

Steeple Aston

September 2026 Issue No. 637

Steeple and Middle Aston Magazine

Life



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To see photographs in colour, please visit the digital edition at
steepleaston.org.uk/sal-magazine
 Previous issues of SAL are also available on this site

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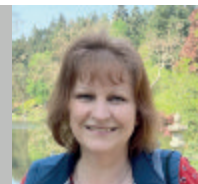
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Steeple Aston *Directory*

Allotments (Church) SACAA		Amanda Rodgers	07793 553150
Angling Club		Sean Simms and Antony Morley	information@steepleastonanglingclub.com
Archive (SAVA)	Chairman	Stuart Cummins	01869 349155
Baby and toddler group		Katy, Martha, Hilary and Lisa	steepleastontoddlergrp@gmail.com
Badminton (Tuesday mornings)		Barbara Brewer	01869 340423
Badminton (Thursday evenings)		Alison Moran	01869 347033
Beekeepers (Swarm collection, advice)		Paul Honigmann	340665, 07512 224700
Bell ringers		Graham & Dorothy Clifton	01869 347273
Handbell ringers		Victoria Clifton	07817 025948
Brownies		Fiona McLoone	01869 340132
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
Church of England (St Peter & St Paul)	Rector	Rev'd Harriet Orridge	01869 932224
	Churchwardens	Eileen Baglin-Jones, Graham Clifton	340099/347273
Church (Methodist) – Tackley		Rev'd Paul Carter	01865 243216
	Steward	Tim Bailey	01869 331516
Cricket Club	Chairman	Peter Higgins	01869 347493
Crimestoppers			0800 555111
Deddington Guides		Maggie Rampley	07957 600755
Deddington Health Centre	Appointments	Patient Triage	01869 338611
	Repeat Prescriptions	Deddingtonhealthcentre.co.uk	
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Dr Radcliffe's C of E School	Headteacher	Lorraine Wood	01869 340204
Environment and Sustainability Committee	Chair	Chris Nevile	chrisnevile@gmail.com
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Fix My Street		Graham Porcas - grahamporcas@btconnect.com	01869 347240
Football Club	Secretary	Stuart Baillie	07809 629666
Garden Club	Chairman	Richard Preston	01869 340512
Golf Society	Chairman	Alan Brewer	01869 340423
Horticultural Society	Show Secretary	Vicky Clifton	07817 025948
Parish Council	Clerk	Cathy Fleet	07989 398838
Police	24hr Call Centre	(non-emergency)	101
Post Office & Harris Stores		Raj	01869 340201
Pre-school			01869 340863
Public House	The Chequers		01869 389174
Robinson's Close	Letting Agent	Angela Smith	07734 112967
Sports & Recreation Centre	Letting Agent	Angela Smith	07734 112967
Steeple Aston Walking Group		Penny, Stuart, Sue and Graham	sawgox25@gmail.com
Team Steeple Cycling		Steve Boote	07805 910281
Valentine Club		Richard & Daphne Preston	01869 340512
Village Hall (see advertisement)	Letting Agent	Angela Smith	07734 112967
Village Emergency Telephone System			690691
Village Website	Editor Jenny Bell	steepleastonwebeditor@gmail.com	01869 943573
Volunteer Driver Service (North Oxfordshire)		live.well.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*

September 2026

Issue No.637

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As we move into autumn, I think most of us will be hoping for some much-needed rainfall and the relief of cooler temperatures. Our gardens, open spaces, flora and fauna have suffered in the relentless summer heatwaves, not to mention the toll on human health as we attempt to negotiate what looks like being the 'new normal'!

Despite the heat, villagers were treated to some great summer events and activities, and we're pleased to showcase the spectacular Middle Aston-bury Tribute Music Festival, and the recent Open Allotments with its sci-fi themed scarecrow competition. By now, you will no doubt have enjoyed the bonanza that is the Annual Flower Show and Fun Dog Show, that will feature in the October issue.

As well as the fun events, there is more sobering news in the SRFI update on developments that are afoot in our region, plus a recent Q&A session with our local MP, Sean Woodcock, in response to the People's Emergency Briefing on Climate Change.

As we welcome the new season, it's often a good time to sign up for a new hobby or activity, so why not have a go at Walking Netball which is featured in this issue, Badminton (Tues mornings/Thurs evenings) or join the local Angling Club featured last month. There are many clubs and societies to join, so do visit the village website steepleaston.org.uk/ for more details, especially if you are a newcomer looking to make connections in the local community.

Carol

COPY

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

COPY DEADLINES

The copy deadline for the October 2026 issue is
Monday 14th September



READ STEEPLE ASTON LIFE ONLINE

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

ADVERTISING

All adverts, and all advertising queries
(availability, prices, dimensions, suitability of
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Monday 14th September

ADVERTISING RATES

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½ page- £18

Full page(village events only) - £20.00

The views expressed are not necessarily the views of the Editor or the Committee. Readers are recommended to seek appropriate financial or legal advice before entering into any binding agreement with advertisers, as appropriate.

Steeple Aston Noticeboard



Horticultural Society AGM – change of date:

PLEASE NOTE: the date of the Horticultural Society AGM has changed from Thursday 15th October to **Thursday 29th October 2026** in Steeple Aston Village Hall Committee Room at 7.00 pm. All are welcome. There will be refreshments!

Fire wood:

This September, we will be felling a large dead tree in the cemetery. The wood will be cut into logs for burning. If anyone would like some logs in exchange for a donation to church funds to help cover the costs, please contact me, Graham Clifton, on 07500 894217.

Ride and Stride:

This year's Oxford Historic Churches Trust Ride and Stride will take place on Saturday 12th September. The idea is to ask people to sponsor you to go round as many churches as you can and raise money. Last year, over £91,000 was raised in the county. Half of the money raised goes to the participants church and half to the trust and is used to help repair churches. In 2025, Steeple Aston received £15,000 to help repair the roof. Details can be found on the OHCT website ohct.org.uk or from me, Graham Clifton.

Open Tower:

Also on 12th September, Steeple Aston Bellringers are planning to open up the church tower between 10.00am and 12 noon. We need some more bell ringers. People can come and just have a look up the tower to see the bells, or view from the top, try ringing a bell or just enjoy coffee and cakes.

Full peal attempt: there will be a full peal attempt by visiting bellringers on Friday 18th September, starting at 12 noon.

Graham Clifton

News from the Health Centre – Patient Participation Group

It was a pleasure to speak to WI members gathered on a very hot afternoon in July. During the presentation, Lindsay and I spoke about the workings of the Patient Participation Group and the targets for the coming year. We also took away responses from the floor such as more help to access the Advice and Appointments Hub and the NHS App. Reaching out to groups for feedback about the health centre, and how it works for patients, is important to the group. At the quarterly meetings there are discussions about any emails and feedback sheets received (available from the surgery reception area) to ensure patients receive the best service possible from the surgery team and to look at any improvements to processes. Recent feedback involved the new automated answering service 'Jackie' and a patient trying to connect with the dispensary. The PPG was able to forward the feedback on to the surgery to investigate.

