



Kidmore End Parish Council

Cane End

Chalkhouse Green

Gallowstree Common

Kidmore End

Tokers Green

Newsletter Summer 2025

Issue 160

Chair Report



What a change a few months can make. We are in early summer, with long evenings allowing us to enjoy our gardens and the surrounding countryside. Your parish council has been very active on your behalf, which means that there is much to report in this issue of the newsletter.

First off, I would like to welcome a new parish councillor from Gallowstree Common, Marguerite Thornton-Gray. Marguerite was co-opted at the meeting in April, and she is looking forward to getting to know her community in Gallowstree Common, and the wider community. This means that we are back to full strength, with 10 parish councillors.

Political news

We held our Annual Parish Meeting on Wednesday May 21 at 7 pm, so thank you to members of the parish who came along to raise issues. At the parish council annual meeting, which started after the APM, we welcomed our newly elected Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) councillor, Maggie Filipova-Rivers. Maggie has been a South Oxfordshire District Council (SODC) councillor, and she is delighted to move to OCC to tackle issues that OCC is responsible for. I am sure that her contacts will be very useful to Kidmore End Parish Council (KEPC) over the next two years or so; it will be 'all change' when our new unitary council, whatever shape that may take, comes into being.

And talking of 'unitary councils', there is a consultation taking place, closing on 15 July, asking for your views on local government and giving information about a proposal for two new unitary councils with the working titles of Oxford and Shires Council and Ridgeway Council. It aims to create strong, financially stable councils that provide high-quality, cost-effective, and locally driven services.

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- **Oxford and Shires Council** would comprise all of the existing district areas of Cherwell, Oxford City and West Oxfordshire.
- **Ridgeway Council** would be made up of the whole of West Berkshire Council's area and all of the existing district areas of South Oxfordshire and the Vale of White Horse.

You may already know that KEPC is part of a group of 7 parishes in South Oxfordshire (JPAG) that have joined together to lobby for an extension to the Chilterns National Landscape. On 9 May, we were informed that the public consultation on changes to the Chilterns National Landscape boundary had been cancelled by Natural England. This is a huge blow to Kidmore End, a huge disappointment to those trying to protect our countryside, and a huge waste of tax-payers money. Your parish council supports the press release created by JPAG, which reads as follows:

'We are extremely disappointed that the review of possible extension to the Chilterns National Landscape (AONB) has been abruptly cancelled by the Government. Kidmore End, Eye and Dunsden, Binfield Heath, Sonning Common, Shiplake, Mapledurham and Harpsden parish councils are united in their belief that there are significant opportunities to identify new National Landscape in their parishes. Once the review began, we commissioned expert consultants to carefully assess the potential areas of expansion. They found there was a strong case. This report has been circulated to relevant bodies.

Many local organisations have been pushing for a boundary review for more than 10 years. Natural England's consultants LUC's expensive technical report was almost complete and public consultation was about to begin.

We want answers from Government.

Why has the work been scrapped rather than put on hold?

Will the work done so far be made public?

Why has public money been used for a review/report that is currently not going to be used? Public money should not be wasted.'

I will keep you updated.

Your parish councillors and what they are responsible for:

At the Annual Meeting we made the following appointments. I (Caroline Aldridge) was voted in as Chairman, with Paddy Malaperiman voted in as Vice-Chairman. We have divided up responsibilities/duties to individuals and/or groups as follows, in place up to the Annual Meeting of the Council in 2026:

Allotments' Manager	Jane Mather
Webmaster	Tony Bowley
Wells' Manager	Nick Room
Amenities Sub-Committee	Caroline Aldridge, Debbie Page, Nick Room, Margurite Thornton-Gray
Community Infrastructure Levy Sub-Committee	All Councillors
Finance Sub-Committee	Caroline Aldridge, Tony Bowley, Iain Pearson
Plans Sub-Committee	Caroline Aldridge, Andrew Harland, Jane Mather, Debbie Page, Marguerite Thornton-Gray, Sue Biggs*, Lyn Stewart-Ashley*, Anna Vorster*
Tenure of the Cricket Club Working Group	Tony Bowley, Paddy Malaperiman, Jane Mather, Anna Vorster*, Clerk of the Council*
Editorial Board of Newsletter	Caroline Aldridge, Debbie Page, Sue Remenyi*
Representatives on Kidmore End Playing Fields Committee	Tony Bowley, Andrew Harland, Iain Pearson
Representative on Oxfordshire Association of Local Councils	Andrew Harland
Transport Representative	Andrew Harland

* Not a member of the Parish Council

Planning

A planning application that has created a lot of interest in the parish is the Fairfax proposal for outline permission for 70 houses on part of the former site of Reading Golf Club in Emmer Green. These houses will be in South Oxfordshire and in Kidmore End Parish, but residents will not feel as if they are living in South Oxfordshire, because they will be accessing all their immediate needs in Reading. KE parish councillors have met with representatives from Caversham and Emmer Green, spoken to planning officers in SODC, and discussed the implications for the Kidmore End Neighbourhood Development Plan (KENDP). This planning application was discussed at length at the June PC meeting. KEPC remains opposed to any further development on this site.

