



Kidmore End Parish Council

Cane End

Chalkhouse Green

Gallowstree Common

Kidmore End

Tokers Green

Newsletter Autumn 2025

Issue 161

Chair Report



Welcome everyone to our last newsletter of the year. I do feel that 2025 seems to have flown by. The Parish Council always takes a well-earned break in August, but this year we have been very busy all summer long on your behalf. Please read on for an update of what has been happening in your parish.

Political news

We expect to hear about our new Unitary council as early as November this year.

Planning

The planning application that continues to create lots 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. Fairfax resubmitted plans during the summer. Your parish council continues to object to this planning application.

The planning portal at South Oxfordshire District Council underwent major renovations over the summer. This means that there is a planning application back log of 2 weeks. Whilst planning officers are able to offer pre-application advice for large developments, they are not able to offer pre-application advice for smaller developments. They will advise us when normal service is resumed.

Neighbourhood Development Plans all over the country are being tested by speculative developers, with some housing applications being approved, despite an NDP being in place. In Kidmore End to date, we have had 3 planning applications that have gone to appeal over the time that we have had our NDP in place; all these applications were dismissed. We need

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to have our NDP updated and agreed by SODC by September 2027. Although updating an NDP is a shorter process, it still takes time, resources and a group of participating parishioners, from each village in our parish. If you are interested in joining the Kidmore End NDP Steering Group, please contact me or the Clerk, Mr Penfold on clerk@kepc.info. We really need a volunteer from Tokers Green and from Cane End.

Electoral Register

Please look out for an email from SODC (assuming that you have provided your email address to them). SODC are updating the electoral register. By updating your voter registration details online, SODC will save money by not having to send out a paper form.

New phone number for general waste enquiries

If you have any waste enquiries, the new number is 01235 422 123. This new number is for all district council household waste, recycling, food, garden waste collections, bulky waste (collections only), clinical waste collections and street cleaning services. It is also the number to call to report fly-tipping and abandoned vehicles, if you are unable to do so online.

Enquiries about garden waste permits should continue to use the main switchboard number of 01235 422422.

Restoration of Kidmore End Well Head

We now have a condition report for the Well Head, which is printed out on the hoarding around the well and can be found on the website at <https://kepc.info/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/Kidmore-End-Well-House-condition-survey-2025.pdf>. We have a quotation for carrying out the repairs, so the Parish Council estimates that we need to raise £25, 000 to ensure that there are sufficient funds for contingencies and sufficient funding to pay for additional costs associated with carrying out works on the public highway. We also don't know what condition the bricks lining the well shaft are in, and we will only know this once works commence. OCC Highways have been helpful. They are happy for us to close part of the road around the Well Head when repairs take place, provided that we have engaged a traffic consultant to produce a report showing how vehicle movements will be controlled to ensure highway safety.

Our next steps will be applying for planning permission for this Grade II listed building. As part of this process, we need to have evidence that the Parish Council owns the well, so a trip to the archives is required. We are also writing grant applications.

I am hugely grateful to the parishioners of Kidmore End who are supporting this important project. They have started raising money already. I am trying to arrange a crowd funding account, but I am having some difficulty arguing with the AI at the moment.

The Phone Box at Chalkhouse Green

Several residents in Chalkhouse Green have contacted the Parish Council about the state of the phone box in Chalkhouse Green. Following an on-site meeting in early July, a report on the condition of the Phone Box was commissioned [see page 6] by the Parish Council, which was discussed at the council meeting in July. A huge thank you to Dr James Mather for writing this condition report for us. This report discussed the future use of the Phone Box, so a follow up meeting on 12 September at the Phone Box was arranged so that the views of Chalkhouse Green residents could be canvassed. The good news is that residents in Chalkhouse Green have started a working party to repair, restore and look after the phone box. The plan is to keep the phone box in situ as a landmark; after all, it has been used by residents for the last 55 years as a focal point to help visitors find their way around! Works will be carried out when weather permits, and a defibrillator will be installed when funds allow. Huge thanks to Johnny Hall for offering to have the phone box repaired and repainted. We all look forward to seeing the project completed.

Our new website at www.kepc.info



The updated website went live on 1 June, and it all looks great. We asked you, our residents, about how our website could be more relevant and useful to you. Our new website reflects the views of our community. We have a new emphasis on informing residents about what is going on across the parish, the county and beyond, providing a place for you to promote events and news happening in your part of the parish.

