | Tackley                    |
|-------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------|
| <b>Maundy Thursday</b><br><b>2<sup>nd</sup> April</b> | 6.00pm<br>Holy Communion<br>with choir |                                |                            |
|                                                       |                                        |                                |                            |
| <b>Good Friday</b><br><b>3<sup>rd</sup> April</b>     |                                        | 2.00pm<br>An hour at the cross |                            |
|                                                       |                                        |                                |                            |
| <b>Easter Sunday</b><br><b>5<sup>th</sup> April</b>   | 9.30am<br>Holy Communion               | 11.00am<br>Holy Communion      | 9.30am<br>Holy Communion   |
|                                                       |                                        |                                |                            |
| <b>Sunday</b><br><b>12<sup>th</sup> April</b>         | 9.30am<br>Morning Prayer               | 11.00am<br>Family Service      | 5.30pm<br>Holy Communion   |
|                                                       |                                        |                                |                            |
| <b>Sunday</b><br><b>19<sup>th</sup> April</b>         | 9.30am<br>Holy Communion               | 11.00am<br>Holy Communion      | 5.30pm<br>Evensong         |
|                                                       |                                        |                                |                            |
| <b>Sunday</b><br><b>26<sup>th</sup> April</b>         | 9.30am<br>Morning Prayer               | 11.00am<br>Morning Prayer      | 9.30am<br>Family Communion |
|                                                       |                                        |                                |                            |

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- Off-Road Car parking
- **For more details and photos** see our website

[savh.org.uk/contact-us](http://savh.org.uk/contact-us) or call 07734 112967

| <b>All Facilities</b>                                       |  |                                               |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|--|-----------------------------------------------|
| <b>Peak Times – involving hire after 6pm</b>                |  |                                               |
| Village Residents (up to 6hrs) (Additional hours at £10/hr) |  | £65 (Plus Refundable Deposit £200)            |
| Non-Village (up to 6hrs)                                    |  | £110 (Plus Refundable Deposit £300)           |
| Non-Village (over 6hrs)                                     |  | £160 (Plus Refundable Deposit £300)           |
| <b>Off-Peak – all hire before 6pm</b>                       |  |                                               |
| Hourly Rate Plus Refundable Deposit £200                    |  | £10/hr (or £30 for 4 hours)                   |
| <b>Hall Only</b>                                            |  |                                               |
| Represented Clubs                                           |  | £9 (up to 3hrs)                               |
| Others                                                      |  | £17 (up to 3hrs plus Refundable Deposit £200) |
| <b>Committee Room</b>                                       |  |                                               |
| Represented Clubs                                           |  | £6 (up to 3hrs)                               |
| Others                                                      |  | £12 (up to 3hrs)                              |

## Steeple Aston Sport & Recreation Centre and Field

| <b>Letting charges</b>                                                                                 |              |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| Social Function peak times (Daily up to 6 hours from 6pm)                                              | £55          |
| Social Function off-peak times (Daily up to 5 hours before 6pm)                                        | £27.50       |
| Meeting of represented clubs (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!)



# HARRIS'S STORES & POST OFFICE

Opening hours:

7.30am - 7.30pm (Mon-Fri)

8.00am - 7.30pm (Sat)

8.00am - 6.00pm (Sun)

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*Fresh fruit and vegetables.*

*Top-up for mobiles, gas and electric.*

*Fax and photocopying services.*

*Dry cleaning agent.*

*National Lottery tickets and much more.*

*Thank you all for your continued support.*

*Please let us know of any ideas or suggestions of ways in which we can extend our services to you.*

**Tel: 01869 340201**

**e-mail: raj4878@hotmail.com**

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

### April 2026:

Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> Blue and brown

Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> Green

Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> Blue and brown

Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> Green

Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> Blue and brown



### May 2026:

Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> Green

Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> Blue and brown

Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> Green

Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> Blue and brown

### Food caddy is collected weekly

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

Glass bottles and jars can now be placed in blue recycling bin or approved recycling sacks – please rinse items first to remove any residues. No need to remove labels/lids.

Please consult the Cherwell District Council website for further details of collections:  
**[cherwell.gov.uk/recycling](http://cherwell.gov.uk/recycling)**

## BUS TIMES

### STAGECOACH S4 BUS SERVICE (timetable effective from 31<sup>st</sup> August 2025)

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

Monday to Friday (excluding 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 2122 2253

Saturday

0721 0821 0931 then hourly to 1531 1641 1746 1849 1937 2037 2216  
0809 0909 1019 1619 1729 1834 1932 2022 2122 2253

Sunday (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)

Monday to Friday (excluding 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 2055 2142 2242 0009

Saturday

0758 0908 1008 then hourly to 1508 1608 1718 1828 1927 2025 2113 2213 2341  
0737 0837 0945 1545 1645 1755 1905 1958 2053 2142 2242 0009

Sunday (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: [Stagecoachbus.com/timetables](http://Stagecoachbus.com/timetables)

### OURBUS BARTONS

OurBus Bartons offers services through Steeple Aston to and from Lower Heyford Station (Mon-Fri), to and from Chipping Norton (Wed), and to and from Bicester (Fri).