For those interested, all planning applications can be found at <https://www.southoxon.gov.uk/south-oxfordshire-district-council/planning-and-development/comment-on-planning-applications/find-and-comment-on-a-planning-application/>

Talking of NDPs, we will be starting to update our NDP later this year. Further information will be in the October issue of this newsletter. If you would like to be involved, please let me know.

The well head in Kidmore End

The deterioration of this structure became a major concern in April. With no communications from OCC Highways, KEPC made the decision to fence off the structure, keeping the safety measures on the footprint of the well. Nick Room has been the main project manager for this, so huge thanks to him for his quick and thoughtful expertise. The future of the well head is very important, not only to KEPC but to the wider community. We had several parishioners raising this important issue with us. The best way to repair the well head so that it is preserved for future generations is at the forefront of all our decision making.

The next part of the project will be to commission a condition report. We hope to see this before KEPC goes on summer break in August. Once we have the condition report, we will know how much it will cost to repair the well head, and how these repairs need to be implemented. At this point, planning permission will be sought to repair the well head. The well head is Grade II listed, so permission from listed buildings will be the next hurdle. After that, we may have to crowd fund to get all the required funding in place to repair the structure.

Our new website

The updated website went live on 1 June. There may be some bugs, so if you notice any problems, please contact the webmaster. Huge thanks to Tony Bowley and Andrew Harland, who have been working on this project for more than a year. All your favourite bits are still there, like 'bin collections', but there is now a new emphasis on community events. If you would like to contribute to news from your part of the parish, please contact the webmaster at webmaster@kepc.info.

Tokers Green Pond

The team in Tokers Green are on the last phase of the Tokers Green Pond renovation. They hope to have had the retaining wall repaired at the end of May, weather permitting.

Gallowstree Common Notice Board

The new noticeboard at Gallowstree Common should arrive in July. One side for the PC, the other side for general notices.

Community Infrastructure Funds

The drive and car park at the pavilion in Gallowstree Common look amazing. It is good to be able to drive to the pavilion without falling into a pothole. There are no speed bumps on the new drive, but we have put up signs asking drivers to keep their speed at 5 mph or less. We will come back to this later in the year to see if speed bumps are required to remind drivers to be considerate. If you have a good idea for CIL money, please send your idea to me or the Clerk at clerk@kepc.info.

Road Safety

The PC is investigating the purchase of a second speed indicator device for Horsepond Road, Gallowstree Common, to remind drivers coming from the other direction (Peppard) that the speed limit is 20 mph. Our Superuser, who marks up potholes for OCC Highways, has run out of paint. OCC Highways seem to be taking their time to deliver new paint, but once this has been received, then our Superuser will be back out to mark up the bad ones! There is some good news, not only has OCC Highways put more money into the budget to fix potholes, but our Superuser has managed to get some of the really bad potholes filled. 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.

Some good news from Tokers Green Lane, Kidmore End. The missing triangle (showing '2 children') on the new warning post advising that there is a school here, has been attached. Hopefully this will help drivers unfamiliar with our parish.

Biodiversity Policy

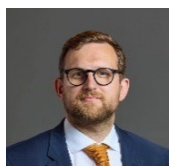
Thank you to everyone who volunteered to create a dead hedge in Kidmore End Play Area. The weather was kind, and we all had fun creating the structure. The next part of the project is to fill the dead hedge with clippings. I am waiting for a good weather window, then we can tidy up the path leading from the church to the cemetery. All the green waste created can be put into the dead hedge. What a great habitat for invertebrates, and a clever way to keep all our carbon in the parish. Sustainable and useful, allowing us to tidy up some areas and providing valuable habitat for wildlife.

Other News

Thank you to everyone who decorated their homes and villages to commemorate the 80th Anniversary of VE Day on Thursday 8 May. The flags and bunting looked great. And finally, what a treat we had from the Flower Ladies on 21 June, when they decorated the church and every gravestone with flowers. A mighty effort creating a beautiful and thoughtful spectacle.

Caroline Aldridge chairman@kepc.info

From our MP – Freddie van Mierlo



Firstly, I would like to congratulate Councillor Maggie Filipova-Rivers on being elected to represent this division on Oxfordshire County Council in the May elections. Having previously served as a County Councillor myself, I know what a privilege and honour it is to represent our communities in this way, and I wish Maggie every success in her new role.

ADHD Services

I received a more positive response from the Government to a letter on ADHD services, suggesting a reopening of waiting lists for young people aged 18 – 25. This would be a positive step in the right direction and end the cliff edge of support at 18.

All Party Parliamentary Group

I am proud to get two All Party Parliamentary Groups off the ground and running - the APPG for Fatherhood and the APPG for Access to Medicines and Medical Devices. The latter builds on my professional experience and links to many of the heart-breaking cases I hear from residents, and the former is a more recent passion, but one I'm honoured to be chosen to represent.