Autumn is on its way, so look out for your invitation to book flu and/or Covid vaccinations. If you are eligible, you will receive a communication in the coming weeks. Next time, find out about the role of the Advanced Clinical Practitioner and the concerning number of missed appointments in the last year. Also, what to do when the 24-hour Pharma self-collection machine for medicines is out of order.

Anne Hunsley - Patient Participation Group ppg.deddington@gmail.co.uk



Sunday 27th September

Steeple Aston Church

Warmly invites you to join us for

Harvest Festival Evensong

6.00pm in the church



Harvest Supper

6.45pm for 7.00pm in the Village Hall

£10 per ticket/£5 under 16s

2 course hot meal

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Sunday 27th September

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Steeple People



Tina Ferguson

Which village do you live in? How long have you lived here? I have lived in Steeple Aston for exactly 40 years this month.

Where did you move from, and what brought you here? We moved from Birmingham because my husband got a lectureship at Oxford University.

What do you like best about living here? It felt like we were on holiday when we first arrived! Now I appreciate how friendly everybody is. I just feel very much part of this village.

How has the village changed since you came? Villages will, and should, always evolve slowly over time, but the traditions and events of village life are still much the same.

A potted history of yourself in 40 words or less: Childhood at the end of the Metropolitan line. Studied Biochemistry at Birmingham University. Married my PhD supervisor and moved here. Became a Chemistry teacher. Took a long time at home when my sons were young. Worked as a school science technician, finally becoming a science teacher again. Now retired.

Early bird or night owl? Cat or dog? Night owl definitely. The best thing about being retired is not having to get up in the morning. Cat, I am very tempted to get one.

Town or countryside? Gym or ramble? The town for theatre and culture, but always pleased to get back to the country. Pilates and a gentle walk.

What was the best thing about your childhood? Having time and freedom to invent silly games.

What is the best aspect of being an adult? Having some money.

What did you want to be when you grew up? A vet.

What was your first job? My university summers were spent between working on archaeological digs, running children's play schemes and working at an adventure playground.

What is the best/worst job you have had? Teaching teenagers can be both the best and the worst job at times. It is certainly never boring.

What's your guilty pleasure? Watching a good drama on telly, with a cup of tea and a large bag of Maltesers.

Who is your favourite musician and track? I'm a 70s girl and love disco/funk. Stevie Wonder is my all time great.

Do you have a signature dish? My Christmas dinner is awesome. My father went to catering college, and it still has to be done the way he taught me.

Who would you most like to have dinner with? My maternal grandma tragically died in a car accident when I was young. We were very close. I would love to tell her about my life and for her to meet my sons.

If you could ban one thing, what would it be? Chewing gum. I hate the sight of it on pavements and the fact that every desk at school had chewing gum stuck underneath it.

What was your favourite holiday destination & why? I love the peaceful island of Sipan, near Dubrovnik. I went back there again this year, and it was as lovely as ever.

What makes you happiest in the world? Floating on my back in a beautiful clear sea, looking up at blue sky, green trees and craggy rocks.

What is your favourite saying or piece of advice? When in Rome, do as the Romans do.





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Applications for the awards must be made by 11th November. Any late applications will only be considered in exceptional circumstances. The scholarship committee then reviews the applications and aims to make awards during December.

To simplify the application process, we are asking young people to apply electronically via a Google form. The link to this is given below, as well as a QR code. The link can also be found on the Steeple Aston website and facebook page.

<https://forms.gle/UuNa3fZBiueZDQD6A>



If you need help with the application process or need more information then please contact me, Tina Ferguson. My email address is tina.merlins@gmail.com

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People's Emergency Briefing Film – UPDATE

There have now been approaching 3,000 screenings of this film across the UK, Europe and the Americas. So far, 123 MPs and 24 Peers have signed the motion calling for the film's conclusions to be debated by Parliament. Our own Banbury MP, Sean Woodcock, who has seen the film, has yet to join them, despite much local pressure and his stated concern at the film's content.

If you have not already done so, please support this initiative by signing the petition at:

petition.parliament.uk/petitions/767687

On Friday 14th August, I attended a Q&A session with Sean, held at the request of the local community in Charlbury. There were 100 attendees and Sean was left in no doubt as to the strength of people's feelings on the subject. The UK is dangerously unprepared for the environmental crisis that is upon us and so well demonstrated in the PEB film. Labour was given a huge majority in 2024 to be radical and act without delay. Most urgently we need measures to ensure:

- Security of our food supply.
- Public health against extreme heat.
- Access to drinking water through an increase in storage and reduction of water loss through leaks.
- Protection of our towns and rural communities from fires and floods.

I strongly recommend everyone to see the film. We are all going to be affected by what is coming. It is imperative that the Government confirms to the public it has plans in place to protect us. If you missed the screening in Steeple Aston, you can find another one locally by viewing the screening map at nebriefing.org

Chris Nevile – Environmental Steeple

Village Hall News



July & August is actually a busy time in the village hall as, with bookings dipping due to holidays, essential maintenance ramps up. The floor is being repolished, electric blinds fitted to the main hall windows, leaky sinks reattached to the wall and, oh yes, fixing a flat roof! The biggest task that my loyal team have been working on is cleaning the red fabric chairs, as they have stained badly and will now take a lot to rejuvenate. Sadly, if this damage had been mentioned to the letting agent on the day, many of the marks could have been removed. Unfortunately we weren't notified and now potentially face a bill of over £1000! Obviously, this has a knock-on effect to letting fees, so please do let us know when anything happens.

HOT, HOT, HOT!! No, not the bonfire night, although that is only three months away (cold night... starry skies... hot cocoa...bangers.... rain, oh yes please, RAIN!). Sorry, back to the point. We know that the hall has been uncomfortably warm when used this summer. In an ideal world, we'd have windows we could open or an air con unit, but we can't magic these things up overnight. However, thanks to S106 money, we have installed electric-operated blinds to the main windows - please can we ask that these are left shut when you leave the building. The curtains can remain open. In addition, we urge people to start the ceiling fans - follow the instructions, as they really do make a difference and please don't forget to turn them off when you leave. Thanks.

Remember - the hall is maintained for the use of the village, so if there is something we could offer but don't, then please do get in touch.

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

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On the 5th August, a group of members took the bus to Oxford then walked into town, following Tina down some little-known alleys for shortcuts. We made our way to one of the largest Oxford colleges, Wadham College, where WI member, Ikhlas Osman, is a librarian. Having organised the visit, she was waiting at 10.00am sharp, ready to give us a guided tour.

Wadham College was founded in 1610 by Dorothy Wadham, whose aim 400 years ago was to make education available to the poor and needy. We were first taken around the vast gardens which are beautifully kept (apart from the lawns) with a variety of interesting plants and trees. We then went into the college chapel which had a strange optical illusion on the steps. Next, we visited the great dining hall, which was all set for a special dinner. Finally, we made our way to the Wadham college library, which has a collection comprising of 53,000 books. One of these is the Shakespeare first folio, which was brought in a box and placed on a special stand for us to inspect. To our surprise, the pages are handled and turned by hand, and gloves are not required. We took note of the typos and errors in spelling.

