

# Blewbury Bulletin

Number 684 March 2026

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## SPRING INTO ACTION WITH TABLE TENNIS



If you're looking for some spring-like exercise that doesn't depend on the rain stopping, look no further than the Table Tennis Club. We are a small friendly club with players ranging from 12 to 70+. We have four tables, spare bats and balls. Meeting on Tuesday evenings in the Village Hall from 5.30pm to 7pm. We operate as pay and play, no membership fees. Under 18s and full-time students pay £1, adults pay £3 per session. We welcome new players with a free first session.

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## CELEBRATION OF THE BLEWbury SPHERE - EXPANDED TO PHOTOGRAPHERS AND ARTISTS

To celebrate this imaginative piece of public art, made by Blewbury's own David Harber, the BPC are calling on the artists and writers of the village to take one or more of the words on the sphere, or the artwork itself, and write a poem, take an artistic photo, or produce another artwork - sketch etc. These can be sent to the Parish Clerk before **10<sup>th</sup> March 2026**. We will then hold a celebration of the poets and the sphere on 20<sup>th</sup> March - the equinox. Prizes will be awarded to the winners in the categories: under 11, 11 to 18, and adult.

Everyone (not just entrants) is welcome to the celebration on the Play Close, Friday 20<sup>th</sup> March (spring equinox) at 7pm to toast the new artwork.

*Here's the picture of the sphere from last month's Bulletin – but this time the right way round! Apologies from the Editor, and congratulations to anyone who noticed.*



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## FAREWELL TO DAVE THE POSTIE – NOW IN PERSON

Karen, Andrew and Sarah are holding a farewell party for Dave the postie, at Blewbury Village Hall, Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> March, 2pm to 4pm, everyone is welcome to come and say farewell, we will hand over all the donations and cards that have been handed in to the post office, and you will of course be able to give him any more on the day. There will be tea and coffee, and hopefully cake (please bring some cake if you are able to). He would like to be able to say goodbye to us all properly! *Karen Forman*

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## CONSULTATION ON FUTURE OF LOCAL SERVICES – HAVE YOUR SAY

The Government consultation on reorganisation of local government is open until 26<sup>th</sup> March. There are three different proposals under consideration, and the choice could have a big impact on our local services and democracy. See article on page 9 for details and information on how to make your voice heard.

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## BULLETIN STOP PRESS SERVICE

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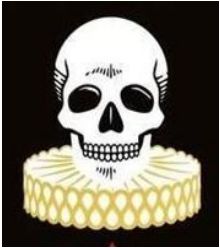
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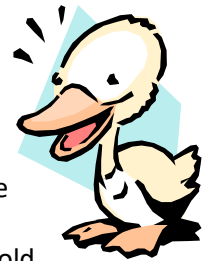
### 'DEATH BY SHAKESPEARE' TALK CANCELLED

Well, it turns out that Friday 13th really is unlucky after all. Kathryn Harkup, our intended speaker, has informed me that she has double-booked herself for March 13th, and I don't think I can go through the whole organisational process for a third time. Sadly, therefore, we will have to cancel this event and issue refunds where appropriate.

If you have already purchased a ticket, either direct from me or from the Post Office, please let me know and I will get the money back to you in whatever form is most convenient. If you have simply reserved a ticket but not paid for it, you need do nothing. Apologies once again; I will try to think of an alternative event to liven up these cold and rainy days, and of course we still have Shakespeare's birthday to look forward to on April 23rd. More on that nearer the time! *Chris Whatmore admin@themotleycrew.org.uk*

### 2026 DUCK RACE

Spring is nearly here, and St Michael's bellringers will again be holding a Duck Race on Easter Sunday, 5th April, in the Playclose. This year they have plenty of water to help them along! The first of five heats will start at 12.00 noon. The first three ducks across the line in the final race will win for their owners £50, £20 and £10 respectively, and all proceeds will go to St Michael's Tower and Bell Maintenance Fund. We are very appreciative of the support given by the village to this annual event, and hope that everyone will enjoy the social occasion and springtime fun.