Sewage

In just a few weeks' time, Henley will welcome the world's rowers to the iconic Royal Regatta and I know this is an event that many local residents enjoy, however this celebration of sport and community is being overshadowed by a serious issue: raw sewage being dumped into the Thames. I recently raised this issue in Parliament as this pollution is blighting the event and putting public health, wildlife, and our local economy at risk.

Townlands Hospital Visit

In May, I enjoyed an informative visit to the Townlands Hospital (my second since being elected). This time I was shown around by NHS Properties, who hold the leasehold to the site. NHS Properties work to ensure full occupancy, with Oxford Health, Royal Berkshire Hospital and a commissioned physiotherapy service making use of the excellent facilities. We also discussed what steps would need to be taken for further services to be delivered at the site.

Child Online Safety

Even before Adolescence became a hit drama, **child online safety** was a top issue that residents have been contacting me about. I was therefore present to debate the safer phones private members bill - and although the bill was not progressed to a vote, I spoke on the dangers of unmoderated and unregulated online spaces including Roblox and urged the government to raise the digital age of consent to 16.

As always, I am holding regular surgeries and responding to residents on individual cases. If you have any concerns or need assistance, please don't hesitate to get in touch. If you would like to contact me, you can reach me at: freddie.vanmierlo.mp@parliament.uk

Freddie van Mierlo MP

From the District Councillor



Although the County Council election is now fading from memory, it did result in a significant change to local government in our area. The long-lasting Conservative domination of our county has ended, and we have said a final goodbye to Kevin Bulmer, who has been nominally our county councillor for the last four years. He scraped in as a Conservative last time, and then left that party, carrying on as County Councillor without a party allegiance, although doing little to justify his role, and most recently he tagged on to the Reform Party to contest a seat elsewhere. Like all other Reform candidates in Oxfordshire except one, he failed to get elected. We now return to having a Lib Dem County Councillor, as was traditional in this area until about 12 or 16 years ago. I am sure that Maggie Filipova-Rivers will be an excellent County Councillor.

In the wider County, once dominant Conservatives are now largely confined to the western part of the County. With just 10 seats won out of the possible 69, they are almost a fringe party with the Greens hard on their heels with 7 seats. Over the last four years, the administration of the County has been joint, with Lib Dems as the dominant party but with Greens playing a role on Cabinet, but now the Lib Dems have an overall majority and no longer need the support of other parties.

More locally, in South Oxfordshire District Council, the Lib Dems have also now ended the partnership that was formed after the 2019 election, but which carried on after the 2023 election although there was no need as the Lib Dems were then the majority party. The Green Councillors on the District provided a strong core of ability and competence, but now, no longer being part of the administration, the Green Party in South Oxfordshire is the official opposition. Not that such parliamentary rivalries play a large part at District level.

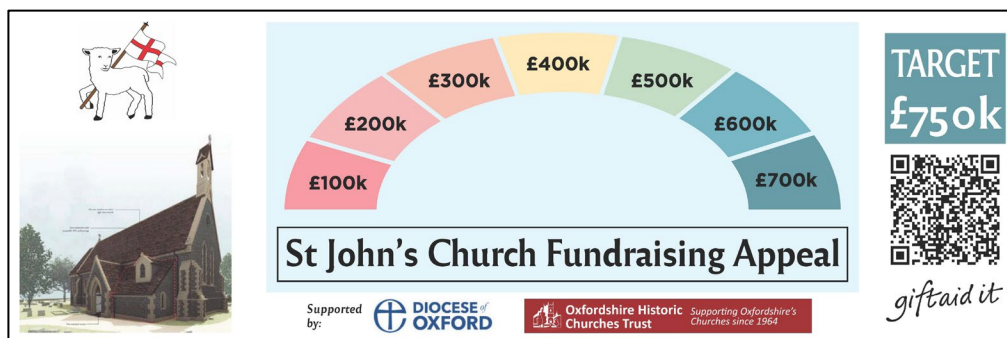
I am pleased to say that all councillors in South Oxfordshire, of whatever party, work together amicably and co-operatively, recognising differences in outlook, not letting party dogma or differences get in the way of running an efficient and effective council. It is sad that local elections, when campaigns are directed from on high by politicians with political ends, are too often full of shallow promises, ignorant assumptions and cheap slogans. Local councils are the opportunity for local people, who know their local area and residents, to exercise influence.

Within a couple of years, all this will change as the County Council and District Council will be abolished, with a Unitary Authority created. Our elected representatives will be even more remote, and will no doubt be elected on the basis of party allegiances that while significant nationally, are usually of little consequence at local level.

Councillor Peter Dragonetti,

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

The Parish Church



The church's Easter services were deemed a success, with good congregations in the lead up to, and over, the holiday weekend. The church flowers looked absolutely beautiful, the music was heavenly, and we were all encouraged by the warmer and lighter evenings. This is the time the churchyard looks its best. Thank you to all in our villages who support the church in their various ways.

A small fall of mortar at the end of April is the reason for scaffolding, but the PCC has also agreed to do some work required by the architect's Quinquennial review on St John's to address high level repairs to the bellcote. It is hoped the scaffolding will be removed before too long.