We need your help develop our website further. We are looking for a resident in each village to be the focus for your community, collating news and forthcoming activities and events to provide articles and diary entries to go on the website. There will be help, and I am assured that this does not take up too much time. The Tokers Green village section

is an example of what has been done, and an example of what your village section might look like. The web team are working with various communities in Chalkhouse Green (Phone Box project), Kidmore End (Playground) and Gallowstree (Playground & Pavilion) to help build their village website area. So please get in touch via the site by contacting the webmaster and/or the Clerk clerk@kepc.info if you would like to help.

Allotment news

Allotment users from Cane End have petitioned the Parish Council to allow them to carry out some infrastructure works to improve how the allotment works for them. One project is to widen the gate so that compost can be delivered more easily. Another project is to put in a second water trough at the other end of the allotment plot. The Parish Council is supporting these projects by paying for the planning application to widen the gate and has offered to manage the project to improve access to water so that VAT can be reclaimed (reducing the costs to the allotment holders by 20%).

After long discussion, the Parish Council is raising the rent for allotment holders from September 2025 to £25 a plot per year.

Tokers Green Pond

The Tokers Green Pond renovation is complete, and what a fantastic job. The Village Green at Tokers Green is now a green space that everyone can use and enjoy, so well done to everyone in Tokers Green who had a hand in creating this focal point for your village.

Community Infrastructure Funds

At the July meeting of the Parish Council, we agreed to use CIL funds to replace the toddler swing in Gallowstree Common Play Area. Despite the best efforts of Cllr Marguerite Thornton Gray, who worked hard to get quotes for the new swing and volunteered to oversee the installation, the project could not be delivered during the summer. The new toddler swing will be erected soon.

At the July meeting, we also decided to purchase a new Speed Indicator Device for Horsepond Road. More details below.

Road Safety

There is a formal consultation on reducing the speed limit on the A4074 corridor between Oxford and Caversham. Your Parish Council is supporting this speed reduction, because it will improve safety significantly for parishioners, particularly at the junction of Rokeby Drive and the A4074. I know that this junction is in the parish of Mapledurham, but many of us use this junction on a daily basis. Having a reduced speed limit on the main road may encourage drivers to be more patient on Rokeby Drive as well. I am hoping that by driving more slowly on the A4074, drivers will be encouraged to adhere to the 20 mph limit in place on Rokeby Drive. There is a meeting to discuss this consultation at OCC on October 9. Let's hope that good sense prevails, and that the consensus is to reduce the speed limit.

On August 29, several parish councillors from Gallowstree Common met with Jon Beale (OCC Highways) and our OCC Cllr Maggie Filipova-Rivers to discuss road safety on Horsepond Road, Gallowstree Common. We had a wide ranging and fascinating discussion on possible measures for how we can reduce speeds, mostly centred upon improving driver awareness of the 20 mph limit and encouraging considerate driving. The first order of play will be finding a suitable position for the new Speed Indicator Device. Cllr Marguerite Thornton Gray is keen to champion driver awareness, by writing to schools, institutions and businesses in the area to ask them to remind parents and employees about the 20 mph limit on Horsepond Road.

Don't forget that you can report potholes, overgrown hedges, blocked gulleys, and noisy drain covers 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.

Public transport to and from Oxford on the River Rapids (Wallingford) X40

- From 3 August 2025, the service increased to operate up to every 20 minutes on weekdays and every 30 minutes on Saturdays and Sundays.
- Buses will return to operate via the Abingdon Road in Oxford, offering faster journeys into the City Centre for passengers, stopping only at Redbridge Park&Ride, Canning Crescent, St Aldates Police Station and Westgate.
- Night bus NX40 will continue to operate via the Iffley Road but will now extend beyond Wallingford to Reading, with support from Reading Borough Council. The last buses will be 03:30 from Oxford and 03:05 from Reading, both operating as far as Wallingford.
- Brand new high-specification buses will be introduced on the route, offering greater capacity and smoother journeys for passengers.

Fibre Broadband Operational Works Weekend Service

There has been a lot of disruption over the summer with works carried out in Chalkhouse Green and Kidmore End. Oxfordshire County Council have a Digital Infrastructure Programme Team. If you have any questions, or need guidance

or assistance, or you need to make a complaint out of office hours (over the weekend), then contact this team. Unfortunately, you need to be able to access the internet to contact the Officer at <https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/communities/digital-infrastructure>

Other News

Thank you to our Flower Ladies who continue to bring us joy with their flower arrangements.

