

Grapevine Appeal

The Ascott Grapevine is provided **FREE** to every household in Ascott and we wish this to continue for a long time to come.

Although 'The Grapevine' does receive support from the Parish Council, it only raises a limited amount of revenue from advertising. The Ascott Grapevine survives mainly on donations. If you would like to help The Ascott Grapevine continue, any donation large or small would be appreciated. You can give a donation to any member of the editorial team.

If there is an aspect of village life not already covered in The Ascott Grapevine please contact a member of the team to discuss your ideas.

Articles for the next issue of The Ascott Grapevine should be submitted by 1st July 2025.

Articles submitted after this date may not be included.

Call 01993 832004 or email: stuart.john.fox@gmail.com

The Editorial Team:

Stuart Fox, Elaine Byles, Wendy Pearse, Keith Ravenhill

Content & Editorial Policy

If you have an article, story or poem you would like to submit for publication The Ascott Grapevine editorial team would love to hear from you. Material for publication is gratefully accepted. Due to space considerations material may not be used immediately but may be held over to be included in a later issue.

The Grapevine editorial team reserve the right to shorten, amend or reject any material submitted for publication.

Opinions expressed in contributions are not necessarily those of the editorial team.

*******************Advertising Rates

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Front Cover by Wendy Pearse

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Local Churches

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Churchwarden James Walmsley Tony Gibson 01993 830699

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Churchwarden Mike Hartley 01993 830160 SS John Fisher & Thomas More, Burford

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bury Priest: Father Stephen Lambert

Churchwarden Pat Yaxley 01993 831385

Holy Trinity, Chipping Norton and

St Teresa, Charlbury

Society of Friends (Quakers), Burford Priest: Fr Clive Dytor 07484158642

Nigel Braithwaite 01993 831282 Sunday Mass at Charlbury 09:15

Services at the Chase Benefice 2025

All the Church buildings of the Benefice are open for personal prayer and reflection everyday between 10 am - 4 pm. Public worship as follows:

1st Sunday of the month 10 am BCP Communion Service at Spelsbury

2nd Sunday of the month 10 am CW Communion Service at Ascott

3rd Sunday of the month 10 am CW Communion Service at Enstone 4th Sunday of the month 8 am BCP Communion Service at Ascott

4th Sunday of the month 10 am BCP Communion Service at Chadlington

Ascott residents are welcome at any of these services. Details will be posted on our website and notice-boards around the village.

For those unable to come to services, there will be a recorded weekly service of reflection and prayer on our website: www.thechasebenefice.org.uk or you can listen by phone on 01608 998955.

From the Rector

Dear Friends

"The sun is out, The grass is ris, I wonder where my holidays is!"

So goes the old, light-hearted rhyme that often comes to mind at this time of year, as we look ahead to the summer months. There is a sense of joy and anticipation as the days lengthen, the gardens bloom, and the warmth of the sun encourages us to slow down a little and savour the world around us.

I wonder what plans you might have for the coming months? Perhaps you are looking forward to a well-earned holiday, a family gathering, or simply some quiet days at home enjoying the peace of your own garden. Whatever your hopes, it's good to take time to pause and reflect on the gift that rest truly is.

Rest is an essential part of what it means to be human. We are, after all, human beings, not human doings — a phrase that always makes me smile, even as I struggle to live it out myself! In a world that often seems to measure our worth by how busy or productive we are, choosing to rest can feel almost counter-cultural. We live in a society that prizes achievement, efficiency, and constant activity. In that context, making space for rest can sometimes seem indulgent, even irresponsible.

Yet true rest is not a luxury — it is a necessity. It nourishes the soul, renews the spirit, and restores the body. It is woven into the fabric of creation itself: when God made the heavens and the earth, even He took a day to rest. Not because He was weary, but to set a pattern for us — a rhythm of work and Sabbath, of action and stillness.

Sabbath rest invites us to trust: to trust that the world will continue to turn even without our endless striving, and that our value lies not in what we achieve, but in who we are — beloved children of God.

So whatever this summer brings you — whether travel or time at home, busy family gatherings or quiet moments alone — I encourage you to make space for true rest. Take time to notice the beauty of God's creation, to cherish the people around you, and to let your soul breathe.

May your summer be filled with joy, with peace, and with the deep knowledge that you are loved beyond measure.

With every blessing,

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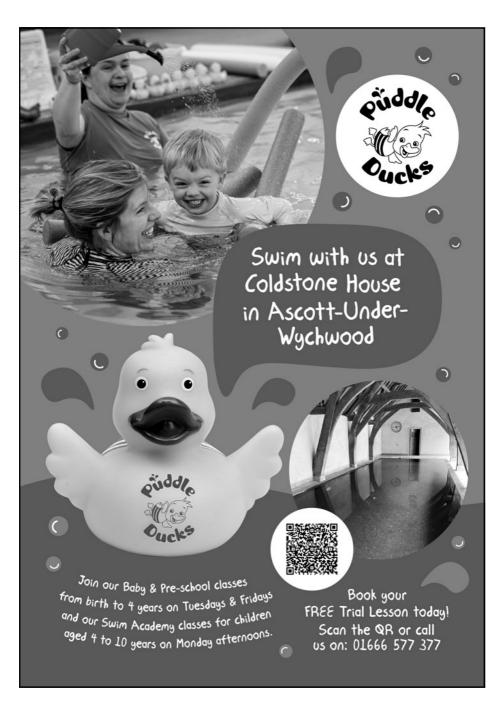
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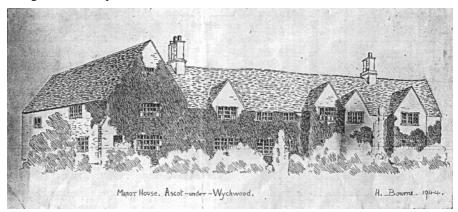
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Heart of the Community



A Tale of Two Manors

At both the east end and the west end of Ascott is a Manor but their histories could not be more different. Ascott Manor at the east end is ancient and when first listed in the Doomsday Book in 1086 during the reign of William the Conqueror it did not mean just a house and surrounding land. A Manor then meant an estate and at that time Ascott Manor Estate comprised nearly two thirds of Ascott parish. The Manor was held from the king by Robert Doilly and in the middle of the 12th century an unlicensed motte and bailey castle was constructed there by his descendent Roger Doilly during the civil war between Stephen and Matilda. The motte still remains. Henry II ordered the castle to be demolished and a manor house was subsequently built, some parts of which are incorporated into the present manor. This estate continued into the last century, latterly in the hands of Cornbury Estate although now some parts have been sold on.



Ascott Manor showing the south front in 1944.



The Manor complex viewed from the north. Early 1900.

Ascott Grapevine

In comparison at the west end Wychwood Manor is a very recent introduction only coming into being in 1914. Around 1911 Lord Sanderson Furness first leased then bought Stone End Farm (now Ascott Earl House) at the west end of the village. He shortly afterwards bought Coldstone Farm next door within whose land was a field named Chestnut Close. In that field he had built a replica Tudor Manor House which was originally named Chestnut Close but later in the century it was renamed Wychwood Manor.



