



Kidmore End Parish Council

Cane End

Chalkhouse Green

Gallowstree Common

Kidmore End

Tokers Green

Newsletter Winter 2025

Issue 158

Chair Report



Welcome everyone to our Winter newsletter. I, for one, am enjoying the lengthening days. I do think that when a new year starts, we can all start to feel a bit more positive. In keeping with this positive attitude, I would like to start 2025 by thanking everyone who helps to keep this parish a great place to live. I know that you will all want to join me in thanking

our Clerk, our parish councillors, the newsletter distributors, and other volunteers, for all their hard work in 2024. And I would like to wish all of you a very happy new year.

I would like to welcome Georgina McCarter as a new parish councillor from Gallowstree Common. Georgina has joined Community Speed Watch, and she will be championing measures to reduce traffic speeds in the parish.

For the eagle-eyed, there is a new food waste collection vehicle operating in Oxfordshire. I have not seen it yet, but it is all electric and is part of South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse district councils' ambition to decarbonise the waste vehicle fleet and move towards net zero. The Terberg EV ORUS will save more than 20 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent a year. This vehicle is able to compress the waste and has a lift to allow the bins to be mechanically lifted and emptied into the waste compartment, which will be quicker for the collection crew as the current food trucks are loaded by hand. The vehicle like most EVs, is also quieter than diesel and petrol vehicles.

Despite continuing communications, we are no further forward with being able to fence off the well at Kidmore End. Once we have permission from OCC Highways, this will be carried out and urgent repair works started.

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Planning

The South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse Joint Local Plan 2041 is one step closer to completion. Your parish council thinks that it is a good plan, and we are supporting it. In other news, the site identified for housing in our Neighbourhood Development Plan in Kidmore End is on the market.

Reading Third Bridge [3rd Thames Crossing and orbital road]

Reading Borough Council are committed to a policy which includes a new cross Thames travel scheme. RB Councillors formally approved the Reading Transport Strategy 2040 on 15 October 2024, despite representations sent to them by your parish council. In fact, your parish council joined forces with 5 other parish councils to send a Petition to RBC asking them to remove plans for a 3rd Thames Crossing and orbital road in the Reading Transport Strategy 2040. The other parish councils signed up to the Petition include Eye & Dunsden, Binfield Heath, Stoke Row, Highmoor, and Sonning Common. This group of parish councils has now been joined by Shiplake, Harpsden and Peppard Parish Councils.

In December 2024, your parish council consulted on the Reading Borough Council Local Plan Update November 2024. In this document there are at least 3 maps showing the proposed position for a new Thames crossing. We continue, and will continue, to oppose this policy.

There is a perceived problem of congestion in Emmer Green and Caversham. We need to explore cooperative, proportionate and deliverable solutions to help the residents of Reading, but the solution to this problem is not funnelling traffic onto the quiet lanes of south Oxfordshire.

Community Infrastructure Funds

Thank you to everyone who has been sending in their ideas for CIL money. As this newsletter goes to press, we hope that the new drive and car park surfacing works at Gallowstree Common Recreation Ground will be carried out. Please send further ideas to me or the Clerk at clerk@kepc.info.

Pavilion Works

We have carried out a condition survey of the Pavilion at Gallowstree Common. Not only has the building deteriorated since it was completed in 2011 but building standards have changed as well. This means that the pavilion requires substantial funds to bring it up to current standards and to make urgent repairs. We hope to spread the costs of urgent works out over 2 years, and implement a 5-year maintenance program, but this will have repercussions for the council budget and our precept.

Precept and Budget

I know that this subject does not interest everyone, but it is important. At the moment, your parish council has a precept of £47 000. This sounds like a lot of money, but it actually equates to £66.17 per year from the Council Tax bill for a Band D property. The average Council Tax payment attributable to a parish or town council in South Oxfordshire for a Band D property for the current financial year is £120.47, which is nearly double what Kidmore End Parish Council received this year. Inflation over the past few years has been 10% and 11%, but capping has meant that we have only been able to put the precept up by 5% in recent years. This means that the precept has been falling in real terms over the years. We now need to raise funds to pay for repairs to the pavilion and for other projects. This means that we are going to raise the precept to £60 000, a 27% increase. This sounds like a huge increase, but it means that a household in a Band D property will pay £84.48 per year or £1.62 per week (compared with £1.27 a week in the current year); an increase of 35 p a week.

Road Safety

There continues to be huge issues associated with speeding in the parish. At the parish council meeting in November, we decided to commission speed surveys in Gallowstree Common during December, timed for before the schools break up for their Christmas holidays. The new 20 mph signs have been in place for several months, long enough for everyone to know that the speed through this village has been reduced. It will be interesting to see what results we get, and whether it is just a few cars that break the speed limit, or if it is a more widespread problem.

