

WHEATLEY NEWS

Published by Wheatley Parish Council



Cows at Castle Hill Farm | Sarah Howes

WNL Editor Wanted - Page 15
Morris Returns - Page 27
Wildlife on the Howe - Page 56



Contributions

The Wheatley Newsletter welcomes contributions and adverts from residents, and from businesses and organisations serving Wheatley and District. News and reports from village organisations are particularly welcome but contentious issues or articles promoting personal causes should be avoided. Submissions should be made by **5th November** for the next issue.

The Editor reserves the right not to print items and to edit items submitted for publication.

Head to bit.ly/wnl-info for further details and to download a booking form.

Meetings & Dates

Full Parish Council

Merry Bells, 19:30

5th October

2nd November

Planning Cmte.

Parish Office, 19:30

14th October

11th November

Finance Cmte.

Parish Office, 19:30

19th October

Open Spaces Cmte.

Parish Office, 19:30

16th November

Parish Surgery

Parish Office

09:30 - 11:30

Every Wed

District Cllr Surgery

Parish Office 10:30

**Not currently
running**

WHEATLEY NEWS

Publisher & Billing Enquiries

Wheatley Parish Council

The Parish Office

The Merry Bells

89 High Street

Wheatley, OX33 1XP

01865 875615

clerk@wheatleyparishcouncil.gov.uk

www.wheatleyparishcouncil.gov.uk

Editor & Artwork/Content Enquiries

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Distributor

This newsletter is kindly distributed to all addresses in Wheatley and Holton by a team of volunteers, organised by the Parish Council.

Disclaimer

The views expressed in the Newsletter are not necessarily those of the Parish Council or the Editor, and no liability can be accepted for any errors or omissions, although we will publish corrections where necessary. Furthermore, inclusion of an advertisement does not imply endorsement by Wheatley Parish Council or the Editor.

Chair's Column

I am very pleased to say that solar lights have been installed in the Memorial Gardens to offer light and safe passage through the gardens to Bell Lane from the High Street. The process of installing the lights has not been simple or quick because the Parish Council have had to obtain a faculty (church permission) to make material changes to what is essentially a burial ground.

The Memorial Gardens are owned by the Diocese of Oxford and have been maintained by the Parish Council (or local authority) since it stopped being an active burial ground in the mid 1850s. There are graves there, and it should be a place of quietness and reflection, so it's distressing when litter is found around the benches after what appears to have been a good night out. Likewise when there are copious amounts of dog excrement after residents have exercised their dogs without disposing of it correctly. This has the unfortunate result of showering our outdoor grounds operatives when they are mowing the grass.

This brings me on to the concerns from residents about walking through the gardens while there are

loose dogs – some residents have said they would rather walk on the unsafe narrow path up Station Road than encounter loose dogs being exercised in a burial ground. Dogs are not allowed in St Mary's Churchyard so that rationale should follow to the Memorial Gardens.

Now for something completely different. At our last meeting, your council voted on purchasing the ground the Cadet Hut sits on (rather than leasing it) for our Youth Hub. We will open negotiations shortly to get the best deal for the village. We also voted on whether to accept the terms of the lease of Littleworth Rd Playing Field to provide an open space for the village. The vote was unanimous and will move the Flood Attenuation Scheme forward, ready for work to begin next March. If the rumours about the coming strength of El Nino weather front are true – we need to get prepared and lobby our local politicians to continue with the actions from the Section 19 report!

Until next time...

Alison Sercombe

alisonsercombe@wheatleyparishcouncil.gov.uk

Parish Councillors

New Councillors

At the meeting of the 7th September, the Council co-opted **Ashley Buttress** to the Parish Council – welcome Ashley! Contact details for Councillor Buttress are on our website.

Resignation

Aaron Brookes has stepped down from the Council. We would like to thank Aaron for his time on the Council and wish him all the best for his future endeavours.

Vacancies

Wheatley Parish Council has seats for 15 councillors and there are two vacancies remaining. The Council meets the first Monday of every month. The Council has 4 committees – Planning, Finance, Open Spaces and Staffing – and manages several assets including 3 playgrounds. The Council carries out several events during the year such as the Christmas Fair and Artisan Markets.

Being a Councillor involves attending meetings where informed decisions are made on behalf of residents. Decisions range from how finances are spent, comments on planning applications, management of village assets, consideration of future projects and more.

The Council welcomes and encourages members of the public to attend meetings and communicate with the Council as this is the best way for us to represent the Parish.

Wheatley Parish Council have a clear strategy to:

- Act against Climate Change
- Support our village to become vibrant, sustainable, and safe
- Make the council accessible to all and to promote inclusivity and wellbeing

The criteria are to be over 18, on the electoral register, live/work/own/rent property in Wheatley or within 3 miles of the village.

The Council is a very proactive team and welcomes anyone who has even a spark of interest and enthusiasm to contact the parish office.

Parish Councils Demystified

For this edition of Parish Council demystified, I will talk about planning.

Parish Councils are statutory consultees on planning applications. However, what sometimes people don't realise is that comments from the Parish Council carry the same weight as those of residents.

The Planning Authority very much welcomes local information that might be useful in considering applications. The Parish Council is aware of the material considerations and legal information that can be applied in comments. The understanding of these material considerations and legal information might make for a comment that is more able to be applied by the Planning Authority in their decision making, but the weight of the comments of a Parish Council and residents is no different.

The Parish Council will always respond to applications where it is consulted but encourages residents who have a view on applications to make their own comments to the Planning Authority as these will equally be considered.

PCSO – Have your say

As you may be aware Thames Valley Police runs 'have your say' sessions, held by local neighbourhood teams, which provide the opportunity for residents to discuss any issues affecting their area or chat about crime prevention measures.

New PCSO Anna Fritsch will be holding two 'have your say' days in Wheatley outside of the Merry Bells on the 23rd October from 11.00 to 13.00 and the 19th of December from 17.00 -19.00.

Officers will be on hand to offer advice, discuss local issues, and answer any questions - do go along and say hello!

Memorial Gardens - Solar Lights

The Parish Council had been asked to consider lighting at the Memorial Gardens for both safety by the step as well as general safety for walking at night. The Parish Council has installed these lights which are now functioning at the Memorial Gardens.

The Parish Council welcomes and will consider any suggestions from residents. If you have any suggestions, please feel free to contact the Clerk.

Upcoming events

Wheatley Christmas Fair: Returns on **Friday 27th November 2pm-8pm** with festive stalls, and entertainment along the High St and inside the Merry Bells.

Parking In Wheatley

As always, parking in our village continues to create issues, and I'd ask everyone to be thoughtful about where they park, especially along our busiest roads, on corners and in residential cul-de-sacs, where emergency and service vehicles may need access.

Parking on pavements, so that they are blocked for prams and mobility scooters, is particularly dangerous, as pedestrians may have to step into the road to get past. This creates a real risk of serious injury.



Dangerous parking can be reported to the police by **calling 101**. Dangerous parking includes:

- **Blocking pavements or roads:** Vehicles parked in a way that forces pedestrians, including those with pushchairs or wheelchairs, into the road.
- **Zig-zag lines:** Parking on zig-zag lines at pedestrian crossings or outside schools.
- **Preventing emergency vehicle access:** Vehicles blocking narrow roads, fire lanes, or access points.
- **Dangerous positioning:** Parking on a bend, the brow of a hill or in a way that obscures a junction.

High Street Parking and The Merry Bells Car Park

There always seem to be a lot of cars parked outside the shops, and this can make it difficult for people to find a space for a quick visit.

The Merry Bells Car Park now has a three-hour parking limit, so if you are staying in the High Street for an extended period or visiting the Merry Bells, could we please ask you to use the car park where possible?

You can also park in the Merry Bells Car Park overnight. The parking restrictions apply between 7am and 10pm, with a three-hour waiting limit.

For example, if you park in the car park at 7pm, you will need to remove your car by 7am the following morning. If you park at 8pm, you need to move it by 8am; if you park at 9pm, you need to remove it by 9am. If you park after 10pm, you will need to move your vehicle by 10am.