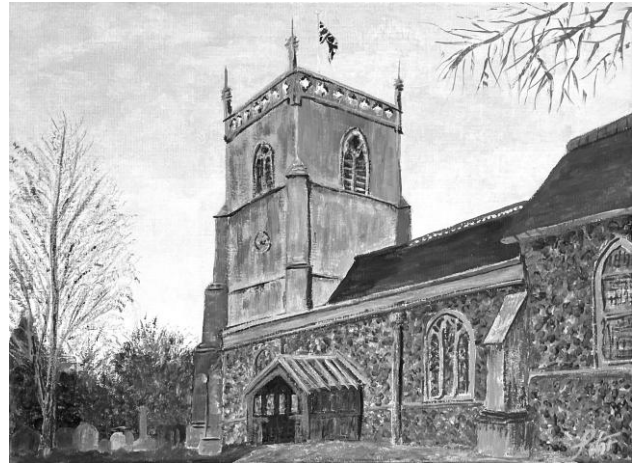
This event is open to everyone, and racing ducks are available for £1.25 each. They are obtainable from the Post Office, any of the bell ringers, or contact Richard and Gill Loyd on 07767 463285.

Racing Ducks are always popular, so please be sure to buy your racers early, as they will all be sold before the race day, and don't forget to come along, bring your family and friends, and cheer for your ducks on the day. If you enjoy this sort of fun, why not meet the ringers in St Michael's one Friday night to see what else we do when we are not racing ducks? You will be most welcome. *Richard Loyd*

### PETER RITSON ART EXHIBITION SUPPORTING TONY LOY TRUST

Throughout May I will be exhibiting my 'Views of Blewbury' paintings at the Cornerstone in Didcot, alongside a host of other artists as part of Oxfordshire Artweeks 2026.

Paintings and prints will be for sale during the exhibition. Following the exhibition I will be making a donation from my painting sales to the Tony Loy Trust who have supported many young people in the village and surrounding area. So please come along to the exhibition and if you like what you see, treat yourself. *Peter Ritson*



### PRE-SCHOOL LOTTERY

The winning numbers for this month's **Blewbury Pre-School Lottery** were as follows:

Feb Draw 1st - 012; 2nd - 070; 3rd - 027. The prize fund was shared (50%/30%/20%) between the three winners and £172.50 was raised for Blewbury Pre-School.

Congratulations to the winners and thank you to all our members for their continued support. Membership spaces are available - to be a part of the next draw, download and fill out a form from [www.blewburypreschool.co.uk](http://www.blewburypreschool.co.uk) - also available from Blewbury Post Office - or email [lottery@blewburypreschool.co.uk](mailto:lottery@blewburypreschool.co.uk)

### SWIRE RIDGEWAY ARTS PRIZE

A reminder of the 2026 competition, whose theme is 'Shapes and Shadows of the Ridgeway'. Entries are welcome from professional and amateur artists, in four categories: Wall Art, Photography, Sculpture and Written work. Closing date 28<sup>th</sup> March; entry forms and details <https://ridgewayfriends.org.uk/swire-ridgeway-arts-prize-2026/>.

### COFFEE AND KIDS!

Our next monthly session is on **Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> March** from 10am to 11.30am in the Vale Room, Blewbury Village Hall. We welcome all bumps, babies & toddlers, along with parents, grandparents or carers. Here is a warm, friendly and safe place to enjoy the company of others and have some refreshment as the little ones have fun with toys, learn to play together and even do some craft activities! A donation of £2 is appreciated towards our costs. Mothers' Union hosts look forward to welcoming you. Any queries, contact *Louise Butler* on 07837 009730.

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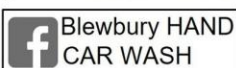


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## **FAURÉ AND DURUFLÉ REQUIEMS IN BLEWBURY**

You are invited to an unforgettable evening of reflection and beauty as Didcot Choral Society presents two of the most cherished masterpieces of the choral repertoire: Gabriel Fauré's Requiem and Maurice Duruflé's Requiem. The concert will take place on Saturday March 28th 2026 at 7.30pm in the inspiring surroundings of St Michael's Church. Fauré's serene and transcendent Requiem offers a message of peace and consolation, celebrated for its lyrical melodies and luminous choral writing. Duruflé's Requiem, rooted in Gregorian chant and rich harmonic colour, provides a moving and contemplative counterpart- together creating a deeply powerful musical journey. Tickets (£12, free to accompanied school-aged children) are available now at <https://www.trybooking.com/uk/events/landing/103885> or by calling 07915 094842. Also available on the door.