June is an important month for us, with the Patronal Festival (of St John the Baptist) looming on 24th – by the time you read this though that will probably be past. The choir will have staged a Saturday afternoon concert, and the flower ladies will have been showing off their remarkable talents, again! If you joined in or came to either or both events, we hope you had an enjoyable time.

This is also the month where we expect to complete the significant building works at our daughter church of Christ the King in Sonning Common. If you have an opportunity, please do pay a visit when the church and hall reopen. As I write,

we have a completion date of 25th June, and we hope the first church service in the very much upgraded building will be 29th June.

Here at St John's, we have been investing more time in getting the final elements in place to work on the heat, light and wiring systems of the church, with redecoration in our sights, and an anticipated start date of mid-October. At Christ the King, we had a large legacy which was specifically designated for that church building: we have no such readily available funds for what we want to do at St John's, and so we continue looking at doing works in phases and appealing for finance from every corner. This next project is much more of a challenge, but one that we really feel cannot wait any longer. We are pretty confident we will convince the church authorities that the work is not only necessary but help us as we go forward to offer the church as a community space - and a reinvigorated environment for pastoral mission and worship. We are sure you will have seen the posters about the church and the banner in front of the War Memorial that gives more information about how to donate if you feel willing to do so.

Nick Room, Churchwarden

The Kidmore End Well

This unique, listed historic artefact at the top of Tokers Green Lane is in a sorry state. Action was taken in April to support the Well itself and shroud the whole item with wooden hoarding. Inside the box there are beams holding up the structure, which could have just toppled over if urgent work was not undertaken to prevent this. The hoarding does not encroach on the highway, but clearly it is important to be aware of the reduced sightlines on the junction.

A meeting between the Heritage consultant, OCC Highways and I was held at the site on Thursday 5th June, and a full survey has now been commissioned by the Parish Council to determine what needs to be done, and the potential timescale, to return the Well to a satisfactory appearance that is also completely safe. It will take time, and require significant funding, particularly as some of the issues with the Well itself cannot be assessed until the Well is lifted off the chamber and a full inspection of the groundworks is undertaken. In the interim, there are moves afoot to make the site appear a little more attractive, without compromising the road space. There will come a time, however, when part of the road will need to be closed off, although, given the 'Y shape' of the top of Tokers Green Lane, it is hoped the impact on traffic will be minimal.

Further information will be released to the village as this project progresses, but fundraising (or crowdfunding) is certainly going to be required because the Parish Council is unlikely to be able to cover the costs.

Nick Room, Churchwarden

The History of Kidmore End Well



The Chiltern Hills are an outcrop of the Chalk Group, a fine white limestone that was deposited in the Cretaceous Period, approximately 145 to 66 million years ago. A key feature of chalk is that it is very porous: rainwater that falls on the hills quickly soaks into the rock, so there are very few ponds, streams or rivers. The Chiltern area is known for its many deep wells, often dating back centuries and serving as a crucial source of water for villages and communities.

In the 17th Century, the settlement – known today as the village of Kidmore End – consisted of a few notable houses such as Cromwell Cottage, Post Cottage, Pond House, Well House, Butlers Farmhouse, Cross Farmhouse and Vines Farmhouse. There would have been other cottages for families who worked on the land and in the woods – in small and simple thatched buildings that no longer exist. In the 18th Century the settlement was extended to include Curtis Farm, Coldnorton and Kidmore End farm, and the New Inn public house. During this period, the larger properties would have had their own deep wells, and the residents of cottages would have collected water from ponds and deserted clay pits.

The situation changed in the mid-19th Century. The famous Maharajah Well in Stoke Row was opened in 1864. Soon after, a decision was taken to dig four public wells in the Parish of Kidmore End, including one at the very centre of our village. Our well, which was 254 ft deep and 4 ft in diameter, was opened in 1868.

Initially, the well was under the charge of the Vicar and Churchwardens but in 1895 it was taken over by the Parish Council. Wire chains were used for drawing the water with a large bucket at each end, one going down as the other was brought up. They were worked by hand, and each operation took about five minutes.

In 1906, the South Oxfordshire Water Company connected the village to a recently built reservoir at Woodcote, nearly five miles away, with water drawn from the River Thames.

During its 157 years, our well has been routinely renovated to ensure it is safe and remains as an important example of our early village buildings and structures. It is often decorated with flowers, most recently to mark the late Queen Elizabeth's Platinum Jubilee in 2022 and the Coronation of King Charles III in 2023.

When complete, the planned renovation will ensure our well continues to provide the community with an important physical reminder of our village's heritage.

Alastair McAslan

St Michaels Church

The Catholic Church is currently celebrating a Year of Jubilee. These occur every 25 years and is a special year of forgiveness and reconciliation, when we are invited to come back into the right relationship with God and with one another. The late Pope Francis made the theme of this year's Jubilee, 'Pilgrims of Hope.' During Lent, a time of reflection in preparation for Easter, amongst our various activities we followed a series of five reflections with the theme, 'We Dare to Hope.' We all have hopes and dreams, but the Christian hope is what was celebrated at Easter. Where the risen Jesus led, we will follow to our true home with him in heaven where all our hopes, all our deepest longings will be satisfied. Our Easter services from Maundy Thursday to Easter Sunday were very well attended compared to recent years and it was wonderful to greet friends and visitors both old and new. It was Easter Monday when we heard of the death of Pope Francis, and we prayed that all his hopes are now realised. We also pray that the newly elected Pope Leo XIV will be a good leader for the Church and a positive influence on world leaders.