The new community speed watch signs are up in Gallowstree Common.

We have been in contact with OCC Highways about the provision of school signs on Tokers Green Lane in Kidmore End. The good news is that we will be receiving 2 new signs, but I don't know when they will arrive, just that this job has been added to the OCC Highways work sheet.

Our Super User is doing a never-ending job of reporting potholes, so a huge thank you to her. Don't forget that you can report potholes, and overgrown hedges, to OCC Highways at <https://fixmystreet.oxfordshire.gov.uk>. Please take lots of photos to upload to the website so that OCC Highways can easily identify the problem.

Talking of hedges, if your hedge is overgrown, particularly if it is hiding Highway signs, please trim it so that road users can see the 20 mph signs, school signs and other road signs.

Biodiversity Policy

I have not been overwhelmed with volunteers who would like to help map wildlife in the parish. However, now that spring is just around the corner, I do hope that you will think hard about whether you can give a few hours a month to help. I promise that it will be fun.

Other News

Gallowstree Common are the first village in the parish to volunteer to help clean their road signs. Well done to them!

The Flower Ladies continue to lift the spirits with their lovely decorations on the wall and colourful pots outside the porch. We are lucky to have a team of talented and dedicated volunteers.

And finally, the parish boasted not one, but 2 Christmas trees this year, one by the war memorial in Kidmore End and the other on the Tokers Green Village Green. Both were beautiful, and a real testament to community spirit in the parish.

As this newsletter goes to press, I learnt that one of our regular newsletter distributors, Sue McNie, has sadly passed away. I want to express my sincere condolences to her husband, John, and to her family for their huge loss.

Caroline Aldridge chairman@kepc.info

From the District Councillor

One of the things that the District Council is particularly good at is picking up fly tipping and, wherever possible, prosecuting those responsible. Recently, Masood Khanloo, the director of a restaurant in the Cowley Road, Oxford, who was responsible for tipping waste at Shotover Country Park had to pay fines and costs totalling £8,500. This was the second time he had committed this offence, and when questioned by officers came up with a string of inconsistent accounts of how he had disposed of his waste. Other offenders who have dumped garden waste and household items across the district have been successfully traced and prosecuted. Our council officers are diligent and persistent and will rummage through dumped waste to find evidence as to who was responsible. If you see fly tipping, please contact SODC as soon as possible, so that not only can an officer check it out for evidence but also it can be picked up by our contractor as quickly as possible. This is important as one tip attracts other fly tips; I am pleased to say that there is not a huge fly tipping problem here.

Another aspect of the environmental work that the Council does is the inspection of food premises; you will have seen the Food Hygiene Ratings outside restaurants and food shops, and it is important that this work is carried out and the public is protected. Serious issues are publicised in the local press and can lead to prosecution. I understand that owners are warned and are then subject to re-inspection, failure a second time will lead to more serious action. While the notices displayed outside should show the ratings, you can check them online quite easily. Perhaps something to do while waiting for the first course!

It is not only food hygiene that can be an issue, but other environmental issues such as noise and smell, and a restaurant in Wheatley was recently fined for not fixing issues of this kind despite being warned. Another matter which SODC is responsible for is the licencing of taxis and taxi drivers. The legislation on taxis is quite detailed and is there to protect the public. On Saturday 26th September an enforcement operation was conducted, where inspections were carried out of vehicles road worthiness and the driver's compliance with the legislation. During the four-hour operation, 34 vehicles were stopped and 19 were found to be non-compliant with issues such as fare charts not displayed or drivers not wearing their badge. Police took action against 5 drivers and issued fixed penalty notices.

The Council is responsible for the licencing of street traders. The District Councils policy in respect of this matter is under review and has been out for consultation. The aim of the policy is, as always, to ensure the safety of the public and the maintenance of a well-ordered public realm

More information about these matters can be found on the SODC Website.

All of this important and unsung aspect of the District Council function is for the protection of the public and enables us all to be more confident that we can live safe and happy lives in our area.

Councillor Peter Dragonetti, District Councillor for Kidmore End, Whitchurch, Goring Heath and Mapledurham

Editors note: For the second time, I asked for a contribution to the newsletter from our MP, Freddie van Mierlo, but sadly I received no reply. SR.

CIRDIC (Churches in Reading Drop-In Centre)

Working to help the homeless

In addition to your generous donations of food and clothing throughout 2024, your financial donations during Lent together with those from many other sources, have ensured that CIRDIC is able to continue to provide its excellent services to the homeless for at least another year. I thought it would be helpful to include CIRDIC's Mission Statement to give you a broader picture of their approach.