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## **BLEWBURY VILLAGE SOCIETY**

The eagle-eyed among you may have noticed that the environmental display in the churchyard has gone. Do not worry: it is currently being refurbished and will be back in place in the spring.

### **BVS Comedy Night, Saturday 7th March**

The legendary Blewbury Comedy Night returns to the Village Hall on Saturday 7th March. Tickets have now almost sold out, but you can join the waiting list by emailing [blewburybvs@gmail.com](mailto:blewburybvs@gmail.com). Please also email us with any returns so that we can offer them to the waiting list.



### **Egg Rolling, Sunday 5th April, 3 pm**

The annual Easter Egg Rolling is back on Easter Sunday, 5th April. This event is open to everyone – bring your decorated eggs to the chalk pits (head up the footpath on the village side of Tickers Folly Field and you'll find us!) Prizes for the best decorated eggs and longest rolls (see also advert on page 17, designed by Elphin Lloyd-Jones).

### **Inter-pub football match: Blue v Red, Saturday 18th April, 3 pm**

Following the success of the last two years' charity pub football matches, organised by Ben Silverthorne, the BVS is delighted to be able to support the latest this year.

### **Blewbury Garden Market**

The Blewbury Garden Market will be running as usual this year from late April to September – subject to finding enough volunteers. See article below.

### **BVS and Parish Council AGM, Thursday 21st May, 7 pm**

The combined BVS and Parish Council AGM will be held on Thursday 21st May in the Village Hall. All are welcome, to hear about the astonishing amount of activity that takes place in Blewbury, and contribute to future events.

### **Save the date for the Summer Dance: Saturday 27th June**

The annual Summer Dance will take place on Saturday 27th June at Ashbrook House, so put the date in your diary and look out for more information in the next edition of the Bulletin.

### **BVS marquee for hire**

The BVS marquee is available for hire by other groups, societies and individuals in the village for a small charge. It measures 12m x 6m and has sides if needed. If you were at the Beer Festival, or have supported the Fireworks Night or Summer Dance, you may have seen it in action. To book it, contact [lydia.wanstall@gmail.com](mailto:lydia.wanstall@gmail.com).

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## **THANK YOU FOR UKRAINE DONATIONS**

Thank you to the many people who donated clothes, medications and other goods to the charity Dragon Oxford Medical Aid. I was very impressed by the generosity and thoughtfulness of the gifts. I delivered a packed car-load to one of the organisers in Oxford, who was delighted with them. Vehicles leave for Ukraine every 4-6 weeks; the priorities now are medication and food. Unfortunately there is no space at present for clothes. If you want to donate medication, medical supplies or food, please contact me, as the collection in the church has finished. Or donate in cash via [www.justgiving.com/fundraising/medicalequipmentukraine-2023](http://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/medicalequipmentukraine-2023). *Flavia Leslie*

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## **BLEWBURY GARDEN MARKET – VOLUNTEERS DESPERATELY NEEDED**

Blewbury Garden Market needs your help! We offer an outlet for sales of surplus garden produce, plants, baked goods etc, every Saturday morning in summer, 9.15 to 11 at Blewbury Service Station. We need more volunteers to help on the stall (on a rota) and also a rota of tall people for a few minutes at the beginning and end to put up the gazebo if rain is likely (and take it down). The Garden Market has served the village for many years and we hope to continue, but we need people! Please contact [blewburygm@gmail.com](mailto:blewburygm@gmail.com). Further details at [www.blewburygm.co.uk](http://www.blewburygm.co.uk). We'll provide an update in April as to whether we have the numbers to start the season. *Sarah Hargreaves*

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## **NORTH MORETON BOOK SALE – BRING OUT YOUR BOOKS!**

North Moreton will be having its next Book Sale on Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> April in North Moreton Church, 10am until 3pm. We will start collecting books in March so please let us know if you have any to give away. Email [northmoretonbooksale@gmail.com](mailto:northmoretonbooksale@gmail.com), call 07908 314771 or 01235 818900 and the organisers will happily collect.

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## VILLAGE HALL NEWS

It's spring cleaning time, so the trustees will soon be putting on their rubber gloves and tackling the grubby marks on the walls, scrubbing out the kitchen and toilets and generally getting into the dusty corners; the cleaning fairy does a great job, but doesn't have time for the deep cleaning that needs to be done occasionally.