There are also normally spaces in the South Oxfordshire District Council car park behind the King and Queen, by the bus stop, and you can park there overnight.

Community Speedwatch

The Wheatley Parish Council Traffic Working Group is hoping to set up a Community Speedwatch Team to help reduce speeding in our community.

Community Speedwatch is an initiative run by Thames Valley Police that enables local residents to work together to improve road safety. The police provide communities with equipment and training to monitor vehicle speeds in their area.

When vehicles are recorded exceeding the speed limit, the registered keeper is contacted initially with a letter explaining the potential risks and consequences of dangerous driving.

If you would like to find out more about joining the team, please email: peterramsdale@wheatleyparishcouncil.gov.uk.

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BACK TO SCHOOL NEWS FROM WHEATLEY PRIMARY SCHOOL

I am writing this at the end of the first week back to school. Whilst children only returned at the end of the week, all the school staff have been onsite most of the week, preparing their classrooms for the new year. The school reverberates with excitement and hope, everyone looking forward to what the new academic year will bring. From the new Reception children exploring the fantastic outdoor grounds right through to Year 6 discovering the responsibilities of being the oldest, everyone is embarking on a learning journey.

We are delighted to report that the school has once again done brilliantly in its end of Y6 SATS results - the percentage of children achieving the expected standard in reading, writing and maths was 11% above both the Oxfordshire and national average. We are also particularly proud that 42% of pupils achieved greater depth in maths which is above the expected standard at the end of Y6. Our revised phonics and maths curricula have benefitted the whole school, and we are proud to give children such a strong start in life.

As well as academic excellence, the school is going from strength to strength on its wider curriculum. Every class from Reception to Y4 is timetabled to benefit from our specialist forest school teaching over the course of the year; extra-curricular clubs are flourishing (though we always welcome new volunteers to add to our offering!), from craft and Lego through to

football and netball; our Cool Kids club provides wrap around and holiday care; and our nurture nest provides a safe and caring environment for those children who need that extra support.

No doubt you will see (and hear) us in the village – the Autumn term gives us the opportunity to participate in village life through harvest festivals and remembrance services, as well as our annual sponsored walk through Shotover. Our choir will start rehearsing for the Christmas fair soon and our PTA committee are already busy preparing for the first disco of the year.

We reported last term that we were saying goodbye to 2 governors and would like to invite new members, especially those with a finance/business background (you don't have to be a parent at the school), so please take a few minutes to consider whether you could give 3-4 hours/month to join our friendly group. Email office.3165@wheatley.oxon.sch.uk if you would like more details.

For those of you with nursery-age children (i.e. those who will be 4 before 1st September 2027) who are due to start school in September 2027, we would love to invite you to come and look round our wonderful school – we have Open days on 1st October at 9:30am and 4th November at 9:30am. Please email office.3165@wheatley.oxon.sch.uk to book your space.

The WPS Governors

www.wheatley.oxon.sch.uk

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Closing date: 4pm Friday 9th October 2026.

Interviews to be held week commencing 12th October 2026

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The Merry Bells Village Hall

Our Upgrades Continue, Getting Ready for Winter

In the previous issue we wrote that having successfully introduced our new booking system, we were planning to upgrade the entry system by replacing the original electronic key-cards, which had to be collected before use, with a new entry code system.

This happened at the end of August and is working very successfully for all of our village hall users, whether they are our long-term regular societies, classes, or organisations. Plus, it is a much easier and more convenient system for our first-time users, who are hiring our rooms and facilities, and now, no longer have to arrange to collect a key-card.

In its place, when making your booking, you will automatically receive your entry code, which will last for the duration of your booking. So, we can announce:

The new entry code system is 'up and running,' and working very successfully.

After the brilliant summer weather-wise, we realise that by the time you are reading this, we will be ready for winter, which to many of us, means reliable and effective heating.

In our coffee room or small meeting room, we have installed two new electric wall-mounted heaters and have finished the redecorating that was needed, following the installation.

Likewise, we are planning to replace the gas heaters in the main hall with new radiators, which will in turn, be more reliable and effective, plus they can be automatically controlled to work in conjunction with bookings in the main hall.

This is part of our going 'fully electric', following our planning to become more sustainable, having installed our solar panels a few years ago. Now, having invested in our own storage batteries last year, we are well on the way to producing our own independent energy supply.

This is all part of the continuous policy of investing in our village hall and its facilities for everyone by using the income from those hiring and renting to cover our very high standards of presentation, maintenance, and cleaning. Part of these overheads are the continuing high costs of not only these services but also the insurance cover required on behalf of all those paying to hire and those who pay rent. Therefore, we do have to once again repeat, that the village hall has never, as part of the original agreement, been there to provide a public toilet. Further, we have to comply with our safeguarding policy and insurance cover, which only covers those paying to hire and rent the facilities.

As mentioned, with our redecorating now complete, we will be re-hanging the previous pictures by local artists that were on display. We would also like to once again invite any local artists who would like to display their work in the village hall to please get in touch with us.

We wrote in the last issue, that we are looking for a new tenant for one of our offices, which is now our largest one available. It is fully carpeted, complete with office furniture and a large built-in cupboard for storage, and therefore ideal for a growing or start-up business. We have received from Wheatley Estates a review of local market-rates for office rentals and as always for local businesses, we always try to offer our rents below the local market-rate.

Please do get in touch with us or Wheatley Estates for a viewing if you are interested.

The Merry Bells Trustees | info@merrybells.org.uk



Wheatley Playing Field Trust

As a result of the lack of rain for many weeks now, coupled with very high temperatures, all pitches are unplayable. Users have been informed of this, and the remarking of pitches and erection of posts will not be done until the field is fit to play on again. Owing to the weather conditions, the RFU were forced to postpone the start of the season until September 21st.

As reported previously, repairs to the wooden framework of the lower pavilion were being carried out during Wheatley Park School's summer break. At the same time, significant plumbing work is being completed. These works will help prolong the life of the pavilions.

Drainage work has also to be carried out, particularly around the lower pavilion which sits in the lowest part of the playing field. The changing rooms will remain accessible and so it can be conducted during term time. To accommodate this, the training

grids and football pitches will have to be moved.

The Trust is delighted to have been awarded a grant from the Football Foundation towards the purchase of new, full size portable goals. These goals are easily moved on wheels allowing realignment of the main football pitch. This will result in less wear and tear of the pitch, especially the goalmouths.

Finally, if you are thinking about playing netball, football or rugby or just want to improve your fitness, please contact the clubs directly or use the Trust contact details below.

Do get in touch at:

enquiries@wheatleyplayingfieldtrust.co.uk
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Paul Willmott | Chairman

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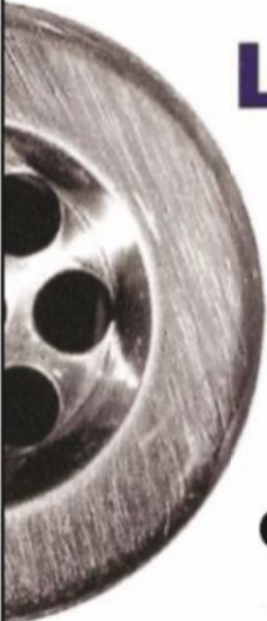
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Who are we?

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join us in planting a memorial tree

find out about our village history

learn how to trace your ancestors

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Who spotted the missing roads (again!)? Please let me know if you spot any more!

Crown Lane – this connected the back of the Crown Hotel with the new London Road near the original doctor's surgery at the old Church Tap, 116, Church Road and then along the track called 'Office Lane' to the new London Road (A40).

Crown Road – leads from Crown Square to Roman Road past the old Crown Hotel/Inn. It was the original main road from Oxford to London and was the last stagecoach stop between London and Oxford (or first from Oxford to London!) It was also the original village posting office for the mail coach. Animal markets were held monthly in the Crown Yard at the rear and a circus visited occasionally. The Crown Inn ceased trading in 1938 and became two residences.



Painting by Bernard Hickey. There are few original old buildings left in Crown Road apart from the Old Crown and some lovely cottages.