Caroline Aldridge chairman@kepc.info

From the District Councillor



The prospect of the new arrangements for local government with a Unitary Authority of some sort is becoming clearer, with the options now really down to three, first a Oxfordshire wide authority, secondly the five district size councils in Oxfordshire, (South, Cherwell, Vale, West and City) being compressed into two, basically the City combining with Cherwell and West Oxfordshire and taking in parts of South Oxfordshire and the rest of South Oxfordshire and the Vale combining with West Berkshire and finally South Oxfordshire, the Vale of White Horse and West Berkshire forming a new council, Ridgeway. The second option should not really be available, as the government had indicated that boundaries of existing authorities should not change.

There are difficulties with all the proposals in different ways; a single authority for Oxfordshire would cover a very large population, greater than the proposed optimum of 500,000, while the proposed Ridgeway council covers a very diverse area. One feature of Ridgeway is that a lot of Britain's nuclear industry from AWRE to Burghfield and Culham will come within one authority.

West Berkshire is already a Unitary Authority, and, facing the challenges of Adult and Child Social services, is already under financial pressure. Apparently, the prospect of these pressures being relieved by the strong financial position of South Oxfordshire is enticing; one has to hope that if this solution comes to pass the weaknesses of West Berkshire do not drag the rest of us down.

A unitary council covers highways, social services and what's left of the local education system as well as planning and waste. The problem lies in the open-ended nature of adult and child social services where statutory obligations can often only be met by engaging private companies who will sometimes take advantage of the situation and can cost local councils huge amounts of money. Oxfordshire County Council is already addressing this by building its own children's homes with the objective of reducing out of area placements. However, the days of large children's homes has passed, and these new homes are for 4 children or less, albeit for children with very special needs.

An important function of the council that we use every week is waste collection, and it's very good that South Oxfordshire now tops the national league in respect of the percentage of waste that is recycled at 62.9%. This is a very good position, although when you look at the volume of waste per person South Oxfordshire does seem to be a very throwaway society, as per head we produce 354 kilograms a year, about a third of a tonne, much more than many authorities, although not topping the league. Whether the volume we produce includes garden waste, which is also then included in the percentage that is recycled is not clear from the statistics.

The District Council is also responsible for dealing with fly tipping, and this is something that I am particularly interested in. It's good that we have not suffered the onslaught of huge volumes of waste being tipped in quiet lanes that seems to happen nearer London, but there is a steady trickle of fly tipping around the District. We are very lucky that the team at SODC are really excellent in this matter, with the officers taking a positive approach, and the team from Biffa who actually do the picking up being both fast and proactive. I know that the fly tipped waste is searched for clues that give information as to where it has come from and who has dumped it, and the Council has a good success rate in successful prosecutions. It is regrettable that the Courts do not impose more punitive fines.

Councillor Peter Dragonetti,

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

St Michaels Church

For about four months Fr Colin Blayney from Australia lived amongst us and acted as our parish priest. During this time, he shared his experience as a pastor of a much larger parish back home. He has returned to Australia and has left us in a better position to discern and fulfil the mission of the Church in our locality. He encouraged us to be better listeners to God and one another, as a means to discern how the parish moves forward over the coming months and years. We will miss him but are grateful for the legacy he leaves. Through his encouragement we now have adults, along with children,

serving at the altar during our Sunday Masses for the first time in many years. He also boosted the team that looks after our grounds. A few parishioners undertook basic first aid training, after which

it was decided to purchase a defibrillator for community use. An appeal to parishioners raised the money within two weeks and the defibrillator is now fixed to the front of the church. Look for the red box as you walk past.