We have no permanent resident parish priest, but during the summer months we are delighted to welcome Fr Colin Blayney from Sydney, Australia to live amongst us. We are hoping he will give us the benefit of his knowledge and experience while he enjoys the delights of South Oxfordshire, a place he knows well. He will help us develop ways to take responsibility for the spiritual care of our parish, while being supported by the priests from neighbouring parishes.

We are now at that time of year when younger members of the community receive their first Holy Communion or are Confirmed. These are very special occasions as we see the youth progress in their spiritual lives. Regular visits are made to the local care homes and others unable to get to church so that they have the opportunity to receive Holy Communion.

To contact the parish, see our website: www.saintmichaelsonningcommon.org.uk.

Kidmore End Primary School

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

Summer term is in full swing at our beautiful village school: the chorus of children playing on the fields, rehearsing for end of year performances and working hard on their final assessments is wonderful to see and hear.

This term our children have been on lots of trips and visits: Windsor Castle, Legoland, Festival of Voices, choir events, inter-school sports competitions and our Years 3, 4 and 5 are finishing the year with an Ancient Greek experience day at Ufton Court. We have also shared some great experiences in school such as our Year 1 Victorian school day. We are very grateful to our staff and parents who have supported us in making these memorable events possible for our children.



To celebrate the end of their primary school journey, our Year 6s have had a range of experiences organised by school, and by our parents. A highlight was their day out at Wargrave's EYOT Centre where they learnt to paddle board and bell-boat on the River Thames. They will be celebrating their achievements from their time at Kidmore End in services at both our local church of St John the Baptist as well as at Christchurch Cathedral in Oxford. It is a time to celebrate their upcoming adventures to secondary school, as well as an opportunity to reflect on all that they have achieved over their time with us at Kidmore End CE Primary School.

Across our school this year, we have had a big focus on our English curriculum, particularly in terms of our children's writing. We have read some incredible texts, both fiction and non-fiction, which have captured the imagination of our young minds. Children from Reception class to Year 6 have been motivated to improve their handwriting and write for a range of audiences and purposes. At the end of each week, a star writer from each class is awarded with a special certificate in our celebration assembly. We are really proud of all of our young writers for their incredible determination to make progress.

Our wonderful PTA (KESA) have continued to work their magic, organising a range of events, fundraisers and activities to support our school community. This term a number of



our parents have set up a lunchtime colouring club, which has been very well received, with children from reception to Year 6 enjoying creative activities under the trees on the fields. Alongside this we have had art competitions, ice lolly sales, culminating a community summer fair to enable us all to join together for some summer fun and games on our beautiful school grounds. The fair starts at 3.15pm on Friday 4th July on our school field, please do come along to share in the community spirit.



Summer term is always a lovely time to stop and reflect on the year as well as start to make plans for the future. We have had a wonderful year showcasing our values of respect, independence, community and kindness, and cannot wait to see what the next year has in store.

To find out more, please do follow us on Facebook, X and Instagram for regular updates.

Claire Spankie, Headteacher

Tokers Green and Chazey Heath News

Here's what has been going on and what is coming up in Tokers Green and Chazey Heath.

The Village Quiz Team



Congratulations to the Tokers Green quiz team: they are basking in success in this season's South Oxfordshire Village Quiz League. The team finished an impressive third on the table, a result which far surpasses that in anyone's memory. We had already secured third place before our final match against Warborough on 15 May, but did not rest on our laurels and finished with a 65-62 victory.

The team consists of a squad of six regular players and another two or three who make an occasional appearance. If anyone would be interested in joining this podium-placing side, please contact Joanne on joanne1humphrey@gmail.com.

The Big Lunch 2025

We had the most excellent time at this year's Big Lunch on Sunday 8th June!

The sun shone as over 130 of us gathered to socialise, share food and raise money for the community fund. We enjoyed such a variety of stalls, featuring the ever-popular plant stall run by Teresa and Andrew, the book stall run by Ian and a lemonade stall run by local children. There was local honey on sale, a Fair-Trade stall run by Riz and Selina's 'Sloth Coffee' van serving drinks and afternoon-tea treats. This year, we created a community nature mandala, run by Catherine and Joanna, with creative inspiration from Annabelle.

Back by popular demand was musical entertainment from the Bottle Neck Brothers and the Boot Boys band (formed from members of the local Rotherfield United Walking Football team).

So many people pitched in to help plan, organise and make the day a really friendly and relaxed occasion, and it was a great opportunity to see old friends and neighbours and to meet new ones.

Thank you to everyone who contributed to make this such a successful and welcoming event!