"To welcome as Christ welcomed those who are in need.

To offer love, hope and compassion within a Christian ethos in order to restore human dignity self-respect and well-being.

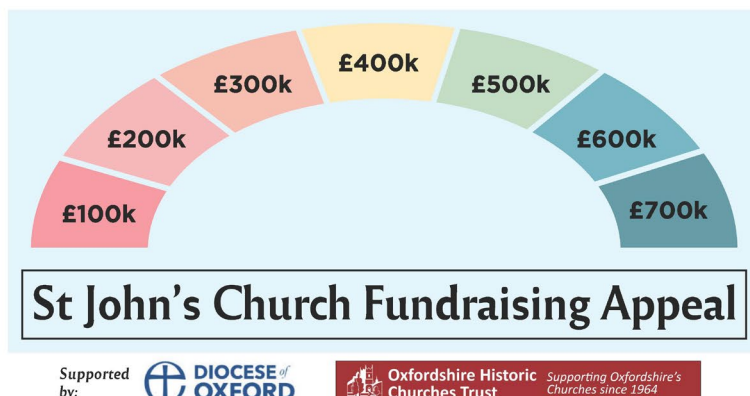
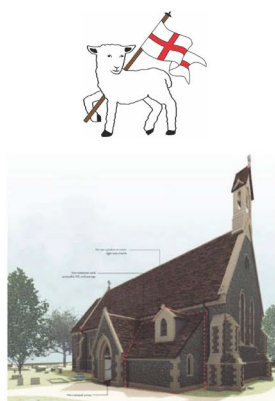
To work together within our community to increase awareness of our shared responsibility towards the marginalised in our society."

Any food, clothing and toiletries you are able to spare in the winter months will be much appreciated. A collection box will be available in the porch at St John the Baptist Church, Kidmore End, for your donations.

Many thanks

Peter Blake

The Parish Church



I am writing this at the beginning of Advent, the start of the new Christian Year, and a time of great expectation; it is a time also when patience is needed, but seldom do we achieve any of that with the pace of life being what it is! By the time you read this, the Christmas holiday will be past, and we enter a quieter season: but who knows what the weather might bring. Regardless, I expect the churchyard will be showing early signs of Spring, a time which beckons the longer days and the warmer months to come.

It's delightful to see the work the school are doing under the leadership of Claire Spankie and her teaching team. In the ecclesiastical parish, we are encouraged by the enthusiasm for church and school to work more closely together, and we look forward to what this might bring during 2025.

Reflecting on autumn activities, the annual Wine & Song event held in the school hall attracted many from our community who came along to enjoy musicians from outside the church choir whose performances were interspersed with a broad selection of delicious wines that proved very popular with folk from Chalkhouse Green, and others. Whilst there was no bugler at our Act of Remembrance at the War Memorial on Sunday 10th November, there was a good turn out and good participation from Sonning Common and Kidmore End primary schools and Maiden Erlegh Chiltern Edge, with both Parish Councils in attendance, as well as the Catholic church represented by Deacon Brian Theobald.

There is little to report in terms of an update on the building work we hope to get started at St John's, primarily because we still need the final sign off by the Diocese to commence fundraising in earnest. I dearly want to 'move the dial' on the dashboard icon we've used on the banner which features on the railings at the top of Kidmore Lane: I am confident this will move – and that such consents as are finally being urged will put us in a good place to demonstrate the church at the heart of Kidmore End is a worthwhile bet for any investor, large or small, to have a stake in the renovations we want to pursue to brighten up the building and improve facilities therein.

A happy New Year!

Nick Room, Churchwarden

St Michaels Church

Last year we celebrated the 50th anniversary of ordination of our parish priest, Fr Michael Sharkey. It was with great sadness the parish learnt that he had to retire and leave the area due to unexpected ill health. His pastoral care of the Catholic community in Sonning Common and the surrounding area will be greatly missed. However, the life of the parish goes on due to the commitment of its parishioners assisted by the parish deacon. Masses are celebrated by priests from the neighbouring parishes of Henley, Goring, and Watlington. Over the Christmas season, when our local priests are committed to their own parishes, we look forward to welcoming two young priests who are currently undertaking further studies in Rome. They will be in England during their Christmas holiday and will spend some time with us, for which we are very grateful.

Since the summer we have been trying to put the message of Jesus to help others less fortunate than ourselves into practice. A produce sale during our parish lunch in September raised enough funds to cover the cost of the Christmas lunch hosted by CIRDIC for the homeless of Reading. In addition, we made Christmas puddings and mince pies for the occasion. Other charities we supported through fund raising events included Reading Refugee Group and Missing People Charity.