Cottages in Crown Square demolished in 1959/60. WW1 fatality Lawrence Thomas Johnson lived in 5, Crown Square

Crown Square – this is at the junction of High Street, Church Road, Mulberry Drive and Friday Lane. Most of the cottages on the south side were demolished and replaced with two detached houses in 1959/60. The south side was colloquially called Louse Hill as the smelly and messy village tannery business operated here using the stream. The neighbourhood was served by the Chequers public house on the corner of Friday Lane.

Now back to our alphabetical journey through the village (will I miss any out?):

Miller Road – named after the Miller family whose descendants have lived in Shotover House from 1871. Sarah, wife of Lt. Col James Miller, was responsible for the building of the Merry Bells (now the Village Hall) in 1888 as a Temperance Hotel to improve the lives of the people of Wheatley and keep them away from the many public houses!

Millne Way – this is now the public footpath along the crest of Bullsdown and Castle Hill to Cuddesdon (where a handful of villagers witnessed the solar eclipse in August). It used to be a short cut (avoiding Ladder Hill) to the mill at Cuddesdon – one of three water mills on the

River Thames in this area, the others being Holton and Waterstock mills.

Morland Close – a cul-de-sac of bungalows and townhouses built in the grounds of Morland House. The last house mistress when it was a children's home in the 1980s still lives there. The Fane family bought the house once the new vicarage was built in London Road and renamed the house after the new owner's wife, whose maiden name was Morland and who was a member of the Morland brewing family of Oxford.

Muddy Alley – an unofficial name for the footpath by the open Fulbrook or Foul brook which joins the junction of Crown Road/Roman Road with Ambrose Rise. Do you know of any other unofficial names for this footpath?

Muddy Lane – another unofficial name – this time for the farm access road between Castle Hill Farm and the river Thames (also called Millne Way?)

Mulberry Drive – a development of detached houses and flats built on the original grounds of Mulberry Court. Mulberry Court dates from the 17th century and was previously called The Elms until the trees were felled during Ivy Morgan's time (1943-1962). See Louse Hill in the previous magazine.

Old Road – used to be the main road to/from Oxford via Wheatley in the parish of Forest Hill with Shotover before the turnpike road was made in 1775 through part of the Shotover grounds after which the road fell into disuse. John Wesley is reputed to have been accosted by highwaymen as he travelled on this road to Oxford in 1737. Have you walked across Shotover Plain to join up the two parts of Old Road – one in Wheatley and one in Headington?



*An old mounting block
at the junction of Old Road and
Littleworth Road*

Old London Road – this was formerly known as London Way which forked here to Oxford through Wheatley and to Worcester through Islip and Woodstock. It was bypassed in 1927 when the London Road was straightened, and its 18th century milestone was moved to the junction of The Avenue and London Road.

Orchard Close – a small development of bungalows built on the old orchard of Rectory Farm.

Heritage Trail leaflets are to be found in dispensers around the village and on the website.

Check out the website www.wheatleyarchive.org.uk.

(Choose: search archive, then search by map or by keywords, decades, or word.

Multiple words in inverted commas e.g. "grocers' shops")

Steph Cox



WHEATLEY COMMUNITY LARDER

We are very grateful to all those who attend the Community Larder each week.

This is a reminder about our aims and ethos and how we like to run the larder. As you know our primary aim is to prevent excess food going into landfill. We are not a food bank, but we do occasionally donate items to the church box for a local food bank.

We would like to emphasise how important respect and fairness are to the efficient and pleasant running of the larder. All of our volunteers give up a considerable amount of their time and at some personal expense, collecting donated food from various outlets, setting it out, manning the tables, and clearing up afterwards. We very much value this as a contribution to the life of the village.

Many thanks to those who have made donations each week, enabling us to donate to many local charities. Since May we have been able to give over £460 to the following: The Scouts, The Windmill, and Thomley Hall. In July we collected money to help the victims of the earthquake in Venezuela and in September we are collecting money to support the relief efforts in Nepal.

Many thanks to anyone who has donated delicious fresh produce from their allotments.

It has been lovely to see some new faces at the larder and another reminder to come early as our food does go very quickly.

The larder is open every Thursday between 2.30pm and 3.30pm at St Mary's Church.

Penny Willmott

WHEATLEY REFUGEE SUPPORT GROUP

We have continued with our programme of films, talks, collections, and other activities.

On 23rd June, the film 'Limbo' describing life on a remote Scottish island for those awaiting a decision on their asylum applications raised over £100 for Refugee Resource in Oxford. They will use this for members of their Women's Group to learn new skills and interests.

On 26th July 20 Ukrainians living in and around Wheatley enjoyed a punting party on the river.

On 10th September, the film 'Peace by Chocolate' described a Syrian refugee family rebuilding their chocolate company into a world-wide business.

On 19th September we held another collection of clothes and bedding, for GAIN (Global Aid Network) for refugees in Eastern Europe.

Refugee Resource have offered to give a talk in Wheatley about their activities - date to be confirmed. We haven't worked so much with them since before Covid.

We continue working with Asylum Welcome on weekly activities.

Further information from wheatleyrefugeegroup@gmail.com.

Nick Vernede

Wheatley Morris Dancing Side

Wheatley Morris is Back

After 26 years, and for these dancers and musician, six months' hard practice, the Wheatley Morris Dancers were back dancing the Wheatley Tradition in Wheatley. On August Bank Holiday Monday, a Wheatley side 'danced out' for the first time in over a quarter of a century.

First of all, at the two Wheatley Care Homes where the residents showed their appreciation of the dancing. Unfortunately, at that point the weather was rather threatening, so we had to dance indoors. This poses its own difficulties as in both cases we were in danger of taking out ceiling tiles and light fittings. Indeed, on one occasion a dancer did head butt a hanging light – but luckily, she was wearing her Morris hat which offered some protection.

Then on to the garden of the Sun public house and outside the Merry Bells. At both venues, the number of spectators and their enthusiasm was above and beyond what we could have expected. Many, many thanks for your support and applause. It certainly gives the side the incentive to carry on practising throughout the winter to perfect their dancing. I suppose the concern was that on the day we would be dancing to the proverbial 'one man and his dog'.

Throughout the afternoon we were joined by two of the boy dancers, who danced on Church Road Recreation Ground on the first Bank Holiday in May (Maypole Monday). It was a delight to have them with us, and I hope they enjoyed it (boy, could one of them eat? We had to drag him away from the cake at Welford Gardens!)

None of those adults dancing that day had ever done Morris Dancing before nor in the main had much knowledge of the activity. So, we are still reaching out to anybody, male or female, experienced or no, who would like to come along and 'give it a go'. We practise on Wednesday evenings from 8.30pm to 9.30pm in the Merry Bells.

If you would like to talk about it first, please give me a ring, number and email below.

Once again thank you to all those who took the trouble to come out and watch us on the 31st.

Gareth Morris | Wheatley Morris Dancers
07713 484090 | garethmorris76@hotmail.co.uk

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- Preparing & cooking hot meals
- Anything not listed, please do not hesitate to contact us, details below:

Linda McMahon on 07715 600524 or email lindalizzymac@outlook.com

Moira McMahon on 07715 609968 or email moiramacc@outlook.com

What's On this
October November



Waterperry
Gardens

EVENT: 3rd & 4th Oct – AUTUMN FESTIVAL WEEKEND

FREE EXHIBITION: Until 1st November
– THE STITCHED GARDEN, IN THE GALLERY

HALF TERM FUN: 17th October – 1st November
– SLITHERING HALLOWEEN SNAKE HUNT

EXHIBITION: 14th November until 24th December
– WINTER GLIMMERS, IN THE GALLERY

EXHIBITION: 15th November
– GROUNDDOG DAY, SUPPORTING O.A.S.

CHRISTMAS MARKET: 21st & 22nd November

MAGICAL EVENT: 21st & 22nd November
– COME AND MEET REAL REINDEER

FAMILY FUN: 21st November until 24th December
– FIND SANTA'S REINDEER IN THE GARDENS



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**Please contact us on 01865 876750 or email us at
staff@horspathnursery.org.uk**

Visit our website for more information www.horspathnursery.org.uk

Ofsted April 2022 Rating: Good

"Practitioners focus successfully on seeking the views of individual children to plan ongoing activities. Practitioners support children's play and have a consistent approach and use good quality teaching strategies to extend children's learning."