The north front of Chestnut Close before it was totally reconstructed.



Groves firm of builders from Milton constructed Chestnut Close of limestone quarried on the Coldstone Farm land.



An interior view of Chestnut Close.

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A second interior view.

Lord Sanderson was a great benefactor to Ascott and a good friend of Reginald Tiddy. Lord Sanderson and his wife were strong supporters of the Liberal and later Labour Movements speaking at meetings and favouring the education of the working man. He became a principal of Ruskin College and in Ascott the two of them set up WEA (Workers' Educational Association) classes which benefited the village and lasted for thirty years. Lady Sanderson also arranged for a clinic to be set up in the school and they became trustees of the Tiddy Hall after Reginald Tiddy was killed. Lord Sanderson and his sister May both became blind, an inherited condition, and after May died, in her memory he set up a Home for poor, working class women in need of rest and recovery, in Stone End Farmhouse and named it May Home.



Stone End Farmhouse. Early 1900.

Chestnut Close was only completed one month before the onset of World War One and due to other commitments during the War the Sandersons only spent short periods of time there. After the War despite previously being very wealthy, like other families in their position, money became really tight, so after firstly leasing the house, Chestnut Close was sold within a few short years.

Wendy Pearse



Victory and liberation in Europe, 1945: Soldiers of Oxfordshire Museum launches new exhibition, *From Conflict to Peace: Celebrating VE & VJ Day*

- New exhibition featuring stories of Oxfordshire celebrating VE & VJ Day 80 years ago
- Accounts of soldiers from Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire that liberated towns, POWs and concentration camps in the latter stages of the Second World War
- A programme of events at the museum and in Woodstock mark the anniversaries of VE Day and other milestones from 1945

Marking the 80th anniversaries of Victory in Europe and Victory of Japan Day, as well as those of many other key events from the final stages of the Second World War, Soldiers of Oxfordshire Museum (SOFO) is launching a brand-new exhibition. *From Conflict to Peace: Celebrating VE and VJ Day* will go on display from Tuesday, 1st April to Tuesday, 18th November 2025. The exhibition will cover the celebrations across the county itself, but also the experiences of Oxfordshire people serving in the armed forces throughout 1945, and for many, beyond the end of the war.

VE and VJ Day were both celebrated across the country in 1945, including many events in Oxfordshire. Women working for MI5 at Blenheim Palace recall hearing the bells of Woodstock's St Mary Magdalene Church ringing out for the occasion. In Oxford, locals recall street celebrations, with 'people dancing in line from St Giles to Carfax'.

With the announcement of the Japanese surrender on 15th August 1945 and the effective end of the war, a two day national holiday was announced and similar celebrations were seen across Oxfordshire, a bonfire was lit in St Clements with an effigy of Hitler, while Christ Church cathedral hosted thanksgiving services, also addressing the moral issue of the atomic bomb.

For many Oxfordshire people serving in the armed forces, including the two county regiments, The Oxfordshire & Buckinghamshire Light infantry and Oxfordshire Yeomanry, 1945 had seen a series of tough battles before hostilities would come to an end, and the prospect of many new challenges in the wake of victory in Europe and over Japan.

The Yeomanry, then serving within the Royal Artillery, would witness some of the darkest aspects of the conflict. 251 'Banbury' Battery were sent to Singapore to defend the island against the Japanese, but when it fell in 1942 they became Prisoners of War. Held captive in terrible conditions and forced to work on the

Ascott Grapevine

infamous Burma-Siam Railway, they were not freed until the Japanese surrendered, over three years later. 249 Battery had remained in the UK until October 1944, but then moved with the Allied advance from France, through Belgium and on to the Netherlands. Here, on 15th April 1945, they would be amongst the first British forces to enter Bergen-Belsen concentration camp. The ordinary soldiers were faced with terrible conditions at the camp that they were neither expecting nor prepared for. Surviving prisoners were malnourished, while thousands of unburied dead and poor sanitation had caused the spread of deadly diseases like Typhus. Despite the liberators' best efforts, around 14,000 held at the camp would still die following liberation, as a result of the conditions they had been subjected to.

The 2nd Battalion, Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire Light Infantry, are most famed for their role in the capture of the Caen Canal and Orne river bridges on D-Day, but also took part in Operation Varsity on 24th March 1945. This was the largest single-day airborne operation in history, with the aim of holding and crossing the Rhine further into Germany. Though ultimately successful, it took a toll on the forces involved, as gliders carrying the men into action took on anti-aircraft fire, with many breaking up before landing. Major John Tillet's D-Company had boarded their gliders '140 strong' but 'was down to 63' by the time they were relieved. The experience was the same across their battalion, with half the men killed or injured.

As the end of the war in Europe approached, their Division received special orders to race to Wismar, Germany, and head off the Soviet advance and a potential invasion of Denmark. At Wismar they would form the Guard of Honour for the meeting of Field Marshal Montgomery and the Soviet Marshal Rokossovsky on 7th May 1945. With the war over, 2nd Oxf & Bucks still had challenges ahead, as they were posted to Palestine in October 1945. Just after they arrived, the terrorist offensive in opposition to British rule began with a wave of bomb attacks.

The 2nd Battalion were not the only part of the county regiment with a special role to play in the latter stages of the war, as 1st Buckinghamshire Battalion were tasked with securing military and industrial sites across Holland and Germany. Gathering vital information and infrastructure for allied intelligence, they were part of Target, or 'T', Force. These new units were the brainchild of James Bond creator, Ian Fleming.

Serjeant Harry Carr, one of just 210 men from the 1st Bucks to have made it home after defending the retreat to Dunkirk in 1940, was part of the T-Force unit when they entered Holland, liberating the Dutch town of Delft on 8 May 1945. With food shortages in the Dutch countryside, Delft was badly affected. Carr recalled, 'we pooled our own rations of bread, stew and flour for our Battalion cooks to supply these poor kids with one meal a day'.

The new exhibition focuses on personal accounts of the people who were there, both soldiers and civilians. It will also be supported by a programme of themed events at the museum, opening with a free talk by Dr Myfanwy Lloyd on the liberation of Bergen-Belsen on Saturday, 12th April, ahead of the 80th anniversary. Dr Lloyd's research, making contact with the families of a British soldier and a survivor of the camp, resulted in a new permanent display at SOFO Museum. Another talk, with local academic Anthony Glees, takes place on 17th April at 7pm, concerning the occupation of the island of Alderney during the war, and the Nazi war crimes perpetrated there that went unpunished. Professor Glees' was an advisor to Margaret Thatcher's War Crimes Inquiry, 1989-91.