The next BlewTube film is another classic, *The King's Speech*, on Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> March 2pm in the Vale Room, tickets available at the door or from the post office.

There is some interest in the village for setting up a group to play Pickle Ball. More details will be available later. Meanwhile if you are at all interested, please do contact Evi Holroyd at [blewburyvillagehall.adm@gmail.com](mailto:blewburyvillagehall.adm@gmail.com) for information.

Here's a little more information about two of the groups that meet at the hall, new members are always welcome!

**Table Tennis Club** – see front page.

### **Blewbury Wine Tasting**

Do you love tasting new and interesting wines, presented by enthusiastic and entertaining experts? The Blewbury Wine Tasting group usually meets on the 3rd Friday each month, in the Village Hall and always welcomes new people. At each event, you can discover new wines, learn more about familiar ones and enjoy sharing the experience with others - no prior knowledge of wine is necessary.

There is a theme for each tasting, usually geographic (e.g. Catalonia, Veneto, South Africa), or sometimes more thematic (e.g. 'wines that age', 'high altitude production'). There is no membership, you can just come to the tastings that are of interest to you. We normally charge £25 per person and typically taste 7-9 wines over a couple of hours, in a friendly and relaxed atmosphere. You are welcome to bring snacks (cheese, meats etc.) to accompany the wines, but this is very much a personal choice.

Our tastings are run by either Tim Syrad ([www.timsyradwines.com](http://www.timsyradwines.com)) who has his own wine tours, tastings and sales business, or someone from Grape Minds ([www.grapemindsdrinkalike.co.uk](http://www.grapemindsdrinkalike.co.uk)), the Wallingford wine shop. Both are very experienced and bring a vast knowledge of wine, its production and history. Why not book a place and come along to give it a try? We would be delighted to see you. To make a booking or to find out more email [blewburywine@gmail.com](mailto:blewburywine@gmail.com).

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### **UPDATE: MOONRAKERS CONCERT**

Friends of St Michael's present 4-piece folk band Moonrakers ([www.moonrakers.net](http://www.moonrakers.net)) with traditional and contemporary songs from the UK and Ireland. Bank Holiday Monday, 4<sup>th</sup> May, St Michael's Church, Blewbury, 7.30 pm. Please note: original plans to include Oxus Group have changed and we hope to be able to arrange another date later in the year. Tickets £15 including a glass of wine or soft drink in the interval. Profits for St. Michael's Church. Tickets from the Post Office from 1<sup>st</sup> March or on the door but best to reserve to avoid disappointment.

Reservations/enquiries: Pat Mattimore 01235 851088 or email [bernardmat@btinternet.com](mailto:bernardmat@btinternet.com).

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### **GARDEN OPENING IN AID OF FLEXICARE**

Early Spring flowers in an Arts & Crafts garden including small fritillary meadow. Larkbeare, 85 Cumnor Hill, OX2 9HX, Sunday, 29<sup>th</sup> March, 2.00 - 6.00pm. Entrance free but donations to Flexicare.

Teas & sale of homemade preserves and plants. Flexicare is an Oxfordshire charity providing a specialised sitting service for families with a disabled child in Oxford, Abingdon, Wantage and surrounding villages for 40 years. Your support helps us to continue to provide this unique, vital service.

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### **BLEWBURY CALENDAR – WITH YOUR PICTURES!**

In memory of Bernard Mattimore, the Friends of St Michael's will be making a village calendar for 2027 - and your picture can be featured. Get out and take pictures (when it stops raining!) or look through some recent pictures you have taken around the village and send them to [Fosmblewbury@gmail.com](mailto:Fosmblewbury@gmail.com). We need images of all seasons, different aspects and areas of the village. If there are any people in your images, you must have permission from everyone before submitting. Closing date is 30<sup>th</sup> June.

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### **DIDCOT FOOD BANK – CONTRIBUTIONS STILL NEEDED**

This month's dates are Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> February to Monday 9<sup>th</sup> March. Donation boxes outside the Charity School House on these dates or at The Post Office any time; local supermarkets also accept donations. All the usual items welcome; ensure all food is within its sell by date. Foodbank cannot accept alcohol, razors, medicines, or homemade preserves. Cash donations, however small, are also very welcome. <https://didcotbaptist.churchsuite.com/donate>.