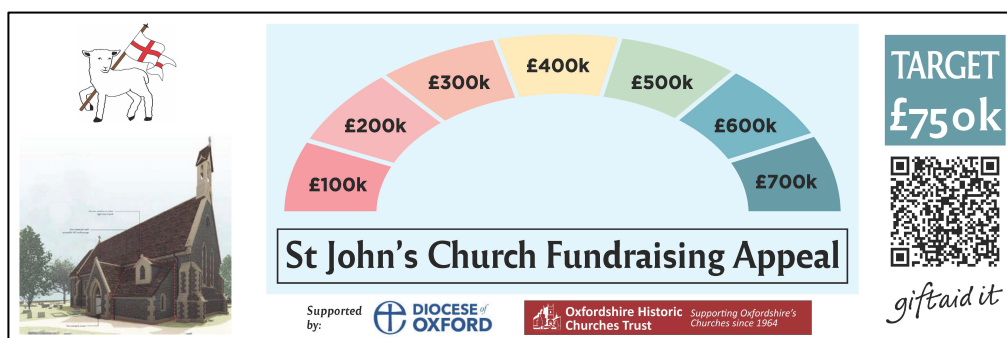
The Catholic Church is celebrating a Year of Jubilee, as it does every 25 years. We are invited to reflect on our relationship with God and one another and see where things need changing for the better. We are encouraged to participate in a pilgrimage together and as a parish we will be walking to Our Lady and St Anne's in Caversham (designated as a Jubilee church). There we will be joined by those unable to make the journey of foot and participate in a time of prayer together.

Looking forward we are planning how we can continue to support CIRDIC, particularly in enabling them to provide a special Christmas for their clients.

November is the month when we remember in a special way our loved ones who have died. We will visit Kidmore End cemetery at 2pm on Remembrance Sunday for a time of prayer. Anyone with family or friends buried there are welcome to join us.

If you have moved to the area and have been looking for your local Catholic church we would be delighted to welcome you. To contact the parish see our website: www.saintmichaelsonningcommon.org.uk.

The Parish Church



The church architects have submitted detailed plans for the electrical work required in Phase 1 of our 3-part programme to modernise St John's. Tender documentation has been sent to potential contractors, and we have been receiving visits from prospective businesses to gain more knowledge of the site. Phase 1 includes rewiring, new heating and lighting, and redecoration of the interior. Responses will be scrutinised, and a choice will be made assuming that the bids come in below our budget. If there is a successful outcome to this process, we expect the church will be closed for several months from mid-November.

The work is very exciting, but also a significant challenge, not least because of restricted access and of course, the extra traffic through the village during the school term. Unfortunately, there is no way around this, save that contractors will be asked to respect school drops and pick-ups as far as possible. We cannot restrict this work to school holiday times; but by doing the work over the winter months, we can also look forward to a brighter, warmer more welcoming building in the spring.

The traditional Act of Remembrance will take place at the War Memorial starting to gather at 10.50 am on Sunday 9th November. Plans are afoot for a Christmas Fair (to be held at Christ the King, Sonning Common), and we will have a full schedule of Christmas services again at the newly refurbished Christ the King. Do look out for bulletins on the church noticeboard and in the Parish Church Magazine.

The Kidmore End Well

Funding applications are being submitted to organisations that are deemed appropriate to finance this kind of renovation. This is, thankfully, a coordinated effort as we strive to reach a target of £25,000 needed to pay for the work. We are grateful for our District Councillor's support, but we will need to draw upon a number of sources to get over the line – and then act in accordance with operational protocols and Council timelines before physically starting to recover this fondly appreciated village asset.

An initiative to make the temporary structure more attractive by posting large images of The Well on the hoarding as a physical reminder of the important historic role of The Well in our village has begun. We expect these images will remain up until restoration work can start, hopefully in the not-too-distant future.

Nick Room, Churchwarden

Repair Café at Springwater Church

Did you know that we have a local Repair Café in Sonning Common? It is run by Louise Floodgate, who is a member of Eco SoCo. This small group of volunteers, mostly residing in Sonning Common, have been very successful in many projects including planting orchards, a community vegetable garden, giving away free trees, many talks on wildlife and the environment and other community events.

The Repair Cafe opens it's doors on the first Saturday the month from February to December from 10-1230 at Springwater Church, Blounts Court Road, Peppard. They have a fantastic group of volunteer repairers who can fix electrical items, clocks, bikes, garden equipment, sharpening, jewellery and textiles. Alongside the repairs there is a cafe selling hot drinks and homemade cakes. The event is free but donations are gratefully received. The volunteer repairers are very successful at fixing things, but if your item can't be repaired, then they will be happy to give advice about what any further action that you can.

So the dates for your diary are:

When: 1st Saturday of the month

Where: Springwater Church, Blounts Court Road

When: 10 am to 12.30 pm



Report on Chalkhouse Green Telephone Box, July 2025

The present situation

The phone box [PB] is of the K6, post-1935 type, designed by the eminent architect Giles Gilbert Scott. In 2020, about 8000 traditional phone boxes remain in public service, of which about 2000 have Listed Building status.