On Saturday, 10th May, Woodstock will celebrate the 80th anniversary of VE Day with a special event in the town's Market Square, featuring live 1940s music, living history displays, food and drink from local businesses, and fun for all ages from 4pm - 8pm. On the same day, the museum will host Lt. Col. (Retd) Mike Tickner for his talk *Savage Wars of Peace*, from 2pm. The talk provides insight into the situation in eastern Asia following VJ Day and the Japanese surrender, as many nations saw an opportunity for independence, and Gurkha, Indian and British troops became responsible for restoring colonial rule in the region.

The new exhibition and accompanying events programme will offer visitors a chance to discover the part Oxfordshire and its people played in achieving victory and liberation in Europe and in East Asia, 80 years on.







The first Ascott Charity was established in 1480 by Thomas and Agnes Robins who placed two cottages and the adjoining land in trust, the rent from which was to help the poor of the parish. The village charity known as the Poor's Estate and The Lower Green Charity was established on 20 March 1894 for the relief of poverty in the village and to provide financial assistance for young people towards their education.

The Charity grew larger over the centuries and by 1934 consisted of 16 cottages, one dwelling house with blacksmith's shop, five enclosures of land and an orchard. On 8 June 1934, most of the land, the dwelling house and the cottages were sold by auction, the proceeds being placed in an Education Trust. Later some of the money went towards the purchase of The Memorial Playing Field and other good causes.

A new village charity was registered on 30 April 2003 to help raise money to buy and equip Ascott Community Shop.

The administration of the old charities was taken over by the new charity in 2007, now collectively known as Ascott Village Charity.

Ascott Village Charity has three sources of funds: the Poor's Estate & the Lower Green Fund; the General Fund and the Flood Relief Fund, from which it can make grants that fall within its remit for hardship, educational/vocational studies and environmental projects. The Charity still owns a small parcel of land, known as Lower Green, which lies to the north of the railway line, east of the road and south of the river.



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EPITAPH

Well, he had a good innings I suppose.

When somebody dies in old age Many will say he had a good innings I suppose

Now well into my 80's, I hope it will not be said of me

I never had a good innings

I had the luck, the rub of the green sometimes

It wasn't a good 'knock', the word a cricketer would use

Cricket, like life, to be successful you need

Judgement, timing and with any luck, being in tune

With what is going on around

Never the swashbuckling batsman

My swash was buckled very early on

Never the stylish drive past long mid-on

Never the cracking cut past cover point

Often clean bowled first ball

Before I had a chance to shine

When it came to fielding

I was sent to long stop out of the way

Where I would daydream the afternoon away

Until the cricket ball flew by

Which would cause the other players to shout

Wake up, wake up you dozy pratt

You've just missed a dolly catch

We will never win this match

If you don't buck-up

And after tea on Sunday on the cricket field

I would hear the church bell ring for Evensong

Calling those middle-class, middle-aged ladies from the W.I.

To pray for Queen and country

To keep England safe

At least until this same time next week

Later locking the pavilion when all had gone

Then walking home alone

Thinking what a complete waste of time

Out L.B.W. before I made a score

My only silver lining, I always preferred to play football

Ascott Grapevine

So don't say he had a good innings
Say he had a good game
He took his life to extra time
He lost the penalty shoot
If somewhere there is a 'here-after'
Then of this I have no doubt
One bright day in paradise
With all the Saints and just maybe Jesus Christ
He will have a football kickabout

I know this is not very good rhyme, but I've come a long way from the boy who couldn't spell his name until he was eight years old. I would never have been a great scholar, told many times I would let my mind wander and lacked concentration. But my generation were told the country had a war to win, education and health would have to take second place. What I see of the world now, I do hope history doesn't repeat its self and young children will **not** be told the same.

We have a war to be fought and replace evil lies with truth.

Yes, I still let my mind wander. Better to dream of Paradise than know the purgatory of a bleak, dark school room of the mid 1940's

Fred Russell.

RIP

Rita Keen February 14th



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May News - Wildflowers

Wild Road Verges

Over 700 species of wildflower grow on road verges, which provide important linear habitats and wildlife corridors. We can combat the 20% drop since 1990 in floral diversity (reported by Plantlife) of verges by adopting better management strategies to protect and cultivate grass verges. One of the best strategies to encourage your local parish to adopt is a two-cut management approach to suppress coarse grass whilst encouraging more diverse wildflower growth. See the graph below to work out which timing works best for your local area! The graph is taken from Plantlife's 'Managing grassland road verges: a best practice guide', which you can download from their website.



It is then also important to collect the cuttings. Wildflowers of species-rich grass-lands grow best in lower fertility soils, whilst high fertility soils support vigorous grass growth. Therefore, taking the biomass, and thus nutrients, they contain away from the verge can reduce the layer of dead grass or thatch and 'open up' the soil surface to allow seed germination. Repeated over several years, this benefits less robust growth and more diversity, and therefore less management is required to create beautiful natural spaces on the roadside. See our guidance on verges for more help https://www.wildoxfordshire.org.uk/guidance/helping-nature-on-your-patch



Lyne Road Green volunteers preparing the ground for wildflower seeds

Let it Grow - in our Community GreenSpaces!

The temptation for many of us can be to regularly mow our greenspaces and keep them looking as neat as possible but research by Plantlife has shown just how beneficial to wildlife the opposite can be. In their 'No Mow May' survey, Plantlife found that the highest production of flowers and nectar sugar was on grass cut once every four weeks. 'Short-grass' plants like daisies and white clover had a chance to flower in between mowing, boosting nectar production tenfold. Areas of grass that were left to grow for even longer periods of time were more diverse in their range of flowers, with other nectar-rich plants like oxeye daisy, field scabious and knapweed providing varied nectar sources well into late summer. At the end, you can take part in a survey by counting the flowers in a square metre of your green space and reporting it to Plantlife.

Find out more at https://www.plantlife.org.uk/campaigns/nomowmay/

Garden mini-meadows:

Spring has arrived, and with it comes the annual tradition of No Mow May: a movement urging people to lock up their lawnmowers throughout May, promoting biodiversity and supporting pollinators. It's an opportunity to witness the beauty of wildflowers and native plants, which thrive when lawns are left untouched. But this year, why not take it a step further and create a mini-meadow or grassland?

No-mow is great to show you where the wildflowers are in your lawn, i.e. what is already there naturally - making it the perfect 1st step of mini-meadow creation. If you want to provide the maximum food source for your pollinators, rather than mowing it all again in June, leave an area of it untouched throughout spring and summer and only mow it in September once the flowers have finished. This is the easiest way to grow a mini-meadow in your garden and means our native bees can easily find nectar sources throughout their most active months. You can always enhance this area with bulbs or by planting wildflowers (e.g., cowslips, ox-eye daisy or foxgloves).