During the autumn one Sunday Mass was celebrated during which the sick and frail were anointed with holy oil to provide spiritual strength and healing. Another was dedicated to celebrating and blessing couples who were commemorating significant wedding anniversaries.

Our Advent tree invited parishioners to take a tag, buy the gift written on it and return it to the tree. These were then distributed to housebound members of the parish and the homeless.

The parishioners of St Michael's wish all readers blessings for the New Year.

See our website for contact information: www.saintmichaelsonningcommon.org.uk:

Kidmore End Primary School

'Be courageous; Be strong; Do everything in love.' (1 Corinthians 16: 13-14)

Our vision is to create a caring, inclusive Christian school community where everyone belongs and everyone is valued. We strive for excellence through developing the courage to take on all challenges. We do this by nurturing confident, independent individuals, with a lifelong love of learning. Our inclusive approach and inspirational curriculum enables all to flourish.

The values which underpin this vision are Respect, Independence, Community, Kindness

We have had a wonderful Autumn term at Kidmore End CE Primary School. This term has seen the launch of our school vision which beautifully sums up our lives at school. Our pupils understand that the vision is about working together, supporting each other with love and compassion. This sense of community and love enables us all to take risks, make mistakes and learn from them. As one pupil said: "It is our motivation".



Our pupils have taken up a range of leadership roles at school this term. The pupils had to apply for the roles; some required a speech, others a letter of application. They have absolutely risen to the challenge of their new roles; launching initiatives and raising awareness as well as being role models for their peers. Our school council and eco council have representatives from classes across the school, our buddies are in year 5, and our prefects, team captains and playground leaders are all in year 6.

We have been reaping the rewards of a busy summer reorganising, cleaning and decorating with the opening of new and renewed learning areas around the school. Many of our pupils have benefitted from our new Rainbow Room. This is a

calm, nurturing space where pupils can spend time when needed. We are extremely grateful for the donations from our local community. We also opened our new outdoor learning space for our Key Stage 1 pupils who are loving the extra space and the opportunity to learn outside.



We had a wonderful day celebrating books and all things Roald Dahl in October, with the relaunch of our school library. Our team of parent volunteers (KESA) created wonderful Wonka bars with some pupils winning golden tickets! We are so pleased and grateful to have our school library up and running again and having regular use with weekly visits for every class.

Early in the term, our Year 6 pupils visited Wales for a 5-day residential trip. They had an unforgettable time canoeing, caving, climbing and conquering fears.

December was a wonderful time of celebration and learning about Christmas. The term ended with two fantastic nativity performances by our Key Stage 1 and Early Years pupils. The confidence and enthusiasm on display was admirable. Many members of our school and parish community joined the Christingle service at St John's as well as our festive carol services and our Christmas fayre. Christmas is such a special time to reflect on the importance of friends, family and all of those around us, and we all felt very grateful to be a part of such a kind, caring community.

Wishing everyone a Happy New Year. We are excited about the term ahead where more adventures and learning await!

Claire Spankie, Headteacher

Tokers Green and Chazey Heath News

There is lots to report about life in Tokers Green and Chazey Heath. Here's what has been going on and what is coming up.

Christmas carol singing

In keeping with the original request for funding from the National Lottery to create a village green, one of the aspirations was to add a Christmas Tree around which the community could gather and sing Christmas carols. Our tree arrived in early December and was lit and decorated before the annual carol singing on Sunday 22nd December. A slight change this year meant that there were two groups starting at different ends of the village who made their way towards the village green and assembled around the Christmas tree for some singing, music and a welcome glass of mulled wine and a mince pie. Selina from Sloth Coffee provided hot drinks and lots of goodies to eat. We collected donations as usual for the Air Ambulance Service – you can continue to donate here: www.justgiving.com/fundraising/tokersgreenvillagecarolservice.

Andrew Harland - andrew.harlandkiteuk@gmail.com

Tokers Green Village Green

It's almost a year since the re-vamp of the Village Green took place. Its beech hedging and grass banks are now looking established, and it has been well used by locals and those passing through as a stop and rest point. Some bulb planting and on-going maintenance of the benches, etc. have taken place through the year with the continued commitment of local residents. Plans to address the build-up of silt in the pond are in progress, and funding to remove it is currently being sought by the Parish Council.

Tokers Green 2025 Village Calendar Competition

The calendar produced by local residents, using their photographs of local scenes, went on sale in late October. There were hundreds of submissions from the community, and it was a real challenge for the 'select' team of judges to choose just one photo for each month from such a high standard of entries. All proceeds go towards our community fund.