When our tour was finished, Tina took us to The Turf Tavern, one of Oxford's oldest pubs, even older than Wadham College, dating back to the 12th century. As we ordered our drinks, we discussed the outing, and agreed that it had been a highlight of the year.

Cathy Lawday



NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The annual general meeting (AGM) of Steeple and Middle Aston Community Land Trust (CLT) will be held in Steeple Aston Village Hall

at 7:30pm on Tuesday 29th September 2026.

All residents are welcome - non-members as well as members. Members can vote.

To join, please see www.steepleandmiddleastonclt.org.uk/membership

Come and hear about progress by Oxfordshire's CLTs and by ours, and ask questions.



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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 product costs of the magazine.

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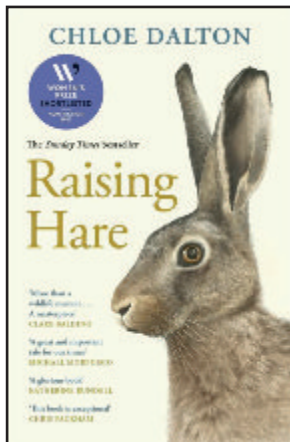
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The Arts Page



Book Review: 'Raising Hare' by Chloe Dalton (Canongate Books, 2025)

This is the heartwarming true story of a city-dwelling professional who, during the Covid lockdown, finds a newly born hare alone and in danger, so feels compelled to rescue it and give it a chance of survival. This book charts their journey together, and chronicles an extraordinary relationship between human and animal, illustrating how the leveret helps her to reconnect with nature and re-evaluate her approach to life. The author's skills of observation and description of the leveret's delicate movements and behaviour offer us a rare glimpse into the animal's traits of serenity, stillness, yet alertness to the dangers that constantly surround it.

This is one of the best nature books I have read, and I found it very touching and thought-provoking, with the author ever careful not to venture into the realms of anthropomorphism, aware that the creature before her was a wild animal. If you love nature, wildlife and the environment, you will enjoy reading this fascinating account, as it's an enchanting read that I would thoroughly recommend to all ages.

Carol Neville

Poetry Corner



"Ageing is the biological process of becoming older by the gradual accumulation of molecular and cellular damage over time. This progressive decline impacts physiological functions, leading to reduced physical and mental capacity." (Wikipedia AI overview)

My take...

Ageing Gracelessly

I'm glad I'm in my 70's
it really is a thrill
I've climbed the slippery slope of life
I'm going o'er the hill
and now I'm on the other side
less effort is required
as I can have a little nap
whenever I am tired
and who's to tell me "No, you can't"
I'd like to see them try
I please myself, I've earned the right
as on my bed I lie

I may be on the downward slope
and to the folk I meet
some things I might say o'er again
with stories I repeat
and who's to tell me "No, you can't"
I tell you one and all
I please myself I've earned my place
It's time to have a ball
I'm glad I'm in my 70's
and climbed up all life's hills
It's time for you to wait on me...
now kindly pass my pills

Peter Wild



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In the Kitchen



Spiced Steeple Aston Fruitcake

Loaf tin liner in large 2lb cake tin
30 minutes prep, 70-80 minutes in fan oven at 150°C

Ingredients:

360gms self-raising flour
1½ tsp mixed spice and ½tsp sweet cinnamon
175gms butter
180gms soft brown sugar
200gms dried fruit
3tblsp warmed black treacle + juice of half a lemon
90gms milk (or less)
1tsp baking powder

Sift together flour, baking powder and spices.
Rub in butter until it resembles breadcrumbs.
Stir in fruit and sugar.
Mix treacle and lemon juice, then stir into the mixture.
Add enough milk to give a dropping consistency.
Turn the mix into the loaf tin, bake, checking for fully cooked.
Allow to cool and take out of tin.

Growl's Kitchen

Blast from the Past

Memories from a Middle Astonian

Fishing Club Report

Reading this report in the August SAL reminded me of a connection of fishing to bellringing and the church services. When I first got involved with ringing at Steeple Aston, the bellringers very rarely rang the bells for morning service on a Sunday. The tower captain at that time, Harry Adams, was a member of the fishing club and usually fishing took place on Sunday mornings. This meant the bells were normally rung for Evensong!

Ice-skating on Middle Aston Lake

It was interesting reading the article about Middle Aston House last month. When I moved into Middle Aston in the 1970s, MA House always put on a Christmas Party for the village, although the village was only half the size then. We also had a village party on the lawn in 1977 to celebrate the Silver Jubilee. I also remember when we used to get cold winters, that Diana Gardner and my wife, Dorothy, enjoyed ice-skating on the lake.

Church Bells

In 1987, when the church bells were restored and augmented, one of the new bells was paid for jointly by the Dr Radcliffe Trust and Middle Aston House, and the bell is inscribed with their names. The Middle Aston Estate was one of the benefactors to the church. MA House has always provided a meeting place for the village to hold its annual parish meeting, and still does to this day.

Graham Clifton



Back to business!

The summer holidays may be winding down, but September often brings fresh plans, new routines and thoughts about what comes next.

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Sci-fi scarecrows at Steeple Aston allotments open day

To coincide with National Allotments week, the Steeple Aston Church Allotments held their Open Day on Sunday 16th August. Very happily, the scorching temperatures had reduced slightly for Sunday's event, for which we were all very grateful! This has not been a good year for anyone trying to grow vegetables or crops, as any farmer will tell you. The allotments have suffered despite heroic watering, as the heat has simply prevented many crops from developing and for those that did, the yields are disappointing. We hope that our visitors took this into consideration when walking around. A good number of visitors attended and whilst we were disappointed at the lack of entries for the village 'Sci-fi' scarecrow competition, they were all well-made and difficult to judge. The winners were Woody Wright for 'Yoda' in the children's class and Mark Utting for 'ET' in the adults. A reminder that this competition is open to everyone in the village.

As we have had little surplus this year, our allotment stall consequently sold mainly jams, preserves and handmade cards, together with books and gardening bric-a-brac. Face painting was popular again and, as for the refreshments, hats off to all those involved in this tremendously successful enterprise and a big thank you to all those donating cakes and helping on the stalls. 'Flourish' had their own stall promoting the Steeple Aston Wellness Garden and welcoming visitors to see their plot and admire their very new and smart shed! Over 50 people stopped to have a chat which is very encouraging. For more information search Flourish Steeple Aston Wellness Garden on Facebook.

At the conclusion of the event, the Allotments Society and Horticultural Society officially unveiled the 'Stuart Walton' flowering cherry tree and commemorative plaque to remember a well-loved member of our community. The photo shows Stuart Cummins representing the Allotments and Richard Preston, the Horticultural Society, with the 'Stuart Walton' cherry tree in front.