Lawns, or sections of garden, can be turned into wildflower meadows in several ways, depending on how much time and effort you want to put in and the result you want to achieve:

- The easiest option is to simply leave some, or all, of your lawn unmown and to let the grass grow long where any wildflowers are already present and for them to be able to reach the height needed to flower. Mow and remove the cuttings in September.
- Another easy option is to plant low-growing wildflowers and spring bulbs in your lawn to create a flower-rich mown lawn. If your lawn already supports several low-growing wildflowers, this will lend itself to adopting this option. This is a good compromise as it requires less frequent mowing

Ascott Grapevine

than a regular lawn but can still be cut before it gets long if you want a shorter, lawn-like finish. Species such as birds-foot trefoil and selfheal are great for butterfly species, such as common blue and small skipper, as well as other pollinators. These wildflowers can also cope with being mown since they can adapt to flower at a short height. Clover is another low growing species favoured by bees.

- The third option is to convert a lawn into a wildflower meadow, which can be done over several years. There are lots of 'how-to' meadow guides out there. I would recommend Plantlife's 'How to Grow a Wildflower Meadow.' You can find it online at www.plantlife.org.uk/how-to-grow-a-wildflower-meadow
- Managing your lawn to both include both shorter and longer areas (to create structural diversity) will support the greatest diversity of species.

Whichever option you choose, mini-meadows are a boon for pollinators and massively increase your garden's biodiversity and benefit to wildlife. I had a hedgehog fossicking in my little wildflower border last year. Remember, your garden must work for you too, so why not have a play and trial different things?

So, as May unfolds and the grass grows taller, consider creating a mini-meadow. Let your lawn be a sanctuary for pollinators, and a testament to the beauty of nature. Together, we can turn our gardens into vibrant ecosystems which collectively make a real difference for nature. Happy gardening everyone!

World Bee Day! 20th May

20th May is annual World Bee Day! Hopefully you're already helping bees get a wide range of diverse nectar sources by partaking in 'No Mow May'. Some other ways to help protect our declining bee populations include purchasing sustainable local honey, ditching harmful synthetic pesticides, providing a suitable water source for thirsty pollinators (can simply be a shallow bowl of water with stones in it for bees to land on), or hosting an event to raise awareness in your local area.

Thank you so much for all you have done for nature's recovery in the last year. Together we have brought people together, created more space for nature, and inspired more people to act for nature. Many people contribute to Wild Oxfordshire, and this support enables us to create a more natural, resilient, and biodiverse Oxfordshire for the benefit of all. If you would like to join in and are able to, we would greatly appreciate a contribution towards our work, either through a <u>one-off contribution</u>, or a <u>monthly contribution</u>. Check out our website to find out more about the many ways you can <u>support us</u> and our <u>recent achievements</u>.

Imogen Parker (Wild Oxfordshire Community Ecologist)

Drill Baby Drill

Drill Baby Drill

Let oil wells gush and overspill

Let man his every dream fulfil

Set central heating higher still

Let air-con give us summer chill

Drill Baby Drill

Drill Baby Drill

Let aircraft trails criss-cross the sky

Why drive or sail when we can fly

Send Challengers on trips to Mars

And we don't need electric cars

Drill Baby Drill

Drill Baby Drill

The polar ice cap's in retreat

While California feels the heat

Through Africa they need the rains

But New Orleans has hurricanes

Drill Baby Drill

Drill Baby Drill

Let wildlife species disappear

It's no great price for man's good cheer

The self styled species of distinction

Seems hell-bent on managing his own extinction

Drill Baby Drill

Nigel Braithwaite





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Ofsted, February 2025

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The Tiddy Hall

Ascott-under-Wychwood, Oxon

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R. Tiddy, Esq., in 1912
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The end of Tiddy Hall's financial year, 31st May 2025, is fast approaching at the time of writing this article. By the time you read this, the year-end will probably

already have passed.

Looking back, we have achieved a lot in the past year. We have installed solar panels and a battery to reduce our energy costs and have also replaced the old sodium/fluorescent lights with new, energy efficient LED lighting. We addressed the flooding problem that afflicted the patio every time it rained and, of course, we replaced the heating system (though this was an emergency rather than a planned project).

Bookings have begun to pick up, though they have not reached pre-COVID levels. The regular folk nights continue to attract great acts and good audiences. Unfortunately, health issues meant that we had to postpone the planned dinner dance (featuring the incomparable Three Piece Sweet!) which would have generated a good amount of additional income for Tiddy Hall. We will reschedule this in the coming months and will also be looking to hold other fundraising events.

We have undertaken some 'behind the scenes' work (a Fire Risk Assessment) which is a costly exercise but necessary to meet our legal obligations. There will be some remedial work undertaken in the coming months in response to the recommendations contained therein.

Given the timing, the remainder of this article will focus on three things:

- the projected full year financial performance;
- the AGM; and,
- the composition of the Management Committee.

Financial Performance

Please note that, to keep the numbers simple, I have rounded them to the nearest £100.

In cash terms, we are projecting a deficit of around £31,500. This somewhat alarming figure does not, however, provide a meaningful picture of the financial health of Tiddy Hall. In order to understand the ability of Tiddy Hall to cover its day-to-day running costs, we have to make a number of adjustments to account for certain

Village website: www.ascott-under-wychwood.org.uk

exceptional or non-recurring items which have distorted this year's figures. These are as follows:

- In the previous year (2023/24) we received a grant of nearly £20,000 but only spent around £3,700 of it during the year (2023/24), with the balance (£16,300) being spent in the current year (2024/25). As a result, last year's cash position was inflated by £16,300 and this year's cash position was depressed by the same amount. Taking this into account, the cash deficit from day-to day activities in 2024/25 is reduced to £15,200.
- There were a number of payments which should have been made in 2023/24 but were not made until the current year (2024/25). Specifically, there were energy bills totalling just over £3,000 which were due in 2023/24 but paid in 2024/25. The reason for the delayed payment of the energy bills was that we were without a bank account for several months following the deeply unhelpful unilateral decision by Barclays to close both Tiddy Hall accounts. It took a while to get new accounts opened with NatWest who, in complete contrast to Barclays, have been very helpful and supportive. Taking this into account, the cash deficit from day-to-day activities in 2024/25 is reduced to £12,200.
- Somewhat incredibly, our beer supplier neglected to invoice us for a delivery way back in 2021/22 which only came to light this year. This cost us £1,800 this year. Taking this into account, the cash deficit from day-to-day activities in 2024/25 is reduced to £10,500.
- Finally, as explained in my previous article, Tiddy Hall's heating system failed when we came to switch it on for the winter. Had we not taken the decision to replace the heating system immediately, we would have had to have closed Tiddy Hall for at least seven months, which was not a viable option. We replaced the heating system at a cost of £10,700. This was funded largely from our reserves, which are now dangerously low, together with a very welcome grant £1,500 from the Village Charity.

Taking all of the above into account, we are actually projecting that we will just about achieve break-even in terms of our ability to cover day-to-day running costs. This is clearly not tenable going forward as we need to make a surplus every year in order to replenish our reserves, which need to be maintained at a level to cover unexpected costs and planned capital expenditure/maintenance.

As always, we need more income from regular hirers and from one-off private bookings. As things stand, Tiddy Hall is being kept afloat by the Pre-school, the folk club and a small number of other regular hirers.