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JACK AND THE BEANSTALK

Performance Dates

Thursday 18th, Friday 19th, Saturday 20th February
2027

Read Through for
Adults

Thursday 29th October 7:00 - 9:30pm
United Reform Church (URC) Wheatley

Sing-A-Long & Auditions
for All Ages

Sunday 1st November 12:00 - 5:00pm
Merry Bells, Wheatley

Parts available for Adults & Children
8 years old+

Notices | Clubs | Events



WHEATLEY YOUTH GROUP

**Sunday evenings
6pm-8pm**

URC in Crown Square
For 11-18 year olds in
Wheatley area
Every week in term time
[brandan.silcox](mailto:brandan.silcox@wheatleycommunity.church)
[@wheatleycommunity.church](mailto:brandan.silcox@wheatleycommunity.church)
More details on p.67

Wheatley Ancestry Day Who Are We?

St Mary's Church
**Sat 3rd Oct
10:30-12:30**
Join us in planting a
memorial tree and learn
how to trace your
ancestors
FREE ENTRY

Wheatley Gardening Club

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Wed 11th Nov
7.30pm, Merry Bells
[wheatleygardeningclub](mailto:wheatleygardeningclub@gmail.com)
[@gmail.com](mailto:wheatleygardeningclub@gmail.com)

St Mary's Church Dr Faustus Thu 22nd to Sat 24th October

7:30pm St Mary's
Tickets £14
Contact [treasurer](mailto:treasurer@stmaryswheatley.org)
[@stmaryswheatley.org](mailto:treasurer@stmaryswheatley.org),
07768 353082, or
Country Collections,
High Street



Wheatley Singers Autumn Charity Concert St. Mary's, Wheatley Sun 22nd Nov 4.30pm

Tickets £15 from choir
members, on the door, or
matthew.maier@mmaier.co.uk
07885 059633

Community Larder

Thursdays
14:30 -15:30

St Mary's Church
Help reduce food
waste and support
local causes

Companionship Café

Merry Bells
3rd Thursday of month
10:00-12:00
Calling all older adults
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APPLE PRESSING

Sat 17th October
Merry Bells

**PROVISIONAL date
due to poor harvest**

Details p.43 and
confirmation to follow

WHEATLEY WINDMILL
and SURROUNDINGS

OPEN DAY

Sunday 11th Oct
14:00 - 17:00

**Last chance to
visit the windmill**
Home-baked cake, drinks,
stalls

WHEATLEY PRODUCTIONS

Jack and the Beanstalk Adults' Read- Through

Thu 29th Oct
7:00-9:30pm
URC, OX33 1UE

wheatleyprods@gmail.com

WHEATLEY PRODUCTIONS

Jack and the Beanstalk Sing-A-Long and Auditions for All Ages (8+)

Sun 1st Nov
12:00-5:00pm
Merry Bells

wheatleyprods@gmail.com

Oxon Contemporary Opera "Poet and Plumber" Revisited

Wheatley House
OX33 1ST

Sat 3rd October
7:30pm

See page 54 for details
Tickets £10
tickets

[@oxcontemporaryopera.org](http://oxcontemporaryopera.org)

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Wheatley URC

Sunday Tea

First Sunday of month
14:30 to 16:00

Come to meet and
make friends with
tea, cakes, and chat
in the **URC Hall**

St Mary's Ladies Guild

2:15pm URC Hall
Fourth Tuesday in month

Hear speakers touching
on many subjects and
charities
Open to all

Mary John 872909

Day by Day

MONDAY

Wheatley Oaks FC | Holton Playing Fields | 19:00-20:00 | Women 30+ | enquiries.wofc@gmail.com

Mindfulness Sitting Group | URC | 08:50-09:40 | 01865 876288 | jmarkgwilliams@gmail.com

Friends of Wheatley Library Fibre Group | 1st & 3rd in month | 14:00-16:00

Beaver Scouts | Scout Hut Holloway Rd. | Term time 18:00-19:00 | 07962 243216

Messy Monday | Maple Tree Centre | 10:00-11:30 | info@mapletree.org.uk

Twins Club | Maple Tree Centre | 14:00-16:00 | info@mapletree.org.uk

Badminton Club | Park Sports Centre | 20:00-22:00 | 07769 827335

Zumba | Wheatley Primary | 19:00-20:00 | Maz: 07773 651154 | mmccann36b@hotmail.com

Move Together Seated Exercise | Merry Bells | 14:00-15:00 | info@flowfitness.org.uk

SOMA Yoga | Merry Bells | 18:00-19:00 | megankentx@gmail.com

TUESDAY

Wheatley Library | Open 14:00-19:00

Rugby Club Seniors Training | Wheatley Playing Field | 19:00 | To book 07768 300314

Wheatley Women's Institute | Merry Bells | 3rd in month | 19:15 | wheatleywi@oxfordshirewi.co.uk

Wheatley Singers | URC Hall | 19:15-21:00 | 07769 037110 | All welcome

Wheatley Gardening Club | Merry Bells | 2nd in month | 19:30

Flow Fitness Pilates | Merry Bells | 10:00-11:00 | info@flowfitness.org.uk

Smart Start | Maple Tree Centre | 09:30-11:30 | info@mapletree.org.uk

Merry Bells Coffee Room | 10:00-12:00 | 01865 873996 | All welcome

St Mary's Ladies Guild | URC Hall | 4th in month | 14:15 | 01865 872909 | All welcome



WHEATLEY CARE SCHEME



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WEDNESDAY

Parish Surgery | Parish Office, High Street | 09:30-11:30

Maple Babies | Maple Tree Centre | 09:30-12:00 | info@mapletree.org.uk

Wheatley Library | Open 09:30-13:00 & 14:00-17:00

Vinyasa Yoga | Merry Bells | 09:30-10:30 | sparkyoga1111@gmail.com | 07769 584255

Pop-up Pilates | Merry Bells | 18:00 & 19:00 | info@pop-up-pilates.com | 07731 321991

Cub Scouts | Scout Hut Holloway Rd. | 18:45-20:15 | 01865 874284 | Boys & Girls Age 8-10½

Guides & Rangers | St Mary's | Term time 19:00-20:30 | Age 10+ | wheatley.guides@yahoo.co.uk

Brownies | St Mary's | Term time 17:30-19:00 | Age 7-9 | 1stwheatleybrownies@gmail.com

Rainbows | St Mary's | Term time 16:30-17:30 | Age 4-7 | wheatleyrainbows@gmail.com

Merry Bells Coffee Room | 10:00-12:00 | 01865 873996 | All welcome

Football Fitness | Tiger's Retreat, Garsington | 19:00-20:00 | yohannadam@yahoo.co.uk | Age 30+

Midday Holy Communion | St Mary's Church | 12:00 | vicar@stmaryswheatley.org

THURSDAY

Mindfulness Sitting Group | URC | 08:50-09:40 | 01865 876288 | jmarkgwilliams@gmail.com

Wheatley Walks | Bus Shelter, Top of Holloway | 10:00-11:00 | 01865 873430

Seated Pilates | Merry Bells | 11:30-12:30 | info@pop-up-pilates.com | 07731 321991

Prayers for the World | URC | 10:00-10:30 | 1st in month

Morning Tea or Coffee | URC | 10:30-12:00 | 1st & 3rd in month | Bring a friend

Memory Cafe | URC Hall | 10:00-12:30 | 2nd in month | laurencelalanne99@gmail.com

Wheatley Library | Open 14:00-17:00

Digital Helper | Wheatley Library | 14:30-15:30 | wheatley.library@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Community Larder & Café | St Mary's Church | 14:30-15:30

Time to Rhyme | Maple Tree Centre | 09:30-11:30 | info@mapletree.org.uk

The Learning Leaf | Maple Tree Centre | 14:00-16:00 | info@mapletree.org.uk

Maple Tree at Forest Hill | Forest Hill Village Hall | 10:30-12:00 | info@mapletree.org.uk