We do have a couple of plots available and whilst all will need work to take on, it can be rewarding, so if you would like to have a go and get things ready over the autumn and spring in time for the new year, have a chat with any member of the committee or contact Amanda Rodgers on sacaaclerk@gmail.com for more information.

Stuart Cummins - Chair, SACA



Middle Aston-bury - a fun-filled music extravaganza

In the spectacular grounds of Middle Aston House, an enthusiastic crowd enjoyed a raft of great acts at the Tribute Music Festival on Saturday 18th July. With the gates opening at 1.00pm, the first act kicked off at 2.00pm with Adele-v-Tom Odell (Imogen Butler). This talented vocalist and piano player was a real joy to listen to and set the bar high for the rest of the days performers to achieve. Girl Bands Unite (from Little Mix to the Spice Girls) raised the octane of energy, especially amongst the younger members of the audience. There was lots of dancing along with a significant amount of parent 'closet' dancing in the background. Just after 4.00pm it was the turn of A.S.K. (Arctic Monkeys, Stereophonics & Killers) who gave us a great indie rock scene tribute - think of big anthems, storytelling and guitar riffs that stirred big emotions and memories of years gone by.

Headline tribute acts continued with Dolly Parton (Lucy Floyd) entertaining us with classic hits, amongst others '9 to 5', followed by Abba's Angels who had everyone up and dancing their socks off to seventies' favourites 'Dancing Queen', 'Honey, Honey' and 'Thank you for the Music', even prompting some to join in with slightly dodgy dance moves! To round off the evening, Queen Greatest Hits gave everyone a chance to really rock out, singing along with such classics as 'We Will Rock You', 'We Are the Champions' and, of course, the classic 'Bohemian Rhapsody'!

The balmy weather was sunny but not scorching - ideal for a relaxed, summer vibe with something for all ages to enjoy. Youngsters played ball games on the vast lawns, as the bigger kids and adults had a bop while listening to the bands of yesteryear. Along with a good selection of street food offerings, bar and even face painting - what more could you ask? Oh, and it finished by 9.00pm – perfect!

Big thanks go to Helen and Dan Wright and their team of helpers, who organised this event once again and somehow managed to ensure that all ran smoothly. No mean feat. We look forward to next year's festival of fun.

Carol Neville & Zazi Barrell





STOP PRESS:

***We've just been notified that next year's Tribute Music Fest will take place in the fantastic grounds of Middle Aston House on Saturday 24th July 2027
SAVE THE DATE!***



THE VALENTINE CLUB

What happens when one postpones a river trip in June because it's too hot? Obviously, we delayed it by six weeks until it cooled down a bit. So, on 12th August, a coach of us more senior members of the community, travelled to Henley to join The Waterman, a large river cruiser accompanied by a two-course meal and a bar. The temperature in the shade was just over 30 degrees centigrade! Not to worry, as the boat was reasonably cool and the meal and crew were absolutely marvellous, so well done, Hobbs of Henley.

Our monthly meeting in August gave us a chance to consider antiques (no, not the members!) and decide what was 'basic, better or best'. Those of you who enjoy The Antiques Roadshow on telly might be a bit more clued up as to how this works. John Place had us entertained as he showed us some of his antiques, before asking us to rank them in order of value. Certainly not as easy as one might imagine, but a different way of spending a Tuesday afternoon in the middle of August.

Now onto September and we are off to The Milestones Museum in Basingstoke for a look around their superb museum. Not a museum as many might imagine, but think a re-creation of town and village life a century ago with shops and vehicles all depicting the general slower style of life from that era. For our monthly meeting, we welcome back one of our favourites, Tony Hetherington, who will sing his way through many songs accompanied by his guitar.

Finally - and I don't think this has happened before - at our August meeting, we were able to celebrate one of our member's 100th birthday! As many of you know, it was Joy Bedding's birthday at the end of August, and it was Joy and her late husband, Maurice, who ran The Valentine Club for many years, and it is with their support and commitment that the club still exists today. To find out more about The Valentine Club, simply visit our website on valentineclub.wixsit.com/aston (simply log onto the village website; go to 'clubs and societies' and click on the link to The Valentine Club), keep up-to-date by looking on the village website steepleaston.org.uk or use that old-fashioned thing called a telephone and give me a ring.

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



Enjoying our boat trip on The Waterman, courtesy of Hobbs of Henley.



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WE DON'T WANT OR NEED THIS HUGE PROJECT

Of all the big projects planned for our part of Oxfordshire, the least known is the SRFI. In the Spring of 2027, the Secretary of State for Transport will take a decision that will have a dramatic effect on the long-term wellbeing of our wider neighbourhood and its communities. If she supports the development of the Oxfordshire Strategic Railfreight Interchange (SRFI) at Ardley, it will herald a great road-building programme around Ardley and Middleton Stoney, major engineering works to the Chiltern rail line, and not least the construction of 6.5 million square feet of warehouses, 84 feet high, and the movement of vast areas of earth and landscape. Once complete after **seven years** of construction vehicles disrupting our country lanes, each day there will be a huge number of HGVs carrying containers to be marshalled at the Interchange, using enormous cranes, working night and day. The countryside will have been transformed into an industrial centre reminiscent of major dockside installations, but here marooned in what was an area of relative rural tranquility. That tranquility will be gone forever. Once the roads are built, they will open the door to Heyford Park's huge planned increase in houses, and to other developments invading our countryside.



Applicants' artists' impression of the SRFI proposals

The SRFI begins Examination by the Planning Inspectorate (PINS) in September. Our local planning authorities – Cherwell and Oxfordshire County Council – have some reservations about the scheme, but will not be opposing it. They are satisfied that the new roads and other changes proposed to existing junctions will happily carry all the extra traffic that the scheme will generate. For 'nationally significant infrastructure projects' such as this, there is a presumption in favour of approval by the Government. The Examiners will be presented with vast amounts of evidence from the applicants – Mountpark – that they have taken care of everything. It will fall to us, the local communities that are going to be so dramatically affected, to make the bulk of the case against the Interchange and to prove that they are wrong.

The new roads, once built, might offer some relief to the two villages that will be largely by-passed. The roads, though, are just part of the 'mitigation' package offered by the applicants, carefully calculated to be the bait that catches the prey. All our local parishes are saying: **We don't want mitigation. We want to stop the project.** The long list of reasons includes the following:

- Destruction of local landscape and permanent change to the rural character of the area.
- Huge increase in traffic despite the new roads, with air pollution and noise (including at night).
- Distribution of goods and products from the site using our country lanes.
- Disruption to the Chiltern line to achieve only a small amount of transfer from road to rail.
- No evidence of demand from the rail freight industry for an SRFI in this location.

Continued.....

- The worst of many major developments proposed locally which will cause cumulative harm.
- Provision of water, sewage treatment and power supplies locally are already under stress.
- 'Forever chemicals' found locally in high concentrations may be released by its construction.
- Impact on local ecology, biodiversity; potential impact on dinosaur tracks of world importance.