The Management Committee will be organising fundraising events to help bolster our income but, the reality is that the support of the wider village community to help generate income for Tiddy Hall is urgently needed.

AGM

We will schedule the AGM for late June/early July. As always, this meeting will be open to the public and I would encourage everyone that has an interest in the future of Tiddy Hall to attend. By then, the accounts will hopefully have been audited so I can share them with all attendees. They will also be posted to the Tiddy Hall website which is accessible to everyone.

Aside from a review of the financials, the AGM will focus on fundraising and increasing revenue from regular hirers. We will also discuss the need for more volunteers to become trustees and join the Management Committee. Speaking of which...

Management Committee

According to the Trust Declaration under which the Tiddy Hall charity was founded in 1930, we should have nine trustees. We currently have four active trustees.

According to Charity Commission guidelines, and good business practice, there are a number of key roles that should be filled: Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, Booking Clerk, Data Protection Officer, Safeguarding Officer and Health & Safety Officer. Ideally, these should be filled by different individuals. It is certainly not good practice to have one person acting as both Chair and Treasurer. Currently, I am Chair, Secretary and Treasurer. Aside from the resulting workload, the current arrangement means that there is no separation of responsibilities which is a key requirement to ensure collective responsibility and effective oversight.

I stepped in to act as Treasurer on an interim basis but we have not been able to identify a suitable permanent replacement. To be fair, the Treasurer role does require some financial management skills which many otherwise willing volunteers may not have. The role of Chair, though vitally important, requires more 'general management' skills (e.g. communication, leadership, organisational skills) which may be more readily found in the wider village community.

In the circumstances, I have decided to announce my intention to step down as Chair at the AGM. I will continue in the role for a minimum of six months and a maximum of twelve months after the AGM. That should provide enough time to identify a volunteer willing to take this on. I will continue as Treasurer after stepping down as Chair.

To conclude, Tiddy Hall continues to serve the local community and many steps have been taken to safeguard its future. The reality is, however, that we need more support from the community which Tiddy Hall serves. Specifically, we need more volunteers to join the Management Committee as trustees so that the various roles can be shared amongst more individuals. With enough members, the roles are really not onerous. The problem arises when the roles are concentrated amongst too few people.

John Bugeji



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Travel with Merv and Travel Four Seasons.

This issue I thought I would share some fantastic news with you all.

I was recently invited to a travel event in Manchester to celebrate the top 50 travel agencies in the UK.

I am thrilled to announce that we won Top Travel Agency for the Southeast!

To make the short list was an amazing achievement in itself and then be crowned the best is incredible recognition.

I would like to thank all my customers in our local area that have booked with me in the past year or so, I am truly grateful, and I look forward to helping many more of you with your travel plans and thank you for being part of our journey.

Here are 5 reasons to book with me...

Personalised Itineraries

I tailor your travel plans based on your preferences, budget, and travel style.

Insider Knowledge & Experience

With 38 years of travel industry experience, I know the best destinations, hidden gems, and exclusive deals that you often won't find online.

Time & Stress Savings

Skip the hours of research — I will handle everything from flights and accommodation to activities and logistics, so you can relax and enjoy your trip. All you need to remember is your passport.

24/7 Travel Support

Should anything go wrong during your journey, I am just a call or message away, every customer has my mobile number! I am ready to help resolve issues on the spot. Booking online doesn't offer that!

100% Independent

I am truly independent, not tied to any airline or large travel company. You can be absolutely confident that the holiday I recommend has been built to suit your exact needs and budget. Plus, your money is 100% safe and protected when booking with me.

Please get in touch when you are planning your next trip. Support a small local business too. I am based here in Ascott Under Wychwood and you are always welcome to visit my travel lounge.



Education Grant

For many years we have supported young people leaving secondary school with a small grant towards books and equipment necessary for their ongoing studies.

This fund was created from a legacy left to the community from one of our villagers, Jussy Brainin, many years ago, and we have continued with it to this day. Jussy believed that helping young people at a significant transition moment in their young lives would have long lasting benefits for their future lives.

We as Trustees are proud to carry on with Jussy's legacy and wishes.

So, if you are sitting your school exams this year we would love to hear from you.

The process is a simple one, just contact one of the Trustees, and we then discuss it and that's it, you're all set.

In the first instance, please send an email to either Andy or me and we will get back to you by return.

Contact:

John Cull (Chair of Trustees) email: john@greenascott.co.uk

Andy Smith (Secretary) email: allsinging1@outlook.com

Meanwhile, best of luck with your exams this summer and whatever you choose to do next, we hope you are able to take a bit of Ascott with you!

John Cull

Registered Number: 1099078

Trustees: John Cull (Chairman), The Revd Mark Abrey, Elaine Byles, Nicky Coldstream, Stuart Fox (Treasurer),

Keith Ravenhill, Andy Smith (Secretary), Sandy Timms.

WYCHWOOD FOLK & ACOUSTIC CLUB



Sat 7th June Pete Morton Tickets £12.00 in advance £15.00 on the door

Tiddy Hall

Pete Morton is a singer and entertainer with a wealth of self-penned songs that express everything from the highly personal to the truly international. Often referred to as an old-time troubadour he delivers an unruly mix of humanism politics, love, social

commentary and humour, all wrapping its way around the folk tradition.

Sat 21st June Mark & Friends Tiddy Hall
**** FFFF ENTRY ****

Our annual fundraiser (via a bucket collection) with any monies raised going towards the village hall. This year we have another exciting collection of misfits, drop outs & waifs and strays to perform for you. Including Ascott's very own **Mark Pidgeon**, Irish troubadour **Enda McCabe**, from Chippy the delightful **Rachel Chai** and a Steve Knightley wannabe from the Shakespeare County **Bill Bates**.

Sat 6th Sept. The Gerry Colvin Band + support from Craig Joiner Tiddy Hall Tickets £15.00 in advance £18.00 on the door

Gerry has been in the music business a long time, his set is an eclectic mix of genre's that can have an audience foot tapping one minute, singing along the next and then a sudden switch gets you thinking of times gone by

He is a master craftsman at the art of working an audience, he is quite simply infectious and you'll be left wanting more

Sat 4th Oct Boo Hewerdine Tiddy Hall

Tickets £15 in Advance £18 on Door

Sat 8th Nov Martyn Joseph Tiddy Hall

Tickets £22 in advance £25 on door

Sat 22nd Nov Mark Harrison Trio Bruern Farms Café

Tickets £12 in Advance £15 on Door

Sat 13th Dec Donnelly & South Tiddy Hall

Tickets £14 in Advance £17 on Door

All events start at 7.30pm Doors 6.45pm

SEE WEBSITE FOR MORE DETAILS - www.wychwoodfolkclub.com

Or call on 01993831427 / 07870563299 - E-mail: wychwoodfolkclub@outlook.com

ASCOTT-UNDER-WYCHWOOD CRICKET CLUB

Spring 2025 has delivered the best weather since 2020, when Covid ravished the world and we were all 'locked down' in our homes and gardens lighting April BBQs.