Aurora Rowan SEND School

The new school based in Dysons Wood opened to its initial day placements of children in November, following a lengthy refurbishment. The school has approval for 15 residential placements and up to 10 day placements.

Michael and Amanda Jan-Janin

Community orchard

Activity continues at the orchard throughout the year. Recent and planned highlights include:

- **November** – we planted almost 100 wildflower plants (provided by residents Richard and Christine) opposite the benches and also sowed 12 packets of seeds (sourced from Greener Henley) into 1m x 1m patches of soil which we cleared before sowing alongside the path.
- **December** – we planted 17 new trees to expand the orchard to 76 trees, with each tree funded by a donation by a local family – and planted by them too.
- **January** – our 3rd annual Wassail will take place on 18th January 2025 and we will again be joined by the singers and dancers from Armaleggan to help us wake up the trees as the cycle of life turns again.

We will soon be mulching the trees again and, as always, will make a call for volunteers to help.

Raising funds

With our village WhatsApp group becoming an active market place/clearing house for goods to be recycled around the village (which is a great thing to avoid it going to landfill), it would be lovely if recipients could make a modest donation - in lieu of buying the item - to our community fund. Contact Ian Beale for account details, or you can donate cash.

Ian Beale - ian99beale@yahoo.co.uk.

Tokers Green and Chazey Heath Sunflower Competition 2024

We had another successful and fun competition this summer. In a change to previous years, entries for the Tallest Sunflower came from seeds that were sown from the same packet and sold at the Big Lunch with proceeds going to the community fund. The winner for 2024 was Ian Beale, whose sunflower measured 187cm. The Most Gorgeous Sunflower category was open to all sunflowers and the winner was Sylvia from Tokers Green who grew this unusual and beautiful specimen. Thank you to all those who bought sunflowers at the Big Lunch and all those who entered the competition.



Christmas Dinners

We enjoyed delightful Christmas dinners at the Pack Horse in early December, with separate events organised for the women and the men of the village. As always great food, company and conversation.

Tokers Green Register of Useful Things TROUT

TROUT is a list of useful things that residents of Tokers Green are willing to lend, for a short time, to a Tokers Green neighbour. There could be many neighbours who have similar things (e.g. a ladder) and the borrower could then find a lender who lives closer to them. The intent is to create this as a neighbourly resource. We have things stored in our cupboards, sheds or attics that we seldomly use and we often hear of a request on our TG WhatsApp group, from a villager for a thing they would like to borrow. If you are a Tokers Green resident and have anything that you are willing to lend to a neighbour, please notify Graham Simms with a private message and he will add your item to the list.

Friday 11am get-together

We're delighted with how welcoming our village green looks, and we use it regularly – especially on Fridays at 11am, when Selina from Sloth Coffee comes in her coffee van and supplies us with excellent drinks and cakes. Do join us when you can – and bring your own cup for extra eco points! It's a great opportunity to meet others and talk over delicious refreshments.

Tokers Green WhatsApp group

All residents are welcome to join the Tokers Green, Chazey Heath and Dysons Wood WhatsApp group, which is an active and really helpful source of local information and support. Contact Mike on 07540 955992.

If this update is missing anything that you would like to share, please get in touch.

Joanna and Chris - tokersgreennews@hotmail.com

Gardening Update

Quiescence.

I thought we would explore some winter garden gems. When learning about garden design, I was taught that it is good practice in country gardens to keep the winter shrubs near the house as the short dark days can seem long. Framing porches and doors with Winter interest shrubs especially the scented ones offer a real uplift on the dreary days. Delicate and often heavenly scented, examples include (photos from left to right):

Daphne Bhoula “Jaqueline Posill” – an evergreen shrub with small pink buds opening to tiny clusters of pink flowers, much loved by bees in winter who are attracted to the scent as much as us humans. A slow grower but worth the wait.

Winter jasmine – more a scrambler than a climber, these yellow flowers with evergreen leaves enjoy romping up walls, self-clinging and easy maintenance. A good prune after flowering will encourage next year's growth, as it flowers on this year's stems. It will recover well from a hard prune if it has become unruly.

The Christmas box – Saracocoa is a low growing evergreen shrub. During February it has small white flowers, and a perfume pervades the area for a 10m radius, it is easy to grow and can frame an area.

Witch hazel, (Hamamelis) is a deciduous shrub with large fragrant coppery orange flowers appearing on bare stems in December and January.

Viburnum bodnantense such as the Dawn variety provides fragrant clusters of delicate pink and white flowers.