The Mid-Cherwell Neighbourhood Plan Forum is getting ready to present this case, and our 11 member parishes have already built up a fund of £6,500 towards the costs of doing so. We plan to launch a community fund-raising scheme to enable us to mount an effective opposition to this huge project. Look out for details of how you can donate; and if you have any expertise that could help make the case, please let us know.

Martin Lipson, Chair, **Mid-Cherwell Neighbourhood Plan Forum**, a consortium of your local parish councils.

Email: info@mid-cherwell.org.uk

Walking Netball



End of Season Report

The Walking Netball Group ended the 2025/2026 season with a final session on Wednesday 29th July. A year of training in the village hall has kept us all in tip-top shape with exercise routines of Confusion, Spots, Noughts & Crosses, Stars, Gladiator and much more (if you want to know what these are, you have to come along!). We are a small group so full teams are not possible, but we manage with reduced numbers to get some game practice in most weeks. It is a fun and social gathering, although some competitiveness does show through at times.

We are fully kitted out with two nets, a bag full of balls, team bibs, training aids and a first aid kit, all provided by England Netball. From time to time, we invite Ali Hathaway from England Netball to give us a real workout. Ali does not stand for any slacking!

We are always looking for new netballers, so if you fancy a go, do come along on Wednesdays at 10.15am at Steeple Aston village hall. We resume for the next season on **2nd September**. We often finish with a coffee at the Grain Store if that provides an added incentive.

Penny Cummins

For more information contact **Merrill Bayley**:
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## LOOK AT YOUR LAWN!

Now - I feel very diffident writing for a village full of expert gardeners who know gazillions more than me. But here we go...

About three years ago, when we were all encouraged to do 'no mow May', the Dales of course took it to heart and did 'No Mow May, No Mow June, No Mow August and No Mow September'! The result that year was a largish patch of lawn with very tall grasses that killed all the small flowers underneath including just about all the white clover that the bees love in the lawn. Plus, it spawned some huge ant nests that reached high up the grass stems. In the end, we had to get someone in to scythe it down! So, guess what? We didn't do that again, but we have allowed plants to grow on their own and we're glad to say that quite a few old friends have returned and some we think of as new have turned up. So, what have we got? The white clover is back though in a different part of the lawn, but hey...it's lovely and easy to identify. We'd love some red clover, but for the moment we must be satisfied with this. Then the pièce de resistance this year was a covering of the lawn with what I think is yellow hawksbeard. There seem to be quite a lot of flowers in this family, so I hope I've got it right. It's a small yellow flower on top of a tall stem. I think it's amazing and the insects love it.

Further up the garden in the shade beneath some trees there are loads of leafy things that, when they come out are super blue/purple flowers. At first, I thought they were Bugle but my resident expert (wife) assures me they are Self-heal. If you get down and look at them, they are every bit as beautiful as any cultivated flower, just slightly smaller. There are hundreds of them in this part of the lawn, so I'm looking forward to the covering in vibrant colour. Self-heal is *Prunella vulgaris*. It doesn't seem very vulgar to me, but utterly beautiful. In the middle of the lawn for some years now we have had a patch of Common Yarrow. Yes, I know they're not stunning like the Golden Plate Yarrow, but they last and last and last! They don't wither in the heat and they seem to go on without water until December, with each tiny flower being perfect. Very close by is a small patch of Bugle with deep purple green leaves which are a joy in themselves. Despite the fact that I'm sure there's a load of other flowers hiding in the lawn, just by some trees is an antirrhinum known as Snapdragon or more commonly Toadflax. Why toads need flax goodness knows. But if you get up close to it, you really can see that it's a member of the antirrhinum family with many spikes made up of perfect little 'bunny mouths'. Ours is quite a deep red but can come in yellow too, I understand.

Well, that's it for now until I find that elusive orchid that put in an appearance about four years ago and hasn't been seen since!

**Martin Dale – Environmental Steeple**



*Self-heal (Prunella vulgaris)*



*Yellow hawksbeard (crepis) – Photos: iStockphoto*

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# Farmer Clusters: What Happens When Farmers Team Up to Create a Healthier Landscape?



*Farmer Cluster, photo: Sophie Cunningham*

Wild Oxfordshire is a charity seeking to create a more natural, resilient, and biodiverse Oxfordshire for the benefit of all.

**Farmer clusters:** Many of us probably don't think about our local farmers on a regular basis (except when we're stuck behind a tractor on a country road!), but they are the heart of our rural landscape, growing food, managing hedgerows, as well as supporting wildlife across the countryside.

Agricultural land accounts for 71% of land nationally and 74% in Oxfordshire. And so, inevitably, the way farmland is managed will have a huge impact on the biodiversity that land can support. Farmers are now joining forces in the form of farmer clusters (or farmer-led groups) to care for the landscape, creating space for wildlife and healthier soils, wetlands, and habitats. These groups facilitate collaborations between farmers and landowners to deliver landscape-scale conservation projects. They also act as support systems by giving guidance and enabling the sharing of experiences and knowledge. Vitally, farmer clusters are designed to be farmer-led, meaning that members play a key role in the decision-making as well as giving them a sense of ownership.

At Wild Oxfordshire, we are proud to facilitate two Farmer Clusters: The Clumps Farmer Cluster, a group of 14 farms located around the Wittenham Clumps, and the Ridgeway Farmer Cluster, a membership of 15 farms. Wild Oxfordshire is supporting these clusters to deliver workshops and events that meet the specific needs of local farmers. Workshops have covered a broad range of topics from soil health and hedgerow management to understanding changes in government grants and farm diversification.



*Farmer Cluster Talk, photo: Sophie Cunningham*

**How you can help:** A farmer yourself? For more information visit [farmerclusters.com](http://farmerclusters.com)

But you don't have to be a farmer to support the countryside and your local farmers:

Follow the countryside code - leave gates and property as you find them, follow local signs and keep to marked paths.

Take your litter home, bag up dog poo, do not light fires and only have BBQs where signs allow them. Always keep dogs in sight and on

leads around livestock and during the bird breeding season.

Visit your local farm shop and submit any wildlife sightings to Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre.

Buy local food where possible at farm shops and local markets.