Fiona Harland - Fiona.h2009@hotmail.co.uk

Community Orchard

There's always something new going on at our community orchard. Here's the latest news of what's been happening in the past three months.

- We installed a beautiful information board that shows the layout of the orchard. Thank you to Cath for creating the board, to Sharon and Glenn for getting the plan printed and to Dave for making the board.



- We have replaced one tree that did not survive.
- With the recent hot weather, we watered the trees in early May. Thanks to Howard and Sandy for the use of their tap as well as the crew of water carriers who came along that evening.

Looking ahead, we will be carrying out regular maintenance work at the orchard on the evening of the first Tuesday each month from 7pm. Everyone is welcome so the more the merrier. See you there on June 3rd, July 1st, August 5th, and September 2nd.

Ian Beale - ian99beale@yahoo.co.uk

Tokers Green Village Green

The Village Green is still looking good, with the spring bulbs having given a beautiful display of colour. We have regular visits from a pair of mallard ducks, and the Muscovy ducks from Dysons Wood Farm have also started to return. There was even an optimistic heron on the bank recently, though its chance of catching any fish is unlikely!

Following approval from the Parish Council, and with funding provided via a grant from South Oxfordshire District Council, the silt from the 'pond' has been emptied. This has improved the appearance of the area and will reduce the frequency of overflow/flooding around the pond, and also on Tokers Green Lane at times of heavy rainfall. A report on the condition of the structure of the 'pond' confirmed that the main retaining wall is at risk due to erosion of the lower courses of concrete blocks. The Parish Council has approved funding for the repairs, which will hopefully be undertaken in June. Scheduling this is a challenge, as it is critical to have several dry days once the work is started!

Michael Jan-Janin - michael@jan-janin.co.uk.

Progressive Dinner – can you help?

A word from Carole Neville: "After 17+ years, I have made the tough decision to step down from organising the Tokers Green Progressive Dinners. I would like to thank everyone who attended the dinners over the years and made it such an enjoyable event and a great way to get to know our neighbours and catch up with friends. If anyone is willing to take on the task on-going, please contact me directly on caroleneville@hotmail.co.uk."

Is there anyone in the village who could step in and keep this excellent and enjoyable event going?

Carole Neville - caroleneville@hotmail.co.uk.

The community fund

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.

Friday 11am get-together at the village pond

Did you know about the Friday coffee mornings at the village pond? Every Friday at 11am, 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 catch up over delicious refreshments.

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.

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



Community Speedwatch



It's a sobering fact that more people are killed in traffic incidents than in all other crimes combined, and speed is a key factor in the type of injuries sustained.

Since November 2022, volunteers from Gallowstree Common have been operating a Community Speedwatch initiative along Horsepond Road. The aim of the initiative is to make those who travel through the community aware that there is a speed limit of 20 MPH, which is appropriate given the residential density, lack of street lighting, and absence of footpaths in some areas. The Speedwatch activity is carried out at designated sites that are risk-assessed for the safety of both those performing the activity and road users. All Speedwatch groups have the support and supervision of the local police to record details of speeding vehicles using a calibrated velocity radar gun. Typically, in any one Speedwatch session, we see around 40% of vehicles recorded speeding at 25 MPH or over. The highest speed recorded to date was a staggering 52 MPH. Registered keepers of vehicles exceeding the speed limit receive a letter explaining the potential risks and consequences of their speeding.

Last year, while conducting a Speedwatch session on Horsepond Road, we were observed by some neighbours from Sonning Common. They were so impressed by the initiative that they formed their own group and can now be actively seen on the roads of their village. This year, both Speedwatch groups aim to work more closely together to coordinate efforts. This includes participating in 'National Speedwatch Day' on 11th July, where many Speedwatch groups across England and Wales are encouraged to hold a session to raise awareness of the initiative.

Your local community Speedwatch is a proactive solution to improve the safety and quality of life for everyone in our local community. Please let's all respect our local communities as we drive through and be careful out there!

Anyone keen to join The Gallowstree Common Speedwatch group please contact me at the email address below.

Michelle Goodyear, speedwatchGTC@kepc.info

Gardening Update

"It is said that when the days are long, the roots grow deep and the blossoms bold."

The Spring of 2025 brought a wonderful show of Cherry Blossom, Magnolia and Wisteria, with its warm sunshine and light winds. What a delight, following the dull wet winter.

With high summer now upon us I thought I would give some tips on how keep flowers blooming and plants thriving throughout the summer.

There are several ways to achieve this through nutrition.