In fact, it's been so dry recently we've had trouble growing the grass thick enough on the square to see it in good health until September.

The settled weather meant we were able to rebuild our storm damaged sightscreens, and Joe Gomm kindly helped weld up our roll on pitch covers.

After a productive 10 weeks of indoor practice, we started with spirited defeats vs Swinbrook, Long Compton and Bodicote (although the latter two both included some star players from other clubs). We then enjoyed a trip to beautiful Kingham Hill School, where we managed to beat their talented 1st XI by 8 runs in a very exciting climax that should have been on Sky Sports! The Ascott bowlers courageously snatching victory from the jaws of defeat, as the home team "got the jitters" and collapsed from a position where it seemed they could not lose. This win was notable for a few reasons, first, our popular spin bowler Iain Bryce scored 50 not out, his first ever half-century, as Ascott set 188/6. With Kingham seemingly cruising at 156/5, skipper 'Mundo' Matthews put his trust in our two youngest bowlers on the day; 13 year old Andrew Taylor, and 12 year old Jake Cooper. They did not disappoint! Jake took 3 wickets, and Andrew 2 to clinch a memorable win in the sun. Fellow Ascott lads Will Harvey (16) and Eddie Russell (14) have also been taking wickets during April; the club's future is in safe hands with these boys.

Our league campaign starts on Sat May 10th with a difficult home match vs Stonesfield.

If anyone is interested in sponsoring one of our match balls for a game this season, do please get in touch - it costs £11. You'll then be guest of honour (if desired), and present our man-of-the-match award.

We're always on the lookout for anyone in the village interested in playing some cricket, we have weekly net practice all season, and play matches every Saturday and Sunday.

Finally, we're looking to put on some junior cricket sessions at the playing field in May, aimed at children aged around 10-12. Do contact the secretary ASAP via the details below if your child is interested.

Ascott Grapevine

Stewart Moss, secretary. 07866 278685

Auwericketelub@hotmail.com

Instagram: ascott_u_wychwood_cricket Facebook: Ascott UnderWychwood Cricket Club





Ascott Village Shop

The Shop is buzzing with the Spring sunshine; the Easter treats are selling out fast as I write, and we had so many orders for Mark's Sourdough Hot Cross Buns on Good Friday that there was scarcely room for them in the bread shelves, though they flew off smartly. The flowering bulbs have been a pretty sight at the door, leading to the table display inside the Shop, expertly designed by Sue Boyer.

Claire has now settled in as Manager, and is doing a marvellous job, with the shelves well stocked and arranged, and we are discussing new lines to add or replace others. Thanks to Merv Bates's persistence with the manufacturer, the coffee machine is finally back working again, so come and enjoy its excellent coffee and choose a slice of cake by the till to go with it.

By the time this goes to press the volunteers should be smartly kitted out with new blue-and-white striped aprons. These are the first new ones since the shop opened in 2004, and we are very excited about them. We are very grateful to the generous donor, who wishes to remain anonymous, as we are to the Ileys and the Folk Group who in the last year have kindly provided new equipment for the stockroom. Sponsorship of this kind makes a real difference to our ability to keep the Shop running smoothly, and if you would like to make a contribution please speak to Claire or me.

And last – we still need a Treasurer! Although Stuart Fox officially retired last Summer, he has kindly continued with many of the Treasurer's tasks, but he would like his freedom. The Lightspeed system installed by Per Henriksen does much of the work at the touch of a computer key, so the job is not nearly so time-consuming as it has been in the past. If you would like to do this important job for the Shop that is so essential in village life, please talk to Stuart, who would love to hear from you.



Chairman, Ascott-under-Wychwood Village Shop

Treasurer for Ascott shop

Ascott Shop needs a new volunteer Treasurer now!

If you have experience in retail and accountancy and would like to help to run our community shop, please consider becoming its Treasurer.

On the retirement of our Former Treasurer, Stuart Fox, who has dedicated himself to the role for over twenty years, and the arrival of our new Manager, Clare Beasant, now is the moment to take the shop forward to a new era.

The work involves looking after the cash, paying the invoices and drawing up the accounts. All procedures are now supported by the Lightspeed program, and we have the opportunity to install a new accounts system that is compatible with Lightspeed and its formidable capabilities.

If you are minded to help support the village community and take the shop forward to be a success for the next generation of villagers, for more information please get in touch with:

Stuart Fox stuart.john.fox@gmail.com

Or

Nicola Coldstream ncoldstream@gmail.com

Village website: www.ascott-under-wychwood.org.uk



Management Committee Contacts

Chairman and Operations	Keith Gowing	01608 811617
Operations	Paul Branch	07771 624578
Routes/Request Stops	Ken Ingamelis	01451 832114
Hiring	Pauline Jackson	01608 811370
	Keith Gowing	01608 811617
New Drivers	Roger Formby	01451 830439
Secretary (and Donations)	Richard Anning	01386 430129

For queries in the event of bad weather, any of the above contacts will be able to provide advice on possible cancellations or delays to services. Alternatively look on our homepage for news/weather updates, or tune to Radio Gloucester or Radio Oxford



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210 Witney to Wychwoods, Monday to Friday (Except Public Holidays)

Timetable valid from 03 April 2023

Sainsburys		0910	1200	1515	1718
Witney Mkt Sq (D)	0715	0913	1205	1520	1722
Welch Way Library	0717	0915	1207	1522	1724
Range Rd	0722				
Deer Pk Med Cntre			1212	1524	1729
Crawley Lamb		0924	1216	1527	1735
Leafield Lower End		0933	1226	1534	1743
Burford	0741				
Ascott U Wychwood		0943	1236	1544	1753
Shipton U Wychwood	0753	0950	1244	1550	1757
Milton, Hare	0758	0955	1247	1559	1800

Wychwoods To Witney, Monday to Friday(Except Public Holidays)

Milton Hare	0800	1000	1250	1600	1800
Shipton U Wychwood	0804	1005	1255	1605	1804
Ascott U Wychwood	0809	1011	1302		
Leafield Lower End	0819	1021	1312		
Burford				1617	1815
Crawley Lamb	0828	1031	1322		
Deer Pk Med Cntre	0835	1038	1329		
Witney Mkt Sq (A)	0842	1044	1336	1646	1828
Sainsburys	0845	1047	1340		
Range Road	0850			1713	
Fernleigh (*Request only)	0907	1100*			

This Timetable is valid from 03rd April 2023.