Winter colour comes in all shapes and sizes mainly from bare barks and stems. The dogwood *Cornus alba Sibirica* is unforgettable with its fiery red stems. Similarly with Midwinter fire. The white trunks and branches of the Silver birch tree *Betula utilis*, is often interplanted with the red Cornus offering a stunning winter look.

Traditionally, Winter was the time to put the garden to bed, to tidy ornamental grasses. cut back spent perennials such as Sedums. We gardeners can make a big difference to wildlife including small insects by keeping the garden intact. This offers not only beauty and visual texture with heights, seed heads and depth, it also allows for movement. The ice caught by the ornamental grasses can offer a striking scriptural look.

A well-maintained winter garden allows insects beneficial to our gardens an opportunity to overwinter in the hollow stems and dense ground cover away from predators and the harsh cold weather. The seed heads from ornamental grasses provide a natural food source for birds during the lean winter months.

An added benefit of this practice is that leaving the plants until Spring allows for a healthier plant as late pruning of grasses and shrubs like Salvia encourages healthy new growth by minimising the damage to the new shoots. Overall, leaving ornamental grasses and shrubs untouched allows for a more resilient garden and ecosystem while adding beauty to the winter landscape.

A great addition to our country gardens is a dead hedge. Winter is a great time to start one, as there is so much material from autumn prunings such as apples, for example, but this is a project that can be started at any time of the year. It consists of a simple base filled in with winter pruning's and added to throughout the year. An old Christmas tree can be a great starting point. The prunings added to the dead hedge offer shelter to a variety of wildlife including birds, insects, small mammals, and hedgehogs. They are easy to create and can be used as a natural barrier, adding rustic charm, and blending into the surroundings. They also act as a good windbreak. A dead hedge is a great way to use the winter prunings, which promotes sustainable garden practice. Kids will enjoy adding to the pile and investigating its inhabitants.



To construct a dead hedge:

- Choose a site where the hedge will serve a purpose – as a wind break, a wildlife area or concealing an unsightly area. It might be all 3!
- Gather the materials. The framework consists of 8-10 wooden posts or sturdy thick branches about 1.2-2 meters long. Lots of dead branches and twigs of various shapes and sizes to fill in. An untreated wooden box placed at the base of the dead hedge or in a quiet spot nearby may attract a resident hedgehog. Rope will add stability.
- Mark out the length and depth of the of the hedge. A depth of 0.5 -1.2 metres is common.
- Drive the posts/ branches into the ground every 1-2 metres along the line, ensuring they are embedded securely.
- Place each pair of stakes 0.6-1 m apart to define the hedge.
- Lay the thickest of the branches between the pairs of steaks to form the base, weaving and stacking in alternating directions to enhance stability.
- Use the largest branches at the bottom (5-10cm thick) and the smaller branches higher up.
- Fill the gaps between large branches with small twigs and leaves and pruning's up to a height of 1.8 m.

Photo of a dead hedge from stock images

I wish you all happy gardening for 2025.

Niamh Kendall

Local Weather Report: Autumn 2024

	Average Maximum Temperature		Average Minimum Temperature		Rainfall	
	Cent	Fahr	Cent	Fahr	mm	in
September	19.1	66	10.9	52	173	6.8
October	15.3	50	7.4	45	77	3.0
November	10.2	50	4.8	40	88	3.6
Rainfall - 3 months to end November 2024					338	13.4

Although autumn temperatures were close to average, Autumn 2024 was disappointing; it was very wet and dull. September was particularly wet and late October and November were particularly dull.

September started very warm, 29.5C/85F on 1st. After 10 days everything changed, initially arctic air brought cold northerly winds, followed by a series of low-pressure systems. These brought milder, but extremely wet weather, for the rest of September. Overall October and the first half of November were warmer and drier. The second half of November turned much colder, with wintry conditions including snow showers (which didn’t settle) on 19th. Maximum daytime temperatures were in single figures and minimum night time temperatures below zero.

Low-pressure systems in the latter part of September brought bands of slow-moving heavy rain. This resulted in very localised, heavy downpours, the heaviest we had was on Friday 20th when 24mm/0.9in of rain fell in 35 minutes, many of the roads in the parish were either flooded or became rivers.

Unsurprisingly September’s rain set records, for ten English counties it was their wettest September on record, and for both Oxfordshire & Bedfordshire this September was the wettest calendar month since records started in 1836. We had more than 3 times September’s normal rain.

The high-pressure system that dominated from late October, brought ‘anticyclonic gloom’ so rather than the clear blue skies that we associate with high pressure systems we had 3 weeks of low cloud, mist, fog and practically no sunshine. In November the University of Reading weather station recorded 17 days when there was no sunshine.