See the website for details: [ourbusbartons-org-uk.stackstaging.com](http://ourbusbartons-org-uk.stackstaging.com)



# 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 May and June to [editorsalife@gmail.com](mailto:editorsalife@gmail.com)

| April                         | Event                                                                         | Venue            | Time              |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Friday 3rd April              | Good Friday: An hour at the cross                                             | SA Church        | 2.00pm            |
| Wed 1st - Sat 4th April       | Chitty Chitty Bang Bang - MYCO theatre company                                | Oxford Playhouse | See Mar issue     |
| Sunday 5th April              | Easter Sunday: Holy Communion                                                 | SA Church        | 11.00am           |
| Tuesday 7th April             | Garden Club's Annual General Meeting                                          | Village Hall     | 7.00pm for 7.30pm |
| Tuesday 14th April            | Valentines: Member of Inner Magic Circle<br>*meeting week earlier than usual* | Village Hall     | 2.30pm            |
| Tuesday 14th April            | WI: Being a Celebrant                                                         | Village Hall     | 7.00pm            |
| <b>Tuesday 14th April</b>     | <b>SAL May copy and advert deadlines</b>                                      |                  |                   |
| Thursday 16th April           | New Maps: Finding old Oxford - Graham Robb                                    | SA Church        | 7.15pm for 7.30pm |
| Monday 20th - Friday 24th Apr | Valentines Holiday: South Somerset                                            |                  |                   |
| Monday 20th April             | Parish Council Meeting                                                        | S & R Building   | 7.30pm            |
| Saturday 25th April           | Farmers' Market                                                               | Deddington       | 9.00am - 12.30pm  |
| Saturday 25th April           | Murder Mystery Evening including meal                                         | Village Hall     | 7.00pm for 7.30pm |
| Wednesday 29th April          | Valentines: Coach Trip - Sudeley Castle                                       |                  |                   |
|                               |                                                                               |                  |                   |
| <b>May</b>                    |                                                                               |                  |                   |
| Tuesday 12th May              | Garden Club - Trip to Waterperry Gardens, near Wheatley                       |                  | 2.00pm            |
| Thursday 14th May             | Steeple Talk: Dr Samuel Radcliffe                                             | SA Church        | 7.15pm for 7.30pm |
| <b>Thursday 14th May</b>      | <b>SAL June copy and advert deadlines</b>                                     |                  |                   |
| Friday 15th May               | Golf Society meet - Hearsall GC, Coventry                                     | Hearsall GC      | 10.00am           |
| Saturday 16th May             | Concert celebrating Dr Radcliffe                                              | SA Church        | 6.30pm            |
| Sunday 17th May               | Deddington Four Farms Challenge 2026: 4 routes                                | Deddington       | From 8.30am       |
| Monday 18th May               | Parish Council Meeting                                                        | S & R Building   | 7.30pm            |
| Tuesday 19th May              | Valentines: Bicester Village                                                  | Village Hall     | 2.30pm            |
| Wednesday 20th May            | Valentines: Coach Trip - GWR Steam Train                                      |                  |                   |
| Saturday 23rd May             | Farmers' Market                                                               | Deddington       | 9.00am - 12.30pm  |

**Pilates.** Village Hall. 2.00pm - 3.00pm & 3.15pm - 4.15pm - Mondays  
**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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# Home-made food

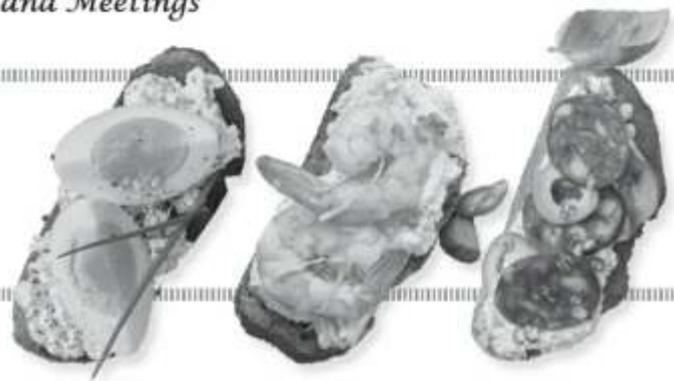
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