Wheatley Village Archive | Wheatley Library | 14:00-16:30 | 01865 425909

Rugby Club Seniors | Wheatley Playing Field | 19:00 | To book 07768 300314

Explorer Scouts | Scout Hut Holloway Rd. | 19:00-21:00 | 07745 285938 | Age 14½-18

Day by Day

FRIDAY

Wheatley Library | Open 09:30-13:00 & 14:00-18:00

Rhymetime | Wheatley Library | 10:00-10:30 | Ages 0-5

Little Learners | Maple Tree Centre | 10:00-11:30 | info@mapletree.org.uk

Scouts | Scout Hut Holloway Rd. | 19:00-21:00 | 07745 285938 | Boys & girls age 10½-14

St. Mary's Bell Tower Practice | St. Mary's Church | 19:30-21:00 | 01865 872250

Merry Bells Coffee Room | 10:00-12:00 | 01865 873996 | All welcome

Martial Arts | Primary School Hall | 07731 512682 | Ages 3-7 | mrsfox@mattfiddes.com

SATURDAY

Wheatley Library | Open 09:30-13:00

Storytime | Wheatley Library | 10:00-10:30 | Ages 3-7

Family Fun | Maple Tree Centre | 3rd in month | 10:00-11:30 | info@mapletree.org.uk

Scrabble Club | Location varies | 1st in month | 19:30 | 01865 872628

Our Lady of Lourdes RC Church | 01865 762433 | corpuschristi.oxford@rcaob.org.uk

- Vigil Mass | Our Lady of Lourdes, Crown Rd. | 18:00

SUNDAY

Wheatley Minis Football | Holton Rugby Club | 09:00-10:00 | Ages 4-7 | 07756 608744

St Mary's Church | 01865 872224 | wardens@stmaryswheatley.org

- Holy Communion | 08:00
- Parish Eucharist | 10:00
- Parish Praise Service | 1st Sunday in month | 10:00
- Family Choral Evensong | 17:30

United Reformed Church | 01865 803859 | secretary@wheatleyurc.org.uk

- Morning Worship | 10:00-11:00 followed by coffee | Communion 1st Sun of month
- Pulse Wheatley Youth Group | Every week term time | 18:00-20:00
- Afternoon Tea | 1st in Month | 14:30-16:00

Wheatley Community Church | office@wheatleycommunitychurch.org

- Wheatley Primary School | 10:30



THE WHEATLEY SOCIETY

After a break in August, the Wheatley Society's 2026–27 programme resumed in September with a visit to the BMW Mini works in Cowley. To me, there is an element of mystery to the huge works which lies just over the hill from us, and so it was fascinating and revealing to go inside and see the impressive, streamlined processes that go into making a car.



Society members on guided walk, Jarn Mound, Boars Hill

The society's series of lectures, visits, and activities continues in October and November. Committee member Caroline Sheriff is leading a Craft Afternoon in the Merry Bells on Thursday 8th October at 2 pm, when a number of different crafts will be demonstrated. I believe that Caroline is taking her spinning wheel with her, and others will give introductions to their own crafts. On Friday 23rd October in the evening (note the date, not as printed in the WS programme) Mike Palmer is giving a talk entitled Arctic to Antarctic. Mike has travelled extensively throughout the world and worked for the Met Office in the Falkland Islands, as well as visiting Antarctica.

There are two events in November for your diaries. On Friday 6th at 7.00 in the Merry Bells is the annual general knowledge Clever Clogs Quiz, for teams formal and informal. On Wednesday 25th November is a 2.00 pm visit to the Map Room in the Weston Library (part of the Bodleian) where Map Librarian Nick Millea will have on display and will introduce a variety of old maps of Wheatley and the surrounding area. Details will be e-mailed nearer the time.

Do come along to our events; all are welcome. If you would like to join the Society (subscription £5 a year) please contact the Secretary, Nigel Banks (sec.wheatleysociety@gmail.com). All events are also open to non-members unless otherwise stated (cost £2).



In July we welcomed Gita Konschak from the charity Supershoes. This is a small charity that none of us had heard of, but what a wonderful charity it is, bringing joy to children who have been diagnosed with cancer. Gita is one of a 300 strong team of very talented artists who hand-paint the trainers specifically for a particular child. Whatever the child loves in life is captured, be it cartoon characters, sports teams, animals, tv programmes or the family pet dog. Even Gary Barlow and Harry Potter appeared on some. They make the child feel special and help to restore confidence and enhance their physical and emotional wellbeing. We saw two very moving video clips of children receiving their shoes: one showed a young girl who was thrilled to see her pet dog on her shoes, and the other a three year old boy who had his favourite tv characters on his. His excitement was a joy to behold.

The charity is run almost entirely by volunteers, including the artists. Since its beginning in 2013 it has brought happiness and empowerment to over 7500 children. They have a website www.supershoes.org.uk and they are also on Facebook. Take a look as there is a gallery showcasing the wonderful work that they do.

Our next meetings are:

20th October

Seated Zumba with Thea Rogers

17th November

Christmas Craft Evening.

Our meetings are held on the third Tuesday of each month at 7.15 pm. Visitors are welcome at most of our meetings. A suggested donation of £5 includes refreshments and a raffle ticket.

HISTORY SNIPPETS: Oct/Nov 1926

It was suggested that the dresses made for the pageant be advertised in the WI magazine "Home & Country" for sale or hire. The Federation proposed allocation of funds raised from the pageant. £300 to be invested and the interest (about 15/-) to be used to provide good lecturers for all institutes in the county. The remainder to be used to improve office facilities. This was carried unanimously. A question was raised at the committee meeting as to the safety of the Merrie Bells, enquiries to be made to the District Council. Nowadays fire safety instructions are read out at every meeting.

Stephanie Brooklyn

wheatleywi@oxfordshirewi.co.uk



NATIONAL EMERGENCY BRIEFING ON CLIMATE, NATURE AND ECOSYSTEM COLLAPSE

STOP THE PLANET I WANT TO GET OFF! Trouble is, there is only one Earth... and we are experiencing a 6th Mass Extinction: the accelerated loss of species in a short geological time span. Do I care? Should I care? Do I really want to know, or should I bury my head in the sand and get on with life... business as usual... while ignoring the increasing threats to our existence?

Perhaps there are strategies we can adopt to become more resilient. The “People’s Emergency Briefing” may answer some of these questions: a film summarising the problems, but also showing that we can rise to the challenge together.

The film follows the [National Emergency Briefing](http://www.nebriefing.org) (www.nebriefing.org) held in November 2025, when ten leading UK experts presented an unfiltered, evidence-based assessment of the accelerating climate and nature crisis to more than 1,200 leaders and politicians. The briefings are available on the website, with a list of local screenings.

There will be a public screening in Wheatley, which we hope to arrange in the coming months. We will involve local organisations and publicise the event on social media.

There is much to despair at in the scenarios laid out, and the film records the shocked reactions of those who attended. But there are also words of hope, if we act swiftly.

Governments cannot expect citizens alone to turn the tanker around without a national survival strategy to guide us and help us tread more lightly on the planet. Despite decades of warnings from climate scientists, governments have been slow to act. The dilemma is that reducing unnecessary consumption, driving fewer miles or taking fewer long-distance trips also reduces tax revenues.

What are the alternatives? In January 2026, the UK Joint Intelligence Committee released a [Nature Security Assessment](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/nature-security-assessment-on-global-biodiversity-loss-ecosystem-collapse-and-national-security) (www.gov.uk/government/publications/nature-security-assessment-on-global-biodiversity-loss-ecosystem-collapse-and-national-security) warning that global biodiversity loss and critical ecosystem collapse pose severe, cascading risks to national security, economic stability and domestic food supplies. What a legacy for future generations...

APPLE HARVESTING AND JUICING EVENT: Our apple-picking team have been out and about, but the harvest has been quite poor. Our provisional annual juicing date is **Saturday 17th October**; nearer the time we will decide whether there are enough apples to make juice.