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## **ONCE IN A GENERATION DECISION - YOUR CHANCE TO HAVE A SAY ON THE FUTURE OF LOCAL SERVICES**

The Government has launched its formal public consultation on options for the shape of councils across Oxfordshire and West Berkshire. The last time a change of this scale happened was over 50 years ago, so this decision will have a significant impact to everyone in the district for many years.

### **What is changing?**

The Government is scrapping the current district and county councils and replacing them with new 'unitary' councils. Unitary councils deliver all council services under one roof.

### **What are the proposals?**

The Government asked the existing councils to develop proposals for them to consider. There were three proposals submitted to government:

- **A single unitary council** that covers all of Oxfordshire.
- **Two unitary councils** that cover Oxfordshire and West Berkshire. One covering the existing council areas of Cherwell, Oxford City and West Oxfordshire. One covering the existing council areas of South Oxfordshire, Vale of White Horse and West Berkshire.
- **Three unitary councils** that cover Oxfordshire and West Berkshire. One covering the existing Oxford City council area but with expanded boundaries. One covering the remaining existing council areas of Cherwell and West Oxfordshire. One covering the remaining existing council areas of South Oxfordshire, Vale of White Horse and West Berkshire.

### **Find out more on the three proposals**

Each proposal has its own website that you can visit to find out more:

- A single county unitary proposal for Oxfordshire developed and supported by Oxfordshire County Council: [www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/oneoxfordshire](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/oneoxfordshire)
- A two unitary proposal for Oxfordshire and West Berkshire developed and supported by Cherwell, South Oxfordshire, Vale of White Horse, West Berkshire and West Oxfordshire councils: [www.twocouncils.org](http://www.twocouncils.org)
- The three unitary proposal for Oxfordshire and West Berkshire developed and supported by Oxford City Council: [www.oxford.gov.uk/three-councils](http://www.oxford.gov.uk/three-councils)

### **What do the current councils think is the best option?**

Vale of White Horse, alongside South Oxfordshire, Cherwell, West Berkshire and West Oxfordshire overwhelmingly support the two unitary option. 142 out of 158 councillors in attendance at councils last year voted to support submitting the two unitary proposal including councillors from all political parties. Oxfordshire County Council support their single unitary proposal and Oxford City Council support their three unitary proposal.

### **How you can have your say**

The Government is running a consultation until Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> March 2026. We would strongly encourage everyone to have a say because this decision will affect all council services, potentially for decades to come.

<https://consult.communities.gov.uk/local-government-reorganisation/oxfordshire>

### **Next steps**

Following the consultation, there should then be a ministerial decision in the summer 2026, with a period of preparation culminating in Shadow authorities elected in May 2027. The government's preferred option is scheduled to become fully operational in 2028. *Information provided by Vale of White Horse District Council*

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## **CONGRATULATIONS TO COUNCILLOR HAYLEIGH GASCOIGNE**

Our District Councillor Hayleigh Gascoigne is on maternity leave – her daughter was born in December, sooner than expected, but both are doing well. She expects to return in the summer. Cllr Andy Cooke, the ward councillor for Drayton, will be supporting Hayleigh's ward colleague Cllr Debra Dewhurst in Hayleigh's absence.

---

## **BELLRINGING NEWS FROM ST MICHAEL'S TOWER**

We are very pleased to welcome three new recruits who are making very good progress in their quest to master the art of church bell ringing. This is no easy thing to do but is extremely rewarding, and of course it maintains a long tradition going back hundreds of years. We wish them all well and hope that they enjoy practising their new skills. Meanwhile, see page 3 for the article on our annual duck race in the Playclose on Easter Sunday. *Richard Loyd*



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## **DIDCOT & DISTRICT UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE**

D&D U3A meetings are held on the third Tuesday of each month at 2pm at Didcot Civic Hall. Visitors are welcome to come to one meeting as a taster before joining.

On **17 March** there will be a talk about gardening entitled "On Top but Never in Control" by horticulturalist Timothy Walker.

For details email [membership@didcotu3a.org](mailto:membership@didcotu3a.org) or visit <https://didcot.u3asite.uk/>.