Our PB is in fair condition, needing a general overhaul and repaint, and some repairs to the door in particular.

Unrestored PBs of the K6 type are traded in unrestored condition, at prices varying between £1000 and £3300. To this extent, our PB is a saleable asset.

The current location of the PB in a hedge at Chalkhouse Green is not at all good, being too close to the road and inclined to flood. It has been suggested that it be relocated to the triangle of open ground opposite, where there is a bit of open space for possible activities, the present notice board, (or an upgraded replacement) and perhaps a signpost.

Restoration

Several firms offer a restoration service, and also sell restored PBs. The cost of restoration varies between £3000 and £6600 plus VAT. If the box is to be fitted out internally with phone, cash box, etc., the cost can rise to £8500 + VAT. Timescales for initial waiting are

18 months and then 6 weeks for the actual works. The most expensive on offer are not apparently the most durable, and in some cases have cheap paintwork.

However, if we wanted to manage the works ourselves, then we could prioritise durability; the operations could commence much earlier, and include:

1. Lift phone off base, dismantle and transport main structure to shot-blasters at Ipsden.
2. Hack up original base.
3. Excavate for and cast new base in new location.
4. Overhaul and repair existing door and repaint.
5. Collect blasted and powder-coated structure from Ipsden; reassemble with new glazing.
6. Fix down to new base.
7. Install new services, perhaps including small solar power pack.

A discussion is needed on how these various operations might be provided locally, on a cost-favourable basis. Cost guidelines will spring from this process.

Future Use

K6 PBs are widely sought after for use within the community, and also in private houses, where they may be used as garden features, shower cubicles, etc.

Within the community, PBs have been used as sharing libraries, defibrillator housings, cake shops, battlefield memorials, beach showers, coffee shops (with machine), etc. However, these uses are often very location-specific: if your site is not at a battlefield, a beach, or at a pier or other public place where the public may require a defibrillator or desire a coffee, then the project may lose its point. This is the nub of the problem: the PB is not hard to restore, but a real, worthwhile and sustainable new use is elusive.

However, *defining a centre for Chalkhouse Green* has been mentioned. It isn't clear whether this would be mainly about defining location or providing a meeting-point. The PB be one way of doing both. Seating and a table could be associated with it. The PB could be lockable and contain equipment. Signage could be integrated into it (though it may be better kept separate).

Another would be to sell the PB, and in its place have a tall and imposing posting box, to replace the current modest modern box-on-a-post across the road. These are available either as original cast iron, or reproduction GRP items, at costs of about £6000 and £1000 respectively, plus VAT in some cases, and of course, installation.

Dr James Mather

Kidmore End Primary School

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

Autumn term is in full swing at Kidmore End CE Primary School. Preparations are in place for our harvest festival, with the sounds of 'Cauliflowers fluffy' and 'Autumn Days' ringing through the school. This year we are supporting the foodbank at Springwater church (more information can be found at www.springwaterchurch.org.uk). We have been talking a lot about being thankful for all that we have around us; family, friends, our homes and our food, as well as thinking about those who are less fortunate than us.



We have been enjoying the autumnal sunshine and the amazing grounds we are blessed to have here at school. Our outdoor learning is in full swing, with our year 1 pupils in Cedar class enjoying their outdoor projects. Playtime has been abuzz, with pupils across the school playing together and helping our new foundation pupils settle in.

Trips and experiences have already begun, with our pupils from Sycamore and Birch classes visiting Hampton Court last week. They absolutely loved seeing their learning about the Tudors come to life! Our year 6s are getting excited about their upcoming residential experience at Woodlands Outdoor Education Centre near the Brecon Beacons in Wales. The trips, visitors and the range of sporting events we attend bolsters the learning in the classroom and widens the pupils' experiences, the learning stays in their memories for years to come.

I feel so lucky to be a part of such a kind, supportive community. During the summer holidays many of our parents gave up their time on a weekend to participate in our working bee. Friends and family worked hard painting, fixing and clearing rooms, play areas and equipment. Our school feels brighter, fresher and the pupils are enjoying using the spaces around the school.

The staff and I are so excited about the year ahead. If you are interested in joining our school please do look on our website for details of our open afternoons, where you will meet me and the team and see the school in action.