THE NEXT SWAP SHOP will be on **Saturday 23rd January 2027**. Before then, try Wheatley Freebies’ Facebook page or charity shops for unwanted items. We normally take a van-load to Redbridge Recycling Centre after each event, so the more you can pass on beforehand, the better. Damaged items cannot be passed on, so please put them in your black bin and help produce electricity instead.

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The usual surgery opening hours are Monday to Friday 8am to 6.30pm
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Enhanced access hours are offered outside these times, please speak to one of the
care navigators on 01865 872448 for more information.

When the surgery is closed, please contact the Out of Hours service by phoning 111

Visit the **Morland House Surgery website** for a wealth of information and guidance on
managing a vast number of health conditions, symptoms, and treatments:

www.morland-house.co.uk.

For example:

- **Winter vaccinations** from MHS and the NHS are available to provide protection against flu and COVID-19. Vulnerable and eligible groups will have been contacted by MHS to book their appointments. To check eligibility, visit the MHS website.
- The **NHS App**, which is free and secure, has recently been updated making it simpler and easier to manage your healthcare.
- **Free Global Health Insurance Card** - planning to travel overseas then ensure you have your UK GHIC card
- **Meningitis and septicaemia** - symptoms and protection; eligibility of young people and students for a free Meningitis B vaccine
- **Are you a Carer?** - find help and support
- **Your Medical Records and Test Results** - guidance on how to access this information.
- **Pharmacy First Service (PFS)**, whereby pharmacies can treat directly seven common health conditions.
- **Expansion of RSV vaccine** to those aged 80 and over
- **The Direct Route** - services you can access without seeing a GP
- **Faster Access to Help for Joint and Back Pain**
- **Group Consultation Clinics** - successful group clinics for menopause and hypertension
- **Breast + Cervical Cancer Screening**

The Chair of the Patient Participant Group (PPG) has contacted local parish councils regarding raising **funds to improve the state of the MHS car park**.

Ordering Repeat Prescriptions: Please use the NHS App or log into your account on the NHS website. For more information on ordering, visit the 'prescriptions' page on our website.

Medicine waste costs the NHS around £300 million/year. Only order the medicines you need. Once medicine leaves a pharmacy it can no longer be re-used even if unopened.



Wheatley Pharmacy

Supporting Community Health and Wellbeing

Autumn is here, and there's plenty going on at your village pharmacy. Here's what Wheatley residents need to know this month.

Flu and COVID-19 vaccinations

It's that time of year again. Make sure you're protected before winter sets in. From 1 October 2026: NHS flu vaccinations will be available to:

- those aged 65 and over, or aged 18 to 65 in a clinical risk group
- residents of long-stay care homes
- carers receiving Carer's Allowance, or the main carer of an elderly or disabled person
- close contacts of immunocompromised people, people experiencing homelessness, and frontline health and social care workers.

NHS COVID-19 vaccinations will be available to those aged 75 and over, residents in care homes for older adults, and anyone aged 6 months or over who is immunosuppressed.

Not eligible on the NHS? We also offer private vaccinations: Flu £24, COVID-19 £99, or both for £119.

Book at www.wheatleypharmacy.com or call 01865 874047. Walk-ins are welcome when capacity allows, but booking guarantees your slot.

Order repeat prescriptions on the NHS App

Still dropping a paper repeat slip at the surgery? The NHS App lets you order from home, day or night, with your request going straight into the surgery's system. Your prescription will be ready to collect at Wheatley Pharmacy four working days later.

It's free and secure for anyone aged 13 and over registered with a GP in England. Search "NHS App" in the App Store or Google Play. Need help? Pop in and our team can show you.

Think Pharmacy First

You don't always need a GP appointment. Our pharmacists can assess and, where clinically appropriate, supply prescription medicines for seven common conditions:

Earache - ages 1–17, Impetigo - age 1+, Infected insect bites - age 1+, Shingles - age 18+, Sinusitis - age 12+, Sore throat - age 5+, Uncomplicated urinary tract infection - women aged 16–64.

No appointment or referral is needed. Consultations take place privately, and the usual NHS prescription charge applies only if you normally pay. If you need a doctor, we'll point you in the right direction.

We also offer blood pressure checks, contraception, stop-smoking support and advice on minor illness. Before joining the 08:00 scramble for a GP appointment, think pharmacy first.

Shop floor renovation

If you've visited recently, you'll have noticed work underway on our shop floor. We expect the renovation to be finished by the time you read this. All services, including prescriptions, consultations and vaccinations, are continuing as normal regardless.

Thank you for bearing with us. We think you'll like the result.

Wheatley Pharmacy | Telephone: 01865 874047 | www.wheatleypharmacy.com

Your local pharmacy team is here for the whole village. Pop in, we're always happy to help.

The Wheatley Pharmacy Team

Wheatley Gardening Club

October is a beautiful time of year with trees changing colour. Your lawns are now ready for autumn maintenance; aerating and scarifying will relieve compaction and remove dead grass, moss, and thatch. Planting spring flowering bulbs such as Crocus, Daffodils, and Hyacinths can begin now.

As the final leaves fall from the trees in November tender plants will need protecting from the cold so move them to a sheltered spot. Winter can be a tough time for birds so keep the water and food well topped up.

There is no meeting in October but the Annual General Meeting of the Wheatley Gardening Club will take place at the Merry Bells on Wednesday 11th November commencing at 7.30pm when some important decisions will have to be made.

Meetings are held at the Merry Bells commencing at 7.30pm.

Non-members are welcome to attend for a fee of £3.00 per meeting.

Queries and information: wheatleygardeningclub@gmail.com

Adrian Shepherd | Secretary



“Poet and Plumber” Revisited

Oxfordshire Contemporary Opera will stage performances of “Poet and Plumber” in St Mary’s Parish Church, Wheatley during 14th – 16th July, 2027. “Poet and Plumber” was written originally by Kit Arnold with piano accompaniment by Roger Simmonds and performed in Wheatley Park School in 2010. Local talent, of which there is no shortage in Wheatley, performed the piece. Now it has been revised and fully orchestrated by Roger Simmonds and will be performed and directed by a cast of young professionals. Rehearsals are scheduled to start in November beginning the process of bringing the opera to life.

As an introduction to this opera OCO will present at **7.30pm on October 3rd 2026** an evening with Marcus Davis-Orrom being interviewed by Rachel Cave. They both performed in the original version. Their conversation will be illustrated with video excerpts from the original performance accompanied by refreshments from the bar.



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Wheatley Gardening Club 84th Annual Show

A drought summer can make it hard to grow award winning produce, but Wheatley Gardening Club members managed to have yet another successful Annual Show.

Here's the list of trophy winners:

Horticultural - Fruit & Vegetables

The Basil Hurdley Trophy | Best Potato exhibit | Terry Brooklyn

The Desmond Coveley Award | 1st Runner bean exhibit | Jim Reilly

The Fred Davies Cup | Best Tomato exhibit | John Morrison

The George Bowler Award | Best onion exhibit | Jim Reilly

The Wilfred Sheldon Trophy | 1st Collection of Vegetables | Petula Banyard

The R F White Challenge Shield | Most points in 'Heaviest & Longest' | Jim Reilly

The RHS Banksian Medal | Most points in Horticultural- Fruit & Veg | Sam Jackson

Horticultural - Flowers & Plants

The George Smith 'Countryman' Trophy | 1st Single Rose | Sam Jackson

The Oscar Wilde Society Trophy | 1st Carnation, single specimen | Not awarded

Dr Orchards Cup | Best floral exhibit | Joyce Edwards

The Markham Silver Jubilee Trophy | Best Pot Plant exhibit | Sam Jackson

The Wyevale Garden Centre Trophy | Most points in Horticultural- Flowers | Joyce Edwards

Domestic - Flower Arranging & Handicraft

The Jubilee Trophy | Best handicraft exhibit | Julie Mobbs

Domestic - Cookery

The Ridge Trophy | Best Cake | Neil Ramsden

The Wilfred Sheldon Rose Bowl | Most points in the Domestic Classes | Sam Jackson

The Wheatley VPA Preserve Cup | Most points in Preserves | Sam Jackson/ Petula Banyard

Photography

The Best Kept Garden | Best Kept Garden | Julie Mobbs

The Harold Pigeon Award | Best Photograph | Sam Jackson

The Millennium Trophy | Most points in Domestic - Flowers/Cookery/Photography | Lucy Collinson

Junior Awards

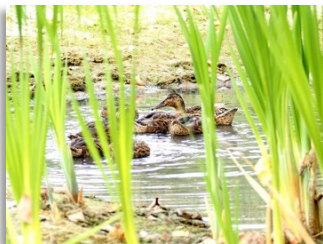
Harding Cup | Best Junior Garden | Grace Collinson

Taff Morgan-Jones Cup | Best Photograph | Isabel Collinson

Lucy Collinson | Show Secretary

WILDLIFE ON THE HOWE

The Howe consists of 26 acres of nature-rich community green space in our village. We care for it as a nature reserve: a protected area managed to conserve local wildlife and habitats, while creating a natural space for everyone to enjoy.