# News from St. Michael's

Rector - The Revd Canon Jason St. John Nicolle

**BENEFICE OFFICE - 01235 850267**

How to contact us: -

Elaine de Ridder, Operations Manager, is available Monday to Friday from 9.00-2.30 pm on 01235 850267, 07434 686044 or via email [office@churnchurches.co.uk](mailto:office@churnchurches.co.uk).

Website [www.churnchurches.co.uk](http://www.churnchurches.co.uk)

Bookings for Weddings, Baptisms and funerals may be made by contacting the office via email or on the office number.

<b>Father Jason St John Nicolle</b>	01235 850267	<a href="mailto:office@churnchurches.co.uk">office@churnchurches.co.uk</a>
<b>Revd Louise Butler</b>	07837 009730	<a href="mailto:revlouiseb@aol.com">revlouiseb@aol.com</a>
<b>Revd John Clarke</b>	01235 510073	<a href="mailto:jphclarke@gmail.com">jphclarke@gmail.com</a>
<b>Revd Dr Mark Rhodes-Smith</b>	01235 850267	<a href="mailto:mark.rhodes-smith@churnchurches.co.uk">mark.rhodes-smith@churnchurches.co.uk</a>

## Services for March 2026 at St Michael's:

- † **Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> March Second Sunday of Lent**
  - 8.00am Holy Communion
  - 10.30am All Age service
  - Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> 7.00pm Time for Reflection*
- † **Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> March Third Sunday of Lent**
  - 10.30am Choir-led Taizé service
  - Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> 7.30pm Fellowship by the fire, Charity School House*
  - Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> 3-4.30pm Father Jason looks at depictions of Jesus in our church*
- † **Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> March Mothering Sunday**
  - 10.30am Parish Eucharist
  - Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> 10.00am Mothers' Union Holy Communion at St Mary's UPTON*
- † **Sunday 22<sup>th</sup> March Fifth Sunday of Lent – Passion Sunday**
  - 10.30am Parish Eucharist
  - Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> 7.30pm Fellowship by the fire, Charity School House*
- † **Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> March Palm Sunday**
  - 10.30am Parish Eucharist

In addition to the services in Church, we continue to have an **online service at 10.30am every Sunday** via the link <https://meet.goto.com/ChurnBenefice/sundayservice>. We also have **online Compline** (15 minute night prayer) every weekday night at 8pm services via link <https://meet.goto.com/312446493>.

One of the key MU objectives is to help those whose family life has met with adversity. In Oxfordshire one way we do this is to arrange holidays, days out or treats for individuals and families who have not been able to have a break or time away. More recently our charity has been able to pay for children to go on school trips and educational holidays when family finances have been tight. MU Members take part in fundraising activities throughout the year raising funds for "AFIA" – **AWAY FROM IT ALL**.



The local MU branch, The Churn MU, will be raising funds for **AFIA** in March when they host one of the Lent Lunches at Hagbourne Church on 7<sup>th</sup> March. These run every Saturday lunchtime 12.30 to 2pm through the weeks of Lent. Come and sample homemade soups, bread & cheese, delicious cakes and hot drinks. You will not be disappointed. If you know of any family or individual who would benefit from an **AFIA** holiday or break, please contact Revd Louise Butler in confidence or go direct to the Oxford MU website: [www.muoxford.org.uk](http://www.muoxford.org.uk).

Our branch also meet monthly for a Holy Communion service followed by refreshments. This is at 10am at St. Mary's Church, Upton on Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> March. All are very welcome. Join us and Join in. *Revd Louise Butler 07837 009730*



**Recent funeral:** 16<sup>th</sup> February at St Michael's Blewbury: Victor Bowman, aged 98  
*May he rest in peace and rise in glory*

What do you think about AI?

I wonder if you have been thinking about the growing impact of AI in the way we do things? Are you worried about AI, or do you take it in your stride?

AI has become a part of normal life. Students use it to help them with their work, at school and University. Modern computers seem to take the general use of AI for granted, and AI is routinely used in offices to help with straightforward but time-consuming tasks.

Are we to be worried about the impact of AI on our lives? Is it going to take away our jobs? Will AI get so clever at doing things that it will become smarter than most human beings? Will AI take over the world?