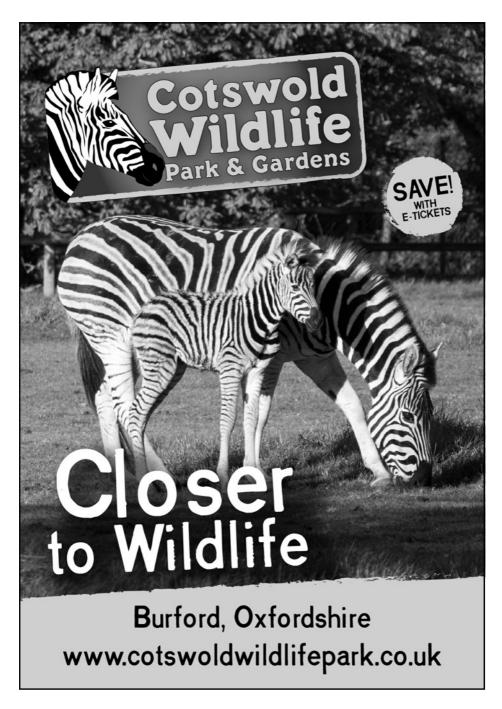




■Buy Tickets from the App

Registered in England and Wales as a charitable Community Benefit Society No.7458 under the Co-operative and Community Benefit Society Act 2014

Village website: www.ascott-under-wychwood.org.uk



Parish Council Summer 2025

I hope you all had a jolly Easter and have settled to enjoying the Spring sunshine. The village is burgeoning and it's nice walking around to see so many gardens start to bloom.

A big 'thank-you' to everyone who participated in the Litter Pick, not only on the day but those who came up to me to say that they had cleared areas in the week leading up to it. Many hands make light work!

On the subject, a number of village facilities are in desperate need of volunteers to help them survive. This includes Tiddy Hall, which faces a real and present danger of closing its doors for ever unless people can be found who are willing to fill the roles of trustees. Again, with sufficient numbers to share the load these jobs are not onerous, but when they fall on a limited number of shoulders – and usually the same faces every time – it is unsustainable. There are a couple of good Yorkshire sayings that roughly translate into Southern English as 'If you want something, ask the busiest person' and 'if you want it done properly, do it yourself' - so if you are one of those villagers who think they are too busy to help, please kindly take note.

Elections

By the time this is delivered, the County Council elections will have passed. These are important, especially in the light of the local government reorganization currently underway. By 2027 our District Council will no longer exist, and presently we do not know the shape of what will replace it, other than that it will be based on extending the reach of the County Council to take over their duties. It is ever more important that we have a councillor who understands the issues facing small rural communities like our own.

Also past will be our Annual Parish Meeting, the best opportunity for everyone to have a say in the Parish Council affairs. This follows our AGM, marking another year in office and I would like to take the opportunity to thank my fellow Councillors, our Clerk Angela and in particular Stuart Fox our Financial Officer for all their hard work. Of course, residents are always welcome to attend a Parish Council meeting, held on the second Tuesday of the month in Tiddy Hall. We enjoy having the public present - it makes a nice change from the other councillors having to listen to me for most of the meeting.

Village Green

You may have noticed some smart new posts at the corner of High Street where the verge was ripped apart by large vehicles. We are also very painfully aware of the damage that has been done to the Village Green by cars and lorries driving over the corners. We are actively looking into options for protecting the Green, though remaining cognizant of the fact that anything we add needs to be safe and not to detract from the beauty of the space.

Similarly, the concrete slabs under the Martyr's Benches which has become frayed as the tree roots have moved, will be replaced with something more appropriate and in keeping.

Some of the white lines have been repainted, and others are on the list. These things are always weather dependent and after the long, wet winter there is a backlog.

New Walking Maps

The Cotswold Wardens and the Parish Councils have combined to launch some new maps of walks in the Wychwoods. These will be published shortly, and we will be publicizing these as they become available.

Picnic on the Playing Field

This year we are reviving our Picnic on the Playing Field. This is in lieu of a village fête which is still in the works hopefully for next year, subject to getting together an organizing committee (see above). We will have live music, tea and cake and of course the inevitable beer tent. Wish for good weather, bring a picnic, come and spread a blanket and join in the fun with everyone.

Brian Leach

Chair, Ascott under Wychwood Parish Council.

contact@ascottpc.org.uk

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Please Help

It's your village magazine

So it would be good to hear from you! We would like you to contribute details of village events and activities to the magazine, perhaps with a few photographs and a report.

Do you have an interesting hobby or pastime that you might be willing to share with our readers?

Are you a keen sportsperson, including running and cycling? Can you share your experiences and hopefully your successes, perhaps encouraging others?

We always welcome articles, perhaps sharing your experiences and adventures. Could you provide information on gardening subjects, including successes and failures from your allotment? Do you have a favourite recipe that might encourage our readers to try?

What do you like about living in Ascott, or what might you want to change? Let off steam and contribute your thoughts and opinions to a letter page.

Do you enjoy any local walks? If so, could you provide details of what to see, describe the walk, and provide a simple map with instructions to follow so you don't become lost?

If there are significant anniversaries within your family, we are always happy to include a mention of these in the magazine.

Remember, this is your magazine! Please use it and help us to include lots of interesting articles, photographs, and comments.

The Ascott Grape Vine editors





JOIN US FOR LUNCH OR DINNER IN OUR
RESTAURANT OR BEAUTIFUL GARDEN OR IF YOU
DON'T FANCY LEAVING YOUR HOUSE, WE OFFER
TAKE-AWAY PIZZA - TUESDAY TO SATURDAY

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Pre-School

We are busy preparing for our annual Preschool fundraiser – BBQ and Sports day. We have been doing this for many years and always enjoy seeing families from the past returning to support us. The children have been practising the races and families kindly donating items for the various stalls. This event is open to anyone, young and old. Do come along. There will be lots of things to eat and drink as well as the usual fete activities.

We have recently fundraised to purchase a new mud kitchen and the children have loved the bigger space to create their own 'dishes'. Groves kindly delivered our play sand and the sandpit has been full of busy diggers!

Our older children are preparing for their move up to Reception and have been enjoying visits from their new teachers as well as visits to their new schools. A very exciting time for them.

As we move into our final term of the year and reflect on the year up until now. It has been our busiest year ever and we have welcomed many new families both from the village and also surrounding villages. We run as a charity and remain the last preschool open in the area. We work hard to continue our work supporting local familes during these times of ever rising costs.