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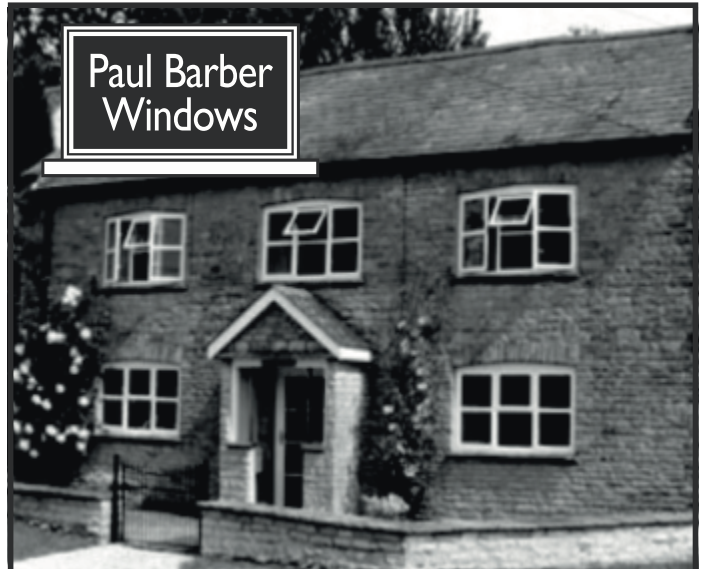
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## Bus Museum showcases the versatility of the humble coach

A Grand Day Out on 2nd August was our most successful 2026 event so far. 180 visitors came to see our recreation of Gloucester Green bus and coach station in the golden era of bus and coach travel - before most people owned their own car. Restored vehicles often have interesting histories. One of the visiting coaches was EYA 923 which was new in 1939 and owned by Blue Motors of Minehead. The coach was the first to reach the Devon village of Lynmouth on 16th August 1952 to evacuate villagers after a catastrophic flash flood caused by 9 inches (229 mm) of torrential rain falling on Exmoor within 24 hours on 15<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> August. The resulting wall of water and debris claimed 34 lives and destroyed over 100 buildings. The coach took survivors to a cinema in Minehead. It is an observation coach with large windows and ceiling lights so that passengers could look up as well as sideways. The coachwork was by Harrington with a large fin at the back. The coach was used for day tours to local attractions such as the Valley of the Rocks, Exmoor and Dartmeet. On Saturdays it would have worked 'on hire to Royal Blue' as a relief express coach to/from Exeter, where passengers might have changed onto a coach going to Gloucester Green.

On 1st September, the government's scheme to reduce VAT on museum admissions comes to an end. The directors have decided not to increase the admission prices for families back to £20 because families are being hit hard by inflation so the price will remain at £17. However, the price for adults, over 65s and children will return to previous levels rising by £1 to £8, £7 and £5 respectively. We do not charge carers or under-fives.

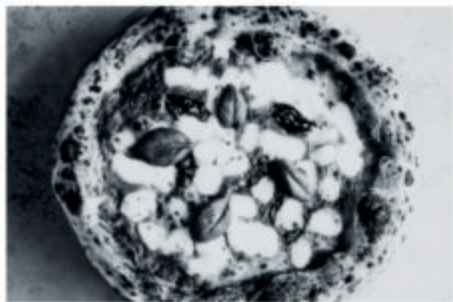


*The EYA 923 Observation Coach, 1939, which was owned by Blue Motors of Minehead. Right: Charmaine Dixey and Andy Cowan dressed for the event. Photos: Oxford Bus Museum.*

On Saturday 12th September, we shall be giving free historic bus rides round Oxford as part of the annual Open Doors Day. We will be based in Bonn Square from about 10.30am until 3.30pm. The Oxford Bus Museum is always changing its displays. Earlier this summer we updated and expanded our 'Buses in Wartime' exhibit which covers both World Wars. In the Second World War the demands of military personnel and evacuees, when added to the resident population, led to overcrowding on the buses. An airman at Upper Heyford was killed in a stampede to board a bus. The City Council made a new by-law to regulate queuing!

In other parts of the country there was reduced demand for bus services so local operators had surplus vehicles. The Oxford company had to hire what vehicles it could get, and one such model was from Yorkshire. It was non-standard (to Oxford), a Leyland model with a central entrance - not a layout that the Oxford passengers were used to. Oxford also hired buses from London. STD 975 was on loan to the City of Oxford from February 1942 right through to December 1946. Imported fuel was in short supply in both World Wars. In the First, a balloon was fitted to the roof to hold town gas, fed to the engine by gravity. In the Second, a trailer burnt coal to generate a constant supply, but engine power was reduced by a third, so performance was poor and the buses could not be used on hilly routes. If you have not visited the museum for a while, why not come and see what has changed. There are plenty of stories to discover.

**Frank Collingwood – Oxford Bus Museum**



Something is coming to the Grain Store this September...

Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> September – save the date. Pizza, prosecco & live music at The Grain Store!

Join us for a relaxed evening of freshly made pizza, glasses of fizz and live music, bringing together everything you need for the perfect end of summer get together.

Whether it's a date night, an evening with friends, or simply an excuse to enjoy good food and great music.

Full details will be released on our Instagram soon, save the date and we can't wait to see you there!



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## Steeple Aston *Walking Group*



### Walking Group enjoy figure of eight route

On Friday 31<sup>st</sup> July, 11 walkers and 2 dogs set out for a 6.5-mile walk starting at the Wykham Arms in Sibford Gower. The figure of eight route, planned by Sarah Bryson, took us down through the village and up across fields into Sibford Ferris and then across rolling farmland and woods back to the pub via Burdrop. The weather was pleasantly warm for us to enjoy the wonderful scenery across the Cotswold countryside. The Wykham Arms played host to 8 of us for a lovely well-earned lunch. The walking group ventures out on the last Friday of the month and the walks are generally between 4.5 and 6.5 miles. Contact details are on the inside cover of this magazine.



## Steeple Aston *Garden Club*



Heat and the drought stopped play! Well, at least it did for the Garden Club in early August when we decided to postpone going to the Oxford Botanic Garden. Hopefully, by the time you are reading this, it will have started raining so all our gardens and the countryside can start to recover and we can organise a visit to the gardens in Oxford.

September sees us visiting Chris and Ray Clarke's garden at the Pound House, Steeple Aston, so please come and join us on Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> September from 6.00pm by contacting either myself (Alison) or Richard Preston using the email addresses below.

The programme of events for the autumn and winter are now on the Steeple Aston website [steepleaston.org.uk/clubs-societies/gardening/](http://steepleaston.org.uk/clubs-societies/gardening/) Again, please contact me (Alison) if you would like a copy of the Programme or to attend any of the forthcoming events.

Alison Llewellyn: [alisonllew.home@gmail.com](mailto:alisonllew.home@gmail.com)  
or Richard Preston: [richard.preston5@btopenworld.com](mailto:richard.preston5@btopenworld.com)



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# The Cricket Report



## *Away to Sibcliffe*

On a beautiful day at Sibford School, Steeple won the toss and batted first. With retirement at 25, captain Will Doggett opened with father Nige. Will rushed to his 25, and after a few quick wickets went out to umpire, mainly to tell Dad to get a move on! It worked and after a couple of boundaries Nige was also retiring. That bought Tom Chesser and Jack Higgins to the crease – Tom not for long as his quick-fire 25 included a six that missed the pavilion window by 6 inches. Jack also scored 25, but with Ben Woods out for an excellent 20, Will came back in. Paul Longman played for tea, whilst Will smashed a huge six before being bowled on the last ball for 42. Steeple ended on a competitive 191.