Claire Spankie, Headteacher



Tokers Green and Chazey Heath News

It's been a busy summer of growing, harvesting and enjoying the outdoors in Tokers Green and Chazey Heath. Thank you to everyone who has contributed.

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. On our normal 'first Tuesday of the month' working session in August, we weeded around the base of the trees, watered those most in need and thinned some fruit from overloaded branches. We also harvested some ripe plums and shared them among the volunteers present at the time. Graham had also recently cut the grass, so it is looking splendid again. There is plenty of fruit still growing in early September, which should be ripe over the coming weeks.



In July, with the continuing hot and dry weather, we needed to water every tree again. Each tree got a bucket of water, while the pears and plums got a second bucket as they looked more stressed. Thanks again to the merry band of water carriers and also to Howard and Sandy for the use of their outside tap. Phil kindly brought his strimmer and tidied up under the benches too.

Looking forward, we are planning our next Wassail for Saturday 7 February 2026; more detail nearer the time.

Ian Beale - ian99beale@yahoo.co.uk

Tokers Green Village Green

The Village Green is still looking good, with the help of volunteers who have been watering the beech hedge around the perimeter of the green. Following evidence of rodents gnawing at the hedge stems, tree guards have now been installed, which will hopefully prevent any further casualties.

The main retaining wall has now been reinforced to prevent further erosion, so that should be the last of the projects required to keep our Village Green protected for some time.

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



Sunflower Competition winners

After growing and selling sunflowers at the Big Lunch, with proceeds going to the Community Fund, we have two worthy winners of this year's sunflower competition.

'Tallest Sunflower', with a sunflower measuring 250cm – Ian Beale.

'Most Gorgeous Sunflower' – Amy Rumble.

Congratulations to you both!

Thank you to everyone who bought or entered sunflowers this year. Good luck for next year!



Maria Hatton - maria_hatton@yahoo.com

Pack Saddle Allotment Plots

"They think it's all over – well, it is now!" Sadly, the plots at the Pack Saddle, under the auspices of Phil, the landlord, are being closed down by the Mapledurham Estate, after five years' hard graft. I am sure that folk would happily still work their plot and avoid any conflict with the Estate's future wishes. An approach to Mapledurham Estate is being considered to see if an alternative solution can be found and head off the deadline given for total closure on the **31 December 2025**.

John Ness, who had led on all this since 2020, has been such an enthusiast and fellow plotter over the years, and I am sure everyone will join me in thanking him for all his good work and helping to bring the community together, and to thank Phil for opening the area up and giving people an escape during the dark old days of Covid.

But the good news is the group are still going ahead with their annual BBQ on **Sunday 21st September at 3.00pm**. As for now, keep on digging (unless you are a no-digger!).

Kidmore End parish website

Tokers Green is one of the most featured villages on the KEPC website with regular activities and updates and we encourage everyone to go to the site and welcome your feedback and suggestions on how we might improve the parish council service and encourage a greater sharing across the parish community. We hope to add more and more activities to other village sections in the months ahead. Visit www.kepc.info.

Help needed, please!

Organisers of the women's and men's Christmas dinners are both stepping down this year. Our many thanks go to both Catherine Middleton and Ian Beale for all their good work and very successful events over the years in helping to bring the community together at Christmas.

Are you able to take on the baton? It would be great to have new people organise these excellent village events. Contact me using the email address below.

Andrew Harland - andrew.harlandkiteuk@gmail.com

Dates for your diaries

- The men's Christmas dinner date is Friday 5th December 2025.
- The women's Christmas dinner date is Friday 12th December 2025.
- The annual Christmas Carols event is on Sunday 21st December 5.00-6.30pm, on the Village Green around our village Christmas Tree.
- The annual Wassail is back on Saturday 7th February 2026 in the orchard.

The community fund

With our village WhatsApp group becoming an active marketplace/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 coffee mornings at the village pond

Every Friday at 11am, Selina from Sloth Coffee comes in her coffee van and supplies us with an excellent array of 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



Gardening Update

“Autumn carries more gold in its pocket than all the other seasons.” – Jim Bishop

Weather Reflections

After months of heavy rainfall, the sun arrived in April and has been shining ever since. While many of us have enjoyed sitting out and admiring the fruits of our labour, the prolonged drought and hosepipe ban have left us anxious about new plantings and watching our lawns turn brown.