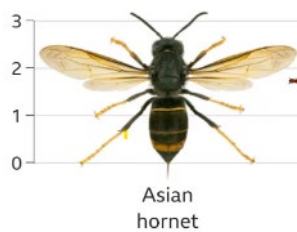
It is 10 years since the Met Offices began naming storms. There were 3 named storms this autumn, Storm Ashley on October 20th, Storm Bert on November 22nd & Storm Conall on November 27th, in each case we escaped the worst of these storms.

Lowest and Highest temperatures for 3 months to November 2024

	Highest		Lowest		Highest Rainfall	
	Cent	Fahr	Cent	Fahr	mm	in
September	29.5	85 (1 st)	2.3	36 (28 th)	38	1.5 (22 nd)
October	18.6	65 (16 th)	-0.1	32 (10 th)	18	0.7 (18 th)
November	16.3	61 (24 th)	-2.9	27 (27 th)	20	0.8 (23 rd)

Chris Brook

The Asian Hornet Update



You soon may start to read and hear more in the press about keeping an eye out for the Asian Hornet. In around early February the queen hornets emerge from winter hibernation and will be looking for somewhere to nest. Although no nests were identified in our area last year, we should not be complacent, and we will once again be using monitoring traps throughout the parish from February until April. I will be in touch shortly with those of you who are hosting traps with more information and replenishments of lure etc. If you would like to be part of the

monitoring project or would like to join the Kidmore End Asian Hornet WhatsApp group to help keep updated on all things Asian Hornet – text me on the number below or send me an email.

Sue Remenyi sue.remenyi@gmail.com: 07791 840999

Kidmore End Cricket Club Season Review

Kidmore End Cricket Club held their Annual General Meeting on Monday 25th November 2024.

Chairman Jeff Sheldon outlined the successes of the playing year with the 1st XI securing 4th place in division 2b and the 2nd XI being promoted from 5B. The continued transformation of the junior set up was also mentioned as well as the growth of women and girls cricket. The outgoing committee was thanked for its efforts in making the 2024 season a successful one and we hope that the addition of new members of the group will push the club further forward. In terms of the senior playing sides in 2024, it would have been virtually impossible to top what was, arguably, the most successful club season ever in 2023, but all the teams performed creditably.

Season highlights as follows:

With the 1st XI being promoted in Level 2 of the Thames Valley Cricket League (TVCL) this was always going to be a challenge and whilst in the early part of the season, there were some challenges, to their credit, the Team Spirit was evident as they successfully rose up the Table and finished 4th in Division 2B.

The 2nd XI again proved to the standout side and whilst they could not quite achieve a 3rd Successive Championship, they finished Runners-Up in Division 5B and will be promoted to Level 4 of the TVCL for the 2025 Season.

The 3rd XI was beset by inconsistent availability and form and are hoping that the 2025 is one with more positives than negatives. The 4th XI put in a number of extremely creditable performances and the continued progression of our Junior Cricketers is to be encouraged and supported.

The best evidence of the junior cricketers making telling contributions in senior games can be demonstrated as follows: Barney being part of a 4th XI Record 10th Wicket Partnership of 67 with David against Bushy Park 3rd XI having come together with the side being 52 for 9 which led to the 4th XI winning by 9 Runs. Archie making his maiden league half century against Maidenhead & Bray 5th XI as part of a 4th XI Record 4th Wicket stand of 125 with his Dad. Aarush scoring his maiden league century of 117* against Cookham Dean 4th XI and not only achieving the Highest Individual Score in the history of the 4th XI in this game, he was also part of a 4th XI 8th Wicket Record Partnership of 57 with Julian in the same game.

The Sunday XI could not unfortunately, retain their Berkshire Blast Sunday League, but were competitive in all their games and several of the junior cricketers performed creditably when called upon.

The Thames Valley League has undergone a major revamp for 2025 following the amalgamation of other leagues and with fixtures being released in the New Year the club is looking forward to seeing who they will be playing.

Women's cricket again moved forward with more ladies turning up for training than in the previous seasons both indoors at Queen Annes school from January and then moving outdoors in late April. The ladies played fixtures against other clubs and won more than they lost and a big thank you goes to Jules Cook for her organisation and also to wish her all the very best as she moves onto pastures new. The women's cricket team spirit is a real strength and their positive attitude and approach shone through whether they were training or playing matches.

The Juniors went from strength to strength again in 2024 and when the weather was good on Friday night in June & July, we had anything up to 120 children and parents on site at the recreation ground which was a spectacular sight.

Allstars was extremely popular this year and we welcomed 63 young boys (51) and girls (12) to KECC for the initial 8-week block (May-July) This was all in spite of the ECB plastics issue which aborted the original sign up date and precluded all players from having a bat and backpack as normally happens.