The young Brett brothers opened the Steeple bowling, with Paddy (2-20) steaming in and removing the opener's off stump with a beauty. Older brother Rory bowled well, but was a bit tired and emotional after a long night out. Three of Sibcliffe's top five retired on 25, but tidy bowling from Ben Woods (0-18) and Paul Longman (0-21) restricted their scoring, and additional wickets from Tom Chesser and Jack Higgins meant Sibcliffe ended up about 40 runs short. A good win.

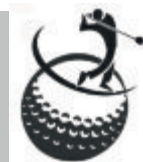
## *Away to Blenheim Park*

A new look Steeple team batted first after an error of judgement/act of ignorance at the toss! The less said the better – our top order was whittled out by a combination of great catching and a highly unpredictable pitch. Our middle and lower order didn't last long, with the exception of on-the-day recruit Wasim who scored an excellent 22 (only byes also reached double figures). All out for 61 in the 14<sup>th</sup> over. Our response was spirited, but they reached the target in 17 overs with 3 wickets down – one an absolute worldie from Lucas Foster which sent the middle stump flying, and two from debutant Khalid who bowled beautifully.

We were thrashed, but it's always a privilege to play at the Palace. And tea was cracking....

## *Phil Chesser*

# Steeple Aston Golf Society



Sadly, our match at the Witney Lakes golf club in August did not go ahead due to maintenance on the course, please read the email from their manager:

*'I spoke with our Head Greenkeeper today, and due to machinery availability, we've had to move our maintenance week to the week commencing 17th August. During that week, there will be limited play while we carry out essential work on the greens. As part of the maintenance, the greens will be tined and heavily sanded, so playing conditions won't be at their usual standard. With this in mind we have rescheduled you for next year'.*

Let's hope that nothing goes wrong for our last meeting of 2026. We shall be meeting at Kirtlington with an 11.00am arrival on Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> September at OX5 3JY. This is an inland type links course with challenging greens. The course incorporates many natural features and has 102 bunkers designed by Graham Webster, 6107 yards, par 70. If you would like to join us as it's just down the road, please call Chris on 01869 347173 or myself on 01869 340423.

In the meantime, this offer has come up again:

Anybody interested in a free ride in a helicopter for 4 people?!

I'm looking for two more people to join us on Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> November. We leave early morning from Biggin Hill airfield and will fly to the River Avon where we will have breakfast and then yacht down the river for lunch. We'll have another flight along the coastline before returning back home. Preferably someone with a helicopter and yacht, otherwise we can't go.

Happy golfing!

**Alan Brewer**

Steeple Talks 17<sup>th</sup> September,  
In the Church 7.15pm for 7.30pm



**Dr Alice Prochaska**

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A small illustration of a tea set with a cup, saucer, and cookies.

**SATURDAY**  
**12<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2026**  
 **10AM – 12PM**

## Apple Pressing Afternoons

Don't let your apples go to waste!



Due to the recent drought, we're bringing our apple pressing afternoons forward this year.

**Saturday 5th September &  
Saturday 19th September  
from 2.00pm – 4.00pm**

Bring your apples and bottles and turn your homegrown fruit into **delicious, healthy apple juice**.

Come and enjoy our Community Orchard, explore our **new wildlife trail**, and make an afternoon of it. **Families are welcome!**

Steeple Aston residents can also use the press themselves, with our pasteuriser available to help your juice last longer. A small donation helps us keep the press running for the community.

**Bring your apples. Bring your bottles. Press, enjoy and take home!**



# Church Matters



*To be alive is a grand thing! (Agatha Christie)*

As we move into an uncertain autumn period after the heatwave of our summer, many of us will be wondering just what weather we might be getting and how we can adjust and prepare for it. It is evident that things are changing in terms of our present climate and my own hope is that we face up to what is happening, and take a constructive and long-term view about how we can best help our farmers, other food producers such as market gardeners and those involved with environmental issues, to care for livestock, crops and nature. We all need to be far more vigilant and aware about husbanding valuable resources such as water, so that our 'green and pleasant land' may still exist for future generations.

This summer, my focus has sharpened on those in great need of assistance as our climate radically changes the environment around us. I've noted the plight of our hedgehogs, moles, voles, rabbits, hares and other wild creatures struggling against the odds, and no doubt, like many of you, made a note of the lack of certain types of insects and gazed rather sadly at the scorched grass and stressed trees, dropping leaves and fruit too early.

But I am not pessimistic, as even in this situation there is something we can do to help. In the Bible, God gives human beings stewardship, care of the earth and all that is in it to us. You don't have to be religious to see how important this is. We have a duty of love with the task of nurturing our living world. So, let's encourage one another to become aware of our environment, care for each other, our living creatures and our natural world through developing a more constructive, positive and proactive attitude as individuals and communities, helping all life sharing this, our fragile earthly home.

Agatha Christie wrote this: *"I like living. I have sometimes been wildly, despairingly, acutely miserable, racked with sorrow; but through it all I still know quite certainly that just to be alive is a grand thing."*

I believe that, I hope you all do. It also asks of us that small extra effort of love for one another and our world. We can do it!

**Fr Robin Gibbons**

## Church Services September 2026

| Date                                        | North Aston                          | Steeple Aston                 | Tackley                              |
|---------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| <b>Sunday<br/>6<sup>th</sup> September</b>  | 9.30am<br>Holy Communion BCP         | 11.00am<br>Holy Communion BCP | 5.30pm<br>Evensong                   |
|                                             |                                      |                               |                                      |
| <b>Sunday<br/>13<sup>th</sup> September</b> | 9.30am<br>Morning Prayer             | 11.00am<br>Family Service     | 5.30pm<br>Holy Communion             |
|                                             |                                      |                               |                                      |
| <b>Sunday<br/>20<sup>th</sup> September</b> | 9.30am<br>Holy Communion             | 11.00am<br>Holy Communion     | 5.30pm<br>Harvest Festival & Auction |
|                                             |                                      |                               |                                      |
| <b>Sunday<br/>27<sup>th</sup> September</b> | 10.30am<br>Harvest Morning<br>Prayer | 6.00pm<br>Harvest Evensong    | 9.30am<br>Family Communion           |
|                                             |                                      |                               |                                      |

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# Travel Times

## Rail travel:

Our nearest local train station is at Lower Heyford, but for more frequent service, 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](http://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 service runs between Banbury and London Paddington, often requiring changes at Oxford, Didcot Parkway or Reading. Go to **[firstgreatwestern.co.uk](http://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](http://nationalrail.co.uk)** or **[thetrainline.com](http://thetrainline.com)**