Hydrangeas have been especially affected (the name itself comes from hydra, Greek for water). After bumper displays in recent years, this season's blooms are shrivelled and sparse, which sadly means fewer flowers next year. Similarly, dry soils and high temperatures have stressed many late-cropping vegetables such as squash and pumpkins, which will need careful hand-watering to prevent growth checks and damage to the developing fruit.

A “False Autumn”

Have you noticed the dry leaves littering pavements and grass? This “false autumn” is nature's way of conserving water. Trees and shrubs drop their leaves to reduce water loss through transpiration, allowing them to survive extended dry spells. While many will recover, there will inevitably be some losses.



Lawn Care in September



Although parched now, lawns will green up once the rain returns. However, bare patches are likely, and September is the perfect time to overseed. The soil is still warm enough for germination, and with a little care you can restore a thick, healthy sward.

Steps for overseeding:

- Remove the thatch with a rake or scarifier.
- Aerate with a fork or hollow puncher.
- Broadcast seed at around 35g per square metre.
- Remove weeds by hand.
- Rake lightly to ensure good soil contact.
- Keep the seed watered during the first two weeks.

A liquid feed such as Maxicrop can also give shrubs, trees, fruit and vegetables a welcome boost of nutrients before winter. This is particularly valuable for perennial crops like raspberries, and even hydrangeas will benefit from a tonic at this time of year.

Time to Divide and Replant

Autumn is the perfect time to review which plants thrived this year and which didn't. It's also a great opportunity to divide clump-forming perennials. This prevents overcrowding, lets in more light, reinvigorates the parent plant, and provides you with two or three extra plants for free.

How to divide:

- Lift the plant carefully with a fork.
- Split the roots using a spade or sharp knife.
- Replant divisions immediately.
- Water in well and apply a frost-protective mulch.

Although the top growth will die back over winter, the roots will be busy establishing ready for a strong start in spring.

Plants to divide now include:

Rudbeckia

- Cool-climate ornamental grasses such as Carex, Festuca and Hakonechloa (divide warm-climate grasses in spring instead).
- Asters

I hope you enjoy the Autumn display.

Niamh Kendall

Local Weather Report: Spring 2025

	Average Minimum Temperature		Average Maximum Temperature		Rainfall	
	Cent	Fahr	Cent	Fahr	mm	In
June	12.6	54	23.3	74	36	1.4
July	13.0	55	27.7	82	44	1.7
August	11.7	53	23.8	75	30	1.2
Rainfall - 3 months to end August 2025					110	4.3

High average temperatures made Summer 2025 the warmest UK summer since records began in 1884. The top-five list of the UK's warmest summers are now 2025, 2018, 2006, 2003, and 2022. For those who lived in England in 1976 and fondly remember that summer, it has now been displaced by this top-five list.

Summer was dominated by persistent high pressure with extended periods of dry, calm, and sunny weather, which reduced soil moisture and amplified ground and air temperatures. Additionally, marine heatwaves raised sea surface temperatures by up to 3°C above normal, reducing the moderating influence of the sea. There were four heatwaves this summer. In Oxfordshire heatwaves are defined as at least 3 consecutive days where the maximum daytime temperature exceeds 27°C. There were a total of 22 days when the temperature exceeded 27°C, on 10 of those days the temperature exceeded 30°C.

The persistent high pressure resulted in clear skies, with sunshine being higher than normal each month. June 5th was the only when University of Reading recorded no sunshine.

Most of the summer was exceptionally dry, with rainfall below average in all three months. July's rainfall was near average, but June & August had only 50% the normal rainfall. Intense rainfall continues to be a feature of our weather, each month had one day when a significant proportion of the month's rain fell in a single 24-hour period. In total there were 65 dry days. This lack of rainfall combined with the extremely dry spring resulted in a hosepipe ban being introduced on July 22nd.

In early August northern Scotland was hit by Storm Floris, this was the sixth named storm of storm season (which runs from Sept 1st to August 31st), in the previous storm season the UK experienced 12 named storms.