Conservation Focus: Planting trees and renovating hedges creates food and shelter for thousands of species, while conservation grazing with sheep and leaving Tombs Field uncut keeps the grass sward varied. This benefits grasshoppers, butterflies, spiders, beetles, pollinators and many other insects. Longer grass also protects small mammals such as fawns, hedgehogs and field mice and provides safe nesting for ground-nesting birds. Our wildlife ponds in Tombs Field are home to ducks, herons, dragonflies, newts and frogs.

Research and Education: The Howe is also used for local scientific study and environmental monitoring. It's a wonderful place for nursery and primary school children to visit and use as a learning resource, while Wheatley Park School students volunteer with us as part of their Duke of Edinburgh awards.

This summer we have been carrying out insect surveying and sampling in Tombs Field with Shotover Wildlife, while volunteers have recorded flora and fauna on our iNaturalist account. A second survey of aquatic life in and around our ponds will be completed in the next six months.



Visitor Access and Enjoyment: The Howe is open to all and we actively want everyone to visit – including responsible dog owners. All dogs must be on leads in all areas and all poo picked up. This applies to all pooches, however 'well behaved', including where no livestock are grazing, such as the allotments, memorial area and Tombs Field.

Sadly, a small number of local dog owners have repeatedly refused to put their dogs on a lead when asked. Even docile dogs could disturb or injure our pregnant sheep and lambs, or other wildlife. Flea and worming treatments are so toxic to aquatic life that dogs entering our wildlife ponds can kill everything in them. That's why we ask all visitors to follow the Countryside Code and 'Respect, Protect, and Enjoy' our village's precious wildlife haven.

Would you like to get involved?

We're constantly on the lookout for new volunteers. If you love nature or DIY, we'd love you to join us. Our friendly Volunteer Sessions run regularly from September to June. No experience or specialist knowledge required. Contact us to find out more.

Photos captured on The Howe, Summer 2026, by E. Madden.

Maggie Fyffe | Chair, The Howe Trust



Happy Autumn from The Maple Tree!

It is raining today as I write this and the children have long gone back to school, so summer is definitely a distant memory!

We had a busy summer despite the heat - a big thank you to all who came to The Maple Tree and an extra thank you to the families who came to our Outreach Little Learners this summer at Great Milton, Stanton St. John, Holton, Garsington and Worminghall. It was a lot of fun exploring other venues in pretty villages. This was made possible by a grant from The HDH Wills 1965 Charitable Trust. We thank them for their generous support!

There is something for everyone at our sessions this month:

Mondays: Messy Monday at 10:00-11:30am and Twins' Club at 2:00-4:00pm

Tuesdays: Smart Start at 9:30-11:30am

Wednesdays: Maple Babies at 9:30am-12:00pm

Thursdays: Time to Rhyme at 9:30-11:30am

The Maple Tree at Forest Hill Village Hall from 10:30am-12:00pm

The Learning Leaf at 2:00-4:00pm at The Maple Tree

Fridays: Little Learners at 10:00-11:30am

Every third Saturday: Family Fun at 10:00-11:30am

Another reminder coming all too soon is our Christmas Tree Sale. Our trees last year were fabulous – the needles just did not drop! Watch for posters and our social media for details in the coming weeks.

We are here to help, if you need advice or support:

01865 236700

info@mapletree.org.uk

www.mapletree.org.uk

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📷 @wheatleynewclub

What's Coming Up

Saturday 17th October

Jacqueline Faye

Raising Money for Air Ambulance

From 7:30pm

Friday 30th October

Children's Halloween Party

5pm - 8pm

Saturday 21st November

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From 8:30pm

Saturday 28th November

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From 8:30pm

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St Mary's Church

01865 872224 | vicar@stmaryswheatley.org

Hello Friends

Hello from St. Mary's Church as I sit listening to some very welcome rain! I'm also mindful that rain may bring anxiety to those vulnerable to flooding in our village. As our wonderful parish council works hard behind the scenes to safeguard against flooding, we also need to look out for and support one another.

We all face different challenges and will often either be supporting others or needing support ourselves. That can mean listening and bearing with each other, even when our views differ or we can't 'fix' things. Simply being 'with' each other can help more than we think.

I've been encouraged by the ways we do this in Wheatley, whether through the weekly larder, cafés and groups, supporting our schools and businesses, or simply sharing a cuppa with a friend.

During the summer holidays we joined other Wheatley churches to run a holiday club for local children. It was a wonderful time of getting to know each other and sharing our skills and enthusiasm in serving our village.

On **Saturday 3rd October**, St. Mary's hosts the village Ancestry Day, with opportunities to explore local heritage and family trees. We will also plant a remembrance tree in the churchyard, creating a new space where loved ones' ashes can be interred.

Our team is also working to make the churchyard safer and tidier. The Diocese of Oxford has asked us to remove items that do not comply with Church of England regulations. Notices explain more, and we would really value your support as we improve the space for visitors and volunteers.

For more information and service times, visit stmaryswheatley.org.

ALL are welcome!! This is YOUR church, so please feel free to get in touch or come and say hello.

Rev'd Clare Joyce

Wheatley United Reformed Church

01865 803859 | secretary@wheatleyurc.org.uk

URC News

I am Reverend Robert Sheard, and my wife is Heather. We moved into Littleworth in the middle of April this year. I am a Minister for the Bernwode partnership, so I cover Wheatley, Brill, Marsh Gibbon, Twyford, and Banbury; all are URCs.

I have been in ministry for 23 years, starting in Cumbria with five churches, then we moved to Lincolnshire, starting with two and then having a third, then onto Suffolk, starting with four then to five, a URC/Methodist Church then took a special (continued on p.67...)

ministry with a URC/ Methodist, and a URC, before we were called to come to Oxford.

I am very into ecumenical working and building relations with other denominations.

Both Heather and I enjoy visiting stately homes and gardens, looking around antique shops, charity shops, historical buildings, and museums.

We have 2 black pussy cats; one is called Faith and one is called Hope.

Please do speak to us if you see us out and about as we are still learning who is who, and where you belong.

God Bless.

Robert and Heather Sheard

Wheatley Community Church

office@wheatleycommunitychurch.org

PULSE - The Wheatley Youth Group

Sunday nights at PULSE – Wheatley's youth group – have been a highlight of the week throughout the teenage years for my four kids. My third son leaves home for uni this month, outward looking, ready to live an independent life, make friends, and serve others. His time at Pulse was a significant influence on that.

They're fortunate. Recent surveys show 1/3 of young people report high or very high feelings of loneliness, nearly 2/3 report having no access to structured youth activities in their local area, and 3/4 spend most of their free time on screens. Since 2010 public funding for youth services in England & Wales fell by 70%, losing >4,500 youth workers. This trend continues. And yet 93% of young people who have attended a youth centre say it has made a positive difference to their lives, learning how to relate to adults, to peers, to explore ideas and develop identity.