## 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)**

# Local Information

## 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 |

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

|                                                                        | Monday to Friday                                | Sat/Sun & Bank<br>Holidays<br>Before 6pm         | Sat/Sun & Bank<br>Holidays<br>6pm to Midnight    |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Steeple &amp; Middle Aston Village Residents / Voluntary Groups</b> |                                                 |                                                  |                                                  |
| <b>All Facilities<br/>(Main Hall, Kitchen and<br/>Meeting Room )</b>   | £10 per hour<br>(£20 min charge)<br>£75 Deposit | £10 per hour<br>(£40 min charge)<br>£75 Deposit  | £15 per hour<br>(£60 min charge)<br>£200 Deposit |
| <b>Non-Residents/Commercial Organisations</b>                          |                                                 |                                                  |                                                  |
| <b>All Facilities<br/>(Main Hall, Kitchen and<br/>Meeting Room)</b>    | £10 per hour<br>(£20 min charge)<br>£75 Deposit | £12 per hour<br>(£40 min charge)<br>£200 Deposit | £20 per hour<br>(£80 min charge)<br>£200 Deposit |
| <b>All Hirers</b>                                                      |                                                 |                                                  |                                                  |
| <b>Main Hall</b>                                                       | £8 per hour<br>(£10 min charge)<br>£75 Deposit  | Not available to book separately                 |                                                  |
| <b>Meeting Room</b>                                                    | £5 per hour<br>(£10 min charge)                 | Check availability with Letting Agent            |                                                  |

See website <https://savh.org.uk/village-hall-hire-fees/> for full details

## 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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*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](mailto:raj4878@hotmail.com)**

**Steeple Aston and Middle Aston  
Refuse & Recycling collection day  
is THURSDAY.**

#### September 2026:

Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> Blue and brown  
Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> Green  
Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> Blue and brown  
Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> Green

#### October 2026:

Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> Blue and brown  
Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> Green  
Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> Blue and brown  
Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> Green  
Thursday 29<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/](http://cherwell.gov.uk/)**

## Steeple Aston Parish Councillors

Angharad Lloyd-Jones (Chair)

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

Greg Elphick

Andrew Gibson

Charlotte Powell, Sports & Recreation  
Centre, Environment

2 councillor vacancies

Cathy Fleet – Parish Clerk  
Email: [parishclerk.steepleaston@gmail.com](mailto:parishclerk.steepleaston@gmail.com)

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# 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 October and November to [editorsalife@gmail.com](mailto:editorsalife@gmail.com)

| September                 | Event                                                                         | Venue                                     | Time               |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|--------------------|
| Saturday 5th              | Apple Pressing Afternoon                                                      | Community Orchard, Water Lane, Steeple A. | 2.00pm - 4.00pm    |
| Saturday 5th-Sunday 6th   | Scarecrow Trail - Theme: Children's Favourite Books                           | Lower Heyford                             | 10.00am - 4.00pm   |
| Tuesday 8th               | WI: 'Hue Knew' talk by colour consultant                                      | Village Hall                              | 7.00pm             |
| Wednesday 9th             | Garden Club Summer Party - The Pound House                                    | Paines Hill, SA                           | 6.00pm             |
| Saturday 12th             | Oxford Historic Churches Trust - Ride & Stride charity event                  |                                           |                    |
| Saturday 12th             | Church Tower Open Morning at St Peter & St Paul Church                        | SA Church                                 | 10.00am - 12 noon  |
| Saturday 12th             | Grain Store - An evening of Pizza, Prosecco and live music                    | Grain Store, MA                           | Evening - Time TBC |
| Sunday 13th               | Steeple Barton Chase                                                          | Barton Abbey                              | 10.30am            |
| <b>Monday 14th</b>        | <b>SAL October copy and advert deadlines</b>                                  |                                           |                    |
| Tuesday 15th              | Valentines: Tony Hetherington                                                 | Village Hall                              | 2.30pm             |
| Thursday 17 <sup>th</sup> | Steeple Talk: The work of Charlbury Refugee Action Group - Dr Alice Prochaska | SA church                                 | 7.15pm             |
| Saturday 19th             | Apple Pressing Afternoon                                                      | Community Orchard, Water Lane, SA         | 2.00pm - 4.00pm    |
| Saturday 19th             | The Trumpets Shall Sound' Concert                                             | Village Hall                              | 7.00pm             |
| Monday 21st               | Parish Council Meeting                                                        | S & R Building                            | 7.30pm             |
| Wednesday 23rd            | Valentines: Coach Trip - Milestones Museum                                    |                                           |                    |
| Saturday 26th             | Farmers' Market                                                               | Deddington                                | 9.00am - 12.30pm   |
| Saturday 26th             | Middle Aston House Open Day                                                   | MA House                                  | 10.00am - 4.00pm   |
| Sunday 27th               | Harvest Festival Evensong in Steeple Aston church                             | SA church                                 | 6.00pm             |
| Sunday 27th               | Harvest Supper                                                                | Village Hall                              | 6.45pm for 7.00pm  |
| Tuesday 29th              | Golf Society meet - Kirtlington Golf Club                                     | Kirtlington GC                            | 11.00am            |
|                           |                                                                               |                                           |                    |
| <b>October</b>            |                                                                               |                                           |                    |
| Monday 5th - Friday 9th   | Valentines: Holiday to the Isle of Wight                                      | Isle of Wight                             |                    |
| Tuesday 13th              | WI: Archaeological discoveries at Broughton Castle                            | Village Hall                              | 7.00pm             |
| <b>Wednesday 14th</b>     | <b>SAL November copy and advert deadlines</b>                                 |                                           |                    |
| Wednesday 14th            | Garden Club                                                                   | Village Hall                              |                    |

**Pilates.** Village Hall - 2.00pm - 3.00pm & 3.15pm - 4.15pm - Mondays

**Choral Society Rehearsals.** Village Hall - 7.45pm - Mondays

**Badminton.** Village Hall - 10.00am - 12.30pm - Tuesdays

**Bellringing practice.** Church Tower - 7.30pm - Tuesdays

**Walking Netball.** Village Hall - 10.15am - Wednesdays

**Brownies.** Sport & Rec Centre - 6.00pm - 7.30pm - Wednesdays

**Toddler Group.** Sport & Rec Centre - 9.30am - 11.30am - Thursdays

**Badminton.** Village Hall - 8.00pm - Thursdays

**Village History Centre (SAVA)** - 10.00am - 12 noon - Saturdays

**Steeple Aston Life is published by Steeple Aston Life Committee**

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# Home-made food

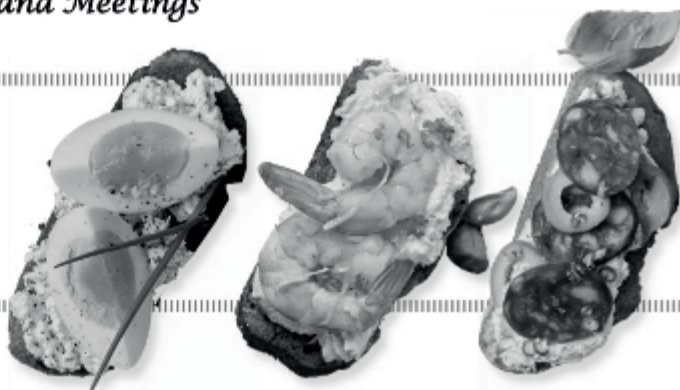
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