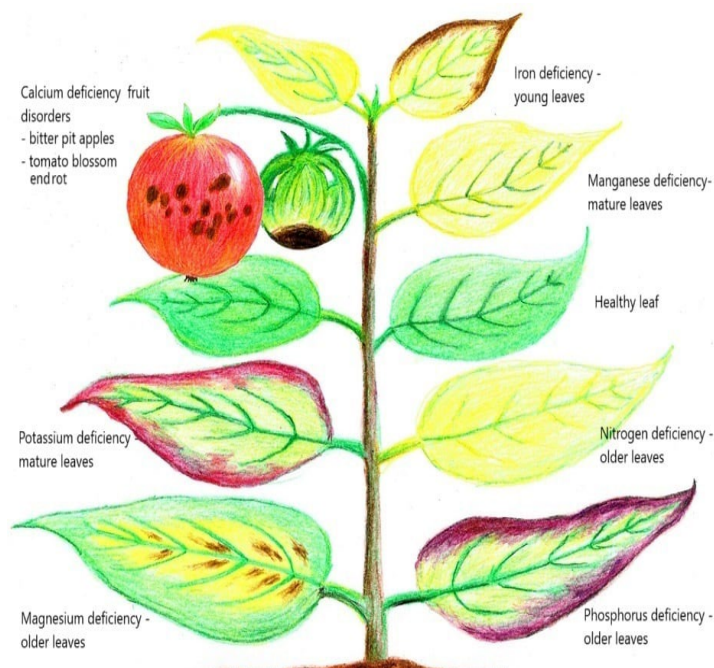
1. Organic fertilisers

- **Comfrey or nettle tea** is a traditional method. Place the nettles or comfrey in a bucket and weigh them down with a brick. Add water, top with a lid and leave for a couple of weeks outside, ideally until it smells very strong which is about 3 weeks. Strain out the leaves and apply diluted to the roots of plants in the ratio 1 part comfrey solution to 10 parts water. Apply to the base of plants. The nutrients, especially potassium supports a good fruit set. Wear protective clothing as the smell is awful and will linger on any clothing if spilt.
- **Seaweed** is another organic fertiliser. It can be bought widely as Maxicrop and it has the advantage over the comfrey tea that it is easier to know how much to apply and it does not smell. Harvested from sustainable seaweed, it boosts all plants and especially fruit
- **Composted soil** from one's own compost heap or brought in soil will ameliorate soils to the benefit of plants. Locally we have Norman Cox -mushroom compost alongside others. Alternatively, Rolawn Soil improver is available online.
- **Wood ash** from fires can add potassium to plants which aids flower and fruit set so it is much appreciated by roses Lavender and fruit trees.

2. Inorganic fertilisers

- **Granules such as Grow More or Vitax Q4 fertiliser.** Both are widely available and good as a general-purpose fertiliser in pelleted form. Add to the base of plants as given on the instructions. Watering in or rainfall will allow the plants to take up the nutrients.

Troubleshooting



(Image courtesy of RHS <https://www.rhs.org.uk/prevention-protection/nutrient-deficiencies>)

Plants can indicate their lack of nutrients to us through the leaves. For example, underwatering is limp leaves. Over watering is also limp leaves but goes alongside wet soil.

Here are details on each nutrient deficiency:

2. Nitrogen Deficiency:

- **Symptoms:** Yellowing of older leaves, starting from the tips and moving inward. The plant may also exhibit stunted growth and reduced yield.
- **Cause:** Insufficient nitrogen in the soil, which is essential for chlorophyll production and overall plant growth.
- **Solution:** Apply nitrogen-rich fertilizers like ammonium nitrate or organic compost.

3. Phosphorus Deficiency:

- **Symptoms:** Dark green leaves with purple or reddish spots, especially on the undersides. The plant may also have delayed maturity and poor root development.
- **Cause:** Lack of phosphorus, which is crucial for energy transfer and root development.
- **Solution:** Use phosphorus-rich fertilizers such as bone meal or superphosphate.

4. Potassium Deficiency:

- **Symptoms:** Yellowing and browning of leaf edges, often accompanied by curling leaves and weak stems. The plant may also be more susceptible to diseases.
- **Cause:** Inadequate potassium, which is vital for water regulation and enzyme activation.
- **Solution:** Apply potassium-rich fertilizers like potassium sulfate or wood ash.

5. Magnesium Deficiency:

- **Symptoms:** Yellowing between leaf veins (chlorosis), primarily affecting older leaves. The leaves may also develop brown spots and drop prematurely.

- **Cause:** Insufficient magnesium, which is a key component of chlorophyll and necessary for photosynthesis.
- **Solution:** Use magnesium-rich fertilizers such as Epsom salts (magnesium sulfate) or dolomitic lime.

Plants are survivors and have methods, such as giving all its nutrients (magnesium), to new leaves, sacrificing old leaves which turn yellow, (chlorosis), so that the plant can continue to grow.

Having a healthy well-nourished plant means it is more resilient against pests and disease, rather like humans. This is because healthy plants can regrow quicker after pest attacks. Just as healthy, well-fed humans fight infection and a weakened immune system makes them more prone to illness, nutrient deficient plants are more vulnerable to fungi, bacteria and pests.

Returning to Wisteria, for a great display next year. Cut back all the next strappy foliage to 7 buds or 10 inches in July. This may need to be repeated in August. Train any new shoots along where required. Cut back again in Feb to 2 buds. This allows the flowers to bloom.