But youth in Wheatley Area have access to a great local youth group each Sunday evening in term time, run by fantastic volunteers from the youth teams of Wheatley Area Churches. Each week there are games, table tennis, pizza, and a chance to hang out and chat and be themselves. Each term there's a trip out and a film night. It's open to everyone, subs are £5 per ½ term, the first session's free, and you can just turn up. Come on! What are you waiting for?

Find out more: brandan.silcox@wheatleycommunitychurch

Curious? Get in touch to find out more.

www.wheatleycommunitychurch.org,

or email us at office@wheatleycommunitychurch.org.

Tim Hinks | Pastor

Our Lady of Lourdes

01865 762433 | corpuschristi.oxford@rcaob.org.uk

OLL and Community for the Common Good

Community is at the heart of all religions and essential to Christianity: the Bible and Church traditions have much to teach us. Throughout the Old and New Testaments people lived in communities, from the Israelites in the desert, to Jesus with his disciples, to the new Christian communities in the letters of St. Paul, who gave enduring advice for living together and contributing to the common good.

As society becomes frighteningly fragmented, churches are among the few places where people of different ages, social classes and countries can meet. Whatever their differences, they provide friendship and help for those needing support locally and beyond.

Reflecting recently on his new book, *The Future Starts With Us*, on Radio 4, former Prime Minister Gordon Brown spoke of the connection between the erosion of civic life and the fracturing of the rules-based international system. Asked about the source of his solutions, he replied, “Kirkcaldy, because it was a community.” His hometown had shaped his view of the world.

Margaret Thatcher’s infamous “there’s no such thing as society” perhaps raised a red flag for communities to be strengthened, particularly when so much contact now takes place on social media ... often in groups too widespread to build community within an identifiable locality.

We feel blessed in Wheatley to be surrounded by church communities through Wheatley Area Churches (WAC), particularly, for us, Our Lady of Lourdes. Other Wheatley organisations, friends and neighbours also contribute to that sense of community. At difficult times, we have found their thoughts, prayers, love and help very supportive.

We might almost say, like Gordon Brown, that our later life has been shaped by the community of Wheatley ... for which we give thanks.

John and Maggie Guy

Wheatley Community Church

office@wheatleycommunitychurch.org

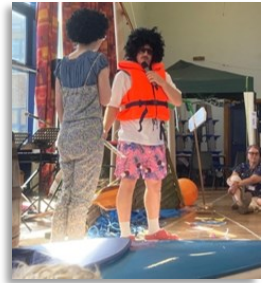
Wheatley Holiday Club 2026



From 25th to 28th August Wheatley Primary School was again filled with children enjoying the annual Holiday Club, led by volunteers from the Wheatley Churches and from our local community. There was a strong nautical theme with a shipwreck, undersea-themed gazebos and a giant whale creation. Each morning was packed with

high energy dancing, music, comedy, teaching from the book of (continued on p.69...)

Jonah, games, and crafts to make and take home. The club strives to be accessible to all and really provided a safe, fun, welcoming atmosphere for every child. Through the churches' generosity it's provided free to any primary school children in the area, including the celebratory family BBQ on the last day. Many in the Wheatley area will have fond memories of the past 20 years of holiday clubs. After a pause during COVID it's so great to see this growing again in our midst. Thank you to all who made it happen.



If you'd like to know about plans for next year's club email us at office@wheatleycommunitychurch.org.

Helen Mendis

Wheatley Area Churches

gordon.ewbank@gmail.com

Wheatley Area Churches

A South African friend of mine once said that the thing he loved most about England was the changing seasons with their shifting rhythm of light and dark. Every month brings a new and fresh perspective on the community around us. To quote the Bible "See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it?"

So it is with the rhythm of church activities here in Wheatley. The focus of our collaborative efforts over the summer was the highly successful 'Shipwrecked' Holiday Club in late August, featuring the adventures of Jonah and his encounter with the whale. The WAC team managed to transform the Primary School hall into a suitably fishy world and much fun was had by all. Planning for next year's Club will start in the new year. Watch this space and sign up early!

Autumn has a more reflective feel, and our focus will be on Remembrance Sunday as we plan together for the joint churches service at St Mary's on 8th November. Beyond that we're quickly into advent and the sense of approaching joy that comes with the anticipation of the birth of Jesus Christ, our Lord & Saviour, and all that Christmas brings. In parallel, there are the contrasting but regular WAC services at our local Care Homes and the weekly Pulse youth club, held at the URC on Sunday evenings. All run by combined teams from our local churches.

I hope that you'll be able to join us for one or more of these highlights in our annual rhythm of collaborative church events.

Gordon Ewbank | WAC Chair

Royal British Legion Wheatley Branch

This year's appeal runs from **Thursday 22nd October** through to **Wednesday 11th November**. During that time collecting tins and boxes of poppies will be located in various retail outlets throughout the village. Please give generously.

We will also have tables at ASDA and Welcome Break Service area with poppies and other merchandise available. To that end volunteers are required. I will be contacting those who have kindly volunteered in the past. But more volunteers are always needed so if you could offer a couple of hours during that period, please contact me on the telephone number/email address below.

This year we are holding a new event in aid of the Appeal – Darts at the New Club.

This will be held on **Sunday 25th October from 1.00pm**. There will be a tournament, entry fee £6.00 and also dart related games/challenges, £1.00 entry fee. For further information please contact the New Club or Andy Masterman at andy@andy-masterman.co.uk.

Remembrance Sunday 8th November, St Mary's Church at 3.00pm. All welcome. Followed by the wreath laying and 2-minute silence at the War Memorial in the Memorial Gardens

Armistice Day Wednesday 11th November at 11.00am at the War Memorial in the Memorial Gardens. Short service and 2-minute silence. All welcome.

Branch Meetings are held at the New Club – doors open 11.30am

Thursday October 15th - Branch AGM

Wednesday December 9th – Christmas lunch (Details to follow) – note change of day

If you wish to stay for the lunch, please contact Laurence Ray on:

laurence.ray950@gmail.com.

Unfortunately, due to the low take up, the decision has been taken to discontinue the Saturday meetings. However, the hunt for new members goes on. Remember, you do not have to have served in the Armed Forces to be a member of the Royal British Legion.

Please contact me, Laurence, or Andy for further information.

Gareth Morris (07713 484090 or garethmorris76@hotmail.co.uk)

Gareth Morris | Branch Secretary | Poppy Appeal Organiser

SODC Waste Collections — October & November 2026

Collection day Monday unless *changed	Which bins and other items?
Oct 12th & 26th Nov 9th & 23rd	Green, brown, food, oil, textiles, batteries
Oct 5th & 19th Nov 2nd, 16th & 30th	Grey, food, oil, small electricals

Key Contacts

Local Governance:

Oxfordshire County Council | 01865 792422 | oxfordshire.gov.uk
County Councillor Tim Bearder | 07789 754727 | tim.bearder@oxfordshire.gov.uk
District Councillor Peter Ramsdale | peter.ramsdale@southoxon.gov.uk
South Oxfordshire DC | 01235 422422 | southoxon.gov.uk
Planning Applications | 01235 422600 | planning@southoxon.gov.uk
Wheatley Parish Council | 01865 875615 | clerk@wheatleyparishcouncil.gov.uk

Local information:

Wheatley Post Office | 0845 722 3344 | Open Mon-Fri 09:00-17:30, Sat 09:00-13:00
The Maple Tree (Children's Centre) | 01865 236700 | laura@mapletree.org.uk
The Merry Bells Village Hall | 07427 343080 | merrybells.org.uk
The Howe Trust | Chair | Maggie Fyffe | 07889 639986 | howetrust.org.uk
Wheatley Library | 01865 815204 | wheatley.library@oxfordshire.gov.uk
Wheatley Park Sports Centre | 01865 872128 | better.org.uk/venues/park
Wheatley Park School | 01865 872441 | wheatleypark.org
Wheatley Primary School | 01865 872366 | wheatley.oxon.sch.uk
Wheatley Good Neighbour Scheme | 07983 119925 | wheatleygns@gmail.com

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OCC Highways | 0845 310 1111 | highway.enquiries@oxfordshire.gov.uk
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Bulky Household Waste Collection | 01235 422406 | waste.team@southandvale.gov.uk
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