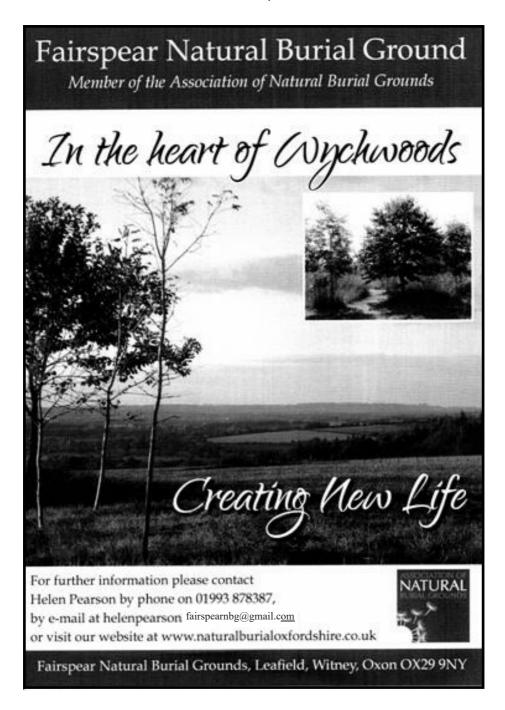


The Mill

at 10 o'clock to mid-day on

Saturday 14th June
Saturday 12th July
Saturday 9th August
Saturday 6th September
Saturday 4th October
Saturday 1st November
Saturday 6th December

Everybody Welcome





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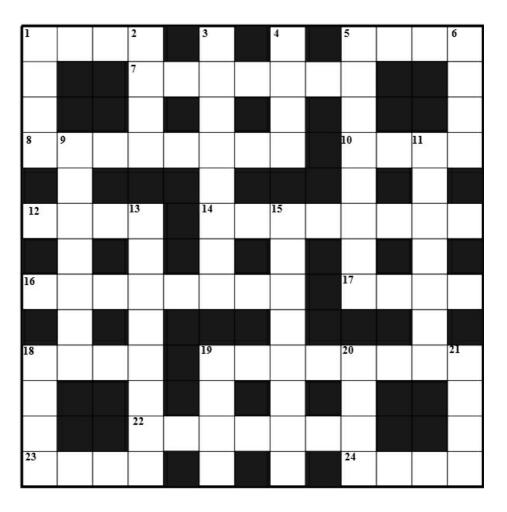
Monday – Friday 7.30am – 5.00pm
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Sunday & Bank Holidays 10.00 – 2.00pm

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Crossword Puzzle



Across

- 1 Show the way (4)
- 5 dong(4)
- 7 Item (7)
- **8** 7 (8)
- **10** Fissure (4)
- 12 Passionate (4)
- **14** Payment in return (8)
- 16 Decide wrongly (8)
- 17 Larva; food (slang) (4)
- 18 Aeroplanes(4)
- 19 Type of house (8)
- **22** Leading (2,5)
- **23** Bluish-white element (4)
- **24** Egg yellow (4)

Down

- 1 Noisy (4)
- 2 Spanish painter (4)
- **3** As torrid (anag.) (5,3)
- 4 Unit of area (4)
- 5 Condemning; criticising as worthless (8)
- 6 Plethora (4)
- 9 Inspect (7)
- 11 Aspect (7) 13 Stately (8)
- 15 Ask (8)
- **18** E.g. trad (4)
- 19 Stupid (4)
- **20** Large town (4)
- 21 Office furniture (4)

Solutions to Crossword in **Edition 125**

Across

- 1 Lead 5 Ding
- 7 Article
- 8 Article
- 10 Rift
- 12 Warm 14 Requital
- 16 Misjudge
- 17 Grub
- 19 Alga
- 18 Jets
- 19 Detached 22 In front
- 23 Zinc
- 24 Yolk

- 1 Loud
 - 2 Dali
 - 3 Stair rod

Down

- 4 Acre
- 5 Decrying
- 6 Glut
- 9 Examine
- 11 Feature
- 13 Majestic
- 15 Question
- 18 Jazz
- 19 Daft
- 20 City
- 21 Desk

Local Business Directory

ANNIE'S CURTAINS AND BLINDS 01993830687 07989497253 www.anniescurtainsandblinds.co.uk	Page 31
ASCOTT VILLAGE SHOP 01993831240 shop@ascottvillageshop.co.uk www.ascottvillageshop.co.uk	Page 5
BURFORD QUAKER MEETING HOUSE 01993 831282, 01993 822114	Page 14
COMBE MILL	
BLENHEIM PALACE SAWMILLS, COMBE, OXON, OX29 8ET	Page 14
COTSWOLD WILDLIFE PARK 01993823006	
www.cotswoldwildlifepark.co.uk	Page 36
ENLIGHTENED WINDOWS 01608 684607 www.enlightenedwindows.co.uk	Page 4
FAIRSPEAR NATURAL BURIAL GROUND 01993 878387	
helenpearson248@btinternet.com www.naturalburialoxfordshire.co.uk	Page 44
FINGERS AND TOES 07525 411 658 fingersandtoes244@gmail.com	
www.fingersandtoes.info	Page 4
FOLK CLUB 01993831427 07870563299	
wychwoodfolkclub@zoho.com www.wychwoodfolkclub.com	Page 29
GROVES SHOP 01993830302 Shop mobile 07970262425 info@alfredgroves.co.uk www.grovesdiyshop.co.uk	Page 45
THE HAIR SALON AT THE PADDOCKS Ladies' and Gentlemen's Hair dress	sing
The Paddocks, Shipton Road, Milton-under-Wychwood, OX7 6GF	
Alison 07980645995; Joy 07867585053	Page 4

Ascott Grapevine

IVY'S FLORIST 01993830268 Instgram@Ivy's Florist	Page 16
JENNA SAUNDERS 01993831338 saundersjenna@hotmail.com	Page 4
JOHNSON'S CHAUFFEUR CARS 01993 830249 07768507100/07971236020 info@johnsonscars.com www.johnsons.com	Page 3
PUDDLE DUCKS Scan the QR or phone 01666 577377	Page 6
PAW PALS 07917 391520 paw-pals.co.uk/westoxon <u>westoxon@paw-pals.co.uk</u>	Page 22
ROBERT GRIPPER 01993831960 robgripper@btinternet.com	Page 3
ROOFIX 08009555063 07817 792194	Page 39
THE SWAN 01993 832332 reservations@swanascott.com www.countrycreatures.com	Page 41
TRAVEL WITH MERV BATES 01993 240001 merv.bates@travelcouncellors.c	
www.travelcouncellors.co.uk/merv.bates	Page 26

Events Calendar - 2025

Date	Time	Event	Venue
June 7 th	7.30pm	Pete Morton	Tiddy Hall
June 8th	2.00pm	Tea Dance	Tiddy Hall
June 10 th	7.30pm	Parish Council Meeting	Tiddy Hall
June 14th	10.00am	Coffee at the Mill	The Mill OX7 6AP
June 21st	7.30pm	Mark and Friends	Tiddy Hall
July 5 th	Mid-day	Ascott pre-school fun day	Memorial playing field
July 8 th	7:30pm	Parish council Meeting	Tiddy Hall
July 12 th	10.00am	Coffee at the Mill	The Mill OX7 6AP
July 13 th	TBC	Martyrs vs Establishment Cricket	Memorial playing field
August 9th	10.00am	Coffee at the Mill	The Mill OX7 6AP
September 6 th	10.00am	Coffee at the Mill	The Mill OX7 6AP
September 6 th	7.30pm	Gerry Colvin Band	Tiddy Hall
September 7 th	2.00pm	Tea Dance	Tiddy Hall
September 9 th	7:30pm	Parish council Meeting	Tiddy Hall

There is a Post Office at Tiddy Hall every Friday between 2.00 and 3.45pm