We are really pleased that we managed to attract 30 signed up U9 players for the 2024 summer and attendance at training was consistently good even during the summer holidays in August and the team performed well in their league matches and just as well in their August friendlies.

U11 is the least numerous group but we managed to have a combination of returning and new players with many in the developmental stage but they adopted a positive attitude and worked well on a Friday with KECC coaches to improve their skills. Also, pleasingly, the u11 fulfilled their hardball fixtures and it is hoped that with bolstering from U9 [Y5 at school] we will be able to put together a competitive squad for next season.

We had an amazing 32 signed up players for the U13 summer season this year with a wide ability range necessitating a split into 2 groups. We are very proud that by entering appropriate leagues in Berkshire and Oxfordshire, all players

played at least one game for KECC last season. We have 4 returning and 3 other players on the Oxfordshire Pathway training programme up to Christmas.

They were 24 u15s played multiple games and several u13s also represented the u15 giving them access to “full size” competitive cricket. We entered 3 x u15 competitions - the Berks League, the ECB Berks Cup and Oxon league. We won our Berks League and lost to Slough in the Semi Final playoff we reached the final of the ECB Berkshire County cup and lost to Slough and in the Oxon league we also played good competitive cricket with the squad we were able to select.

What a season it has been for the KECC Girls. Confidence has grown throughout the team which has seen the Girls go from strength-to-strength culminating with all of them facing hardball in the nets before the season was out! Winning the majority of their matches really shows how much they work together and are identifying the strengths of their teammates. In the latter stages of the season, they even started to grasp tactics to ensure their victories!

The cricket club website and social media platforms has all of our news and updates so please do have a look and see what we are up to in the closed season and do get in touch.

Mark New



Winter 2025

22 January
19 February
19 March
16 April
21 May

**Friends of Sonning Common
Library Application form**

<http://www.kepc.info/news.php#foscl-application>



Are we missing your club or society?
Would you like to see their activities
listed in the Newsletter? Do you have
any news items or pictures for the
Parish?

If you would like to contribute to the
next edition, or to the website we'd be
delighted to hear from you. Articles
can be sent to editor, members of the
editorial board or directly to the
website webmaster – see right panel
for contact details.

The **closing date** for the next edition
is **6 March 2025**.

Useful Numbers and Contacts

Thames Valley Police, non-emergency 101
emergency 999
website www.thamesvalley.police.uk

Crime Stoppers (anonymous) 0800 555 111
Victim Support 01865 751511

SODC email: info@southoxon.gov.uk 01235 422422
Open: Mon-Thu 8.30 am - 5.00 pm
Fri 8.30 am - 4.30 pm

ORCC Directory of Transport Schemes 01865 883433
orc@oxonrcc.org.uk

Oxfordshire Rural Community Council,
Jericho Farm, Worton, Oxon OX29 4SZ

Oxfordshire Highways 0845 310 1111
<https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/roads-and-transport>

Fix my Street <http://fixmystreet.oxfordshire.gov.uk>

Citizens Advice Bureau (Henley)
Website <https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/local/oxfordshire-south-vale/contact-us/>
Telephone 0808 278 7907

Parish Councillors

Parish Council Chairman

Caroline Aldridge chairman@kepc.info

Andrew Harland andrew.harland@kepc.info (07747470108)

Iain Pearson iain.pearson@kepc.info

Tony Bowley tony.bowley@kepc.info

Jane Mather jane.makower.mather@kepc.info

Patrick Malaperiman patrick.m@kepc.info

Georgina McCarter georgina.mccarter@kepc.info

Debbie Page debbie.page@kepc.info

Grant Readings grant.readings@kepc.info

Nick Room nick.room@kepc.info

Clerk to the Council

Roger Penfold clerk@kepc.info (0118 947 3130)

District Councillor

Peter Dragonetti peter.dragonetti@southoxon.gov.uk (0118 9844711)

County Councillor

Kevin Bulmer kevin.bulmer@oxfordshire.gov.uk (07803 005680)

Diamond Jubilee Pavilion at Gallowstree Common

Bookings:

Roger Penfold 0118 947 3130

Kidmore End Memorial Hall

Bookings:

Alan Gibbon alan47b@btinternet.com

Newsletter Editorial Board

Caroline Aldridge (Editor) chairman@kepc.info (0118 972 3700)

Sue Remenyi sue.remenyi@gmail.com (07791 840 999)

Debbie Page debbie.page@kepc.info

KEPC website

Tony Bowley <http://www.kepc.info>
webmaster@kepc.info