Niamh Kendall

Local Weather Report: Spring 2025

	Average Maximum Temperature		Average Minimum Temperature		Rainfall	
	Cent	Fahr	Cent	Fahr	mm	In
March	13.2	56	2.5	26	6	0.23
April	17.8	64	4.8	41	18	0.71
May	19.8	68	7.7	46	27	1.06
Rainfall - 3 months to end May 2025					51	2.00

Spring 2025 was exceptionally dry and warm across the UK, contrasting sharply with the previous spring. During spring, weather patterns in north-west Europe are fairly static, this year the position of the dominant high-pressure system brought dry continental winds rather than the normal moist Atlantic winds.

March started cooler than average before high pressure over southwest England brought warmer, settled weather. Both the maximum daily temperature & average maximum temperature were particularly high for March. The continued presence of the high-pressure system in April saw settled warmer conditions for most of the month. Again, maximum day time temperature was well above average, making this April the 3rd warmest April in the UK. May started very warm but a change in the position of the high pressure saw a cooler second week before temperatures rose again, high daytime temperatures made it the warmest May in England.

It was a dry spring overall, March had only 20% of the normal rainfall, April 32%, and May 56%, making it the second driest spring on record.

This spring was characterized by clear skies and high sunshine levels, with March, April, and May experiencing 145%, 139%, and 128% of normal sunshine respectively. There were only 3 days when University of Reading recorded no sunshine.

Clear skies during the day bring plenty of sunshine but also result in lower overnight temperatures with frequent frosts in rural areas. The weather station at Benson recorded an average night-time temperature almost 1C below the long-term average. The last ground frost I saw was on May 14th in a particularly cold point on my daily dog walk.

New analysis shows spring is the fastest-warming season in the UK, average spring temperatures have increased by 1.8°C since 1970. According to the Joint Nature Conservation Committee sighting of the first frogspawn & the first native bluebell flower are seen as key events that herald the start of spring. These are now typically happening 9 days earlier than they were around 2000.

Lowest and Highest temperatures for 3 months to May 2025

	Highest		Lowest		Highest Rainfall	
	Cent	Fahr	Cent	Fahr	mm	In
March	18.4	65 (9 th)	-4.1	25 (2 nd)	3	0.11 (23 rd)
April	26.9	80 (30 th)	-0.9	30 (8 th)	13	0.51 (22 nd)
May	27.8	82 (1 st)	1.9	35 (8 th)	8	0.31 (11 th)

Chris Brook

Kidmore End Cricket Club



With the cricket season starting to get into full swing life at Kidmore End Cricket Club has certainly been busy for the first two months of the season. The Club league teams playing in the Thames Valley League have enjoyed a positive start to the season with all four XIs playing good cricket with a positive spirit. The Sunday XI is playing in the third season of the Berkshire Blast and they are hopefully of retaining their champions status from the 2023 season it has been great to see some of our younger players developing their skills being well supported by those who have more experience! The coloured clothing, pink ball and stumps and bails which light up have also added to the atmosphere.

The junior section of the club is also enjoying a successful season both in terms of matches played and with over one hundred boys and girls are attending the training sessions which run on a Friday evening and Tuesday evening this section of the club is in good health. The cricket coaching programme for women is proving very popular on a Tuesday evening, with the Kidmore End women's team have several fixtures planned in the remainder of the season. Friday evening training remains a real social event for all members of the local community as parents congregate with their children for cricket training whilst other local people come along for a catch up with friends and neighbours whilst enjoying the food and bar facilities which are available.

The club runs the ECB ALL Stars programme which introduces young people to cricket and all the other boys and girls who attend receive high quality coaching from our dedicated coaching team. All of the Junior teams are also underway with their league and friendly fixture programme and have also enjoyed some success however just as importantly they are playing good cricket for fun and enjoying spending time playing sport with their friends. Match reports for the club's teams are published weekly in the Henley Standard along with the website.

The recreation ground is also looking a picture and is a testament to the hours of work which our team of volunteers put into maintaining the cricket square, outfield and surrounds for the benefit of all who enjoy the use of the recreation ground.

Full details of fixtures and match results for all the Kidmore End teams and upcoming events are to be found on the club website and social media channels. For more information, please contact club Chairman Jeff Sheldon at kidmoreendcricketclub@gmail.com For further details on junior cricket please email Matt Connor at keccjuniors@gmail.com

You will be given a warm welcome at the Gallowstree Common ground if you come along on a match day or a Friday evening, so please do come along and see us. Further information on the club can be found on the club's website: <http://kidmoreendcc.co.uk/> You can also follow us on X (Twitter) and find us on Facebook.

Mark New

Do you run a business in the Parish of Kidmore End?

In the Autumn issue we plan to repeat a focus on local businesses. If you run a business in the Parish and would like to participate, please send no more than 100 words describing what you do and include your name and business address.

Send all contributions or any queries to me at sue.remenyi@gmail.com.



Summer 2025

Parish Council Meetings

23 July 2025
17 September 2025
22 October 2025
19 November 2025
17 December 2025
21 January 2026
18 February 2026
18 March 2026
22 April 2026
20 May 2026.

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 contributions to
the next edition of the newsletter is **6
September 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

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Diamond Jubilee Pavilion at Gallowstree Common

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Kidmore End Memorial Hall

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