Lowest and Highest temperatures for 3 months to August 2025

	Lowest		Highest		Highest Rainfall	
	Cent	Fahr	Cent	Fahr	mm	In
June	6.9	45 (3 rd)	31.3	88 (19 th)	16	0.6 (5 th)
July	6.7	44 (2 nd)	33.5	92 (11 th)	16	0.6 (31 st)
August	5.7	42 (21 st)	33.8	93 (12 th)	13	0.5 (28 th)

Chris Brook

Kidmore End Cricket Club



Parishioners who regularly visit the recreation ground at Gallowstree Common will have noticed that the club has packed away for the season with sightscreens moved to the pavilion, covers taken off, square renovated and fenced off and so the winter hibernation begins!

The 2025 season finished on the first weekend in September with the final round of league matches for the men's senior teams and the boys U17 Team in the Berkshire Cup final. Unfortunately, the final round of league matches saw all three senior men's team lose their matches and the boys U17 final was abandoned due to a player from Theale & Tilehurst sustaining an injury with a new date for the final yet to be announced.

Junior training this year ran until the end of August due to children wanting to keep playing past the traditional end of season in July. With Friday nights at the recreation ground proving to be a popular event both for members of the cricket club and the local community. The girls section enjoyed a good season with many positive aspects being seen in their development through training and performances in their matches. The boys teams from U9-U17 also put in strong performances in their league campaigns in both the Berkshire and Oxfordshire competitions and with several of our

younger players playing in the Saturday League teams and also the Sunday league and friendly team it showed that the hard work being put into junior training is paying dividends.

Looking ahead to the 2026 season we would welcome any new players of any age or ability to join and play in any of our senior and junior teams. We will also be running as ever our very popular Friday evening junior coaching sessions with a variety of food trucks serving their lovely dishes and the club bar being open for anyone in the local area to enjoy the facilities. Indoor training will again run throughout the winter for juniors and seniors so please keep an eye on social media channels and members on their inbox. In addition to this the Friday night pavilion bar will be open twice a month between October and March so do keep an eye out for the adverts which will appear on the Parish website and our various social media platforms.

Mark New

Supporting Local Causes in Our Community

The Whitchurch Hill Village Fete is a popular event attended by many people from across South Oxfordshire and West Berkshire. The Fete fund currently holds approximately £3,000 available for distribution to deserving causes within the parishes in the surrounding area.

Funding Priorities

Priority for funding will be given to projects or asset purchases that:

- Provide a direct benefit to the local community
- Do not receive direct financial support from local government sources

If you are part of a community group, organisation, or initiative with a proposal that fits these criteria—whether it's for equipment, resources, or a new activity that will enhance community life—we'd love to hear from you.

How to Apply

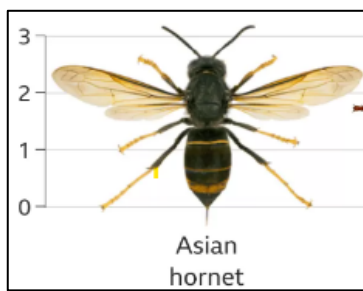
To request an application form, please write to Peter Burdon, parish councillor in Goring Heath, at cllr.peter.burdon@goringheathparishcouncil.gov.uk.

Peter will be happy to guide you through the straightforward application process and to answer any questions about eligibility or the types of projects the fund can support.

Let's Make a Difference Together

The Whitchurch Hill Village Fete fund is a testament to what a community can achieve. If you know of a good cause that could benefit from a helping hand, don't hesitate to get in touch or tip off someone you know in the community.

Asian Hornet Update



As of 11th September 2025, the Animal and Plant Health Agency's National Bee Unit (NBU) informed us that there has been a total of 429 sightings of the yellow-legged Asian hornet in England in 2025. Furthermore 112 confirm nests have been found and destroyed. The majority of sightings have been in Kent, with some in East Sussex and Essex. Fortunately, there have so far been no sightings within a 35-mile radius of our parish. At this time of the year the mated Queens have left the nest and have found a place to hibernate for winter. It is possible, if still unlikely, that some may have strayed closer to our area. We will therefore remain vigilant, and I will be in touch with holders of the community traps in the Spring when we will repeat the monitoring programme.

If you would like to be part of the Parish 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: 07791 840 999

sue.remenyi@gmail.com



Autumn 2025

Parish Council Meetings

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
December 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 0345 3101111
<https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/contactus/contact-highways-team#no-back>

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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Maggie Filipova-Rivers maggie.filipova-rivers@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Diamond Jubilee Pavilion at Gallowstree Common

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Kidmore End Memorial Hall

Bookings:
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Gallowstree Common

Community Speed Watch Group speedwatchGTC@kepc.info

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