Opinions vary. Some serious and well-informed people worry that AI is poised to change our world for ever – and not necessarily for the better. Other people think that the impact of AI is not going to be as catastrophic as some might fear – human beings have lived through the adoption of new forms of technology in the past, and some think that the coming of AI will be similar to the coming of the railways, the telephone, or the computer. Things will change, and some jobs will be lost; but new jobs will be created, and life will generally carry on much the same as always. It will simply be that some things will be quicker, easier and perhaps cheaper than they were before.

Whatever your thoughts about AI, I think it is important for us all to think about its impact, not least so that we can maximise its benefits and protect ourselves against its risks. To this end, I'm starting a series of informal talks about the impact of AI in different areas of our lives. We'll be looking at the impact of AI in areas such as science, education and the world of work. The first of the series will take place on Sunday 8th March 2026 at 6pm at St Andrew's Hagbourne, as part of our celebration of British Science Week. The topic will be "Science in the Age of AI", and will be aimed at a general audience - you don't have to be a scientist to come along! The talk will take place within our very informal 6pm service. Details of the other talks in the series will be finalised shortly – do contact the church office for more details.

Why am I writing about AI? It is because AI is all about science, and I see science as one of God's greatest gifts to human beings. There is no conflict between Good Science and Good Religion (there can be a conflict between Bad Science and Bad Religion, but that's another matter!) One of the roles of Christianity is to promote the common good, so that every human being can flourish. How might AI help human flourishing? Come along on 8th March and share your thoughts. It will be lovely to have you with us. - *Father Jason*



**LENT** started on Ash Wednesday, 18th February. During Lent we are putting on several Lent courses and events, including:

- \* Father Jason's tour of some of our churches starting Thursday 26th February at 3pm. This year he will be looking at depictions of Jesus through the ages. Father Jason will do a short repeat online on Friday 27th at 7pm.
- \* Revd Mark will explore the meaning of Holy Communion which is at the heart of Christian spirituality (online), starting Wednesday 25th February at 7pm.
- \* Our Ecumenical group will be looking at John's Gospel with the help of the book "Meeting God in John". Starting Friday 27th February at 10.30am.
- \* The very popular Lent soup lunches in St Andrew's Hagbourne Church every Saturday during Lent.

Details are in our Lent leaflets which are available in our churches and online

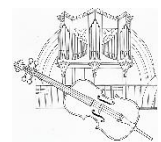
<https://www.churnchurches.co.uk/content/pages/documents/lent-leaflet.pdf>

Free Organ recitals at St Andrew's Church OX11 9LP

Every first Sunday of the month at 5pm

Our next organ recital on Sunday 1st March at 5pm will feature music for 'cello and organ.

Linda Benton and Mo Windsor will be playing. All welcome!



Singing Stainer's Crucifixion



The combined choir of St Andrew's Hagbourne and surrounding areas will be singing Stainer's Crucifixion on Passion Sunday, 22 March at 6pm St Andrew's Hagbourne. Everyone welcome to attend! It isn't too late to join the choir! Weekly rehearsals are on Thursdays at 7.30pm at St Andrew's church with a final dress rehearsal on 22nd March at 3pm. For more information and to download music, please see

[https://colin-windsor.github.io/HomePage/Stainer\\_Crucifixion.htm](https://colin-windsor.github.io/HomePage/Stainer_Crucifixion.htm)

Food Bank Collection

Saturday 28th February - Monday 9th March

Thank you for your continued generosity. Giving even one item to the Didcot Emergency Foodbank will make a difference to the Foodbank's ability to help those in need. Drop off at the Old School House between the dates above or at the Post Office anytime.

- St Michael's Action Group



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## Dates for 2026

A Celebration of Blewbury and the Players, 20 June, St Michael's  
Catie Flye and her usual Two Cousins and a Piano team, which have performed so many enjoyable revues in Blewbury over the years

The Wind in the Willows, Orchard Dene, 15-18 July

Fifty Years of Blewbury Players,  
Exhibition, Orchard Dene Garden, 15-18 July

A Christmas Carol,  
St Michael's Church, 25-28 November

More details for all at [www.blewburyplayers.co.uk](http://www.blewburyplayers.co.uk)



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## BLEWBURY PLAYERS

**Book Preview - Drama in an Oxfordshire Village - Fifty Years of the Blewbury Players**, Village Hall, 20<sup>th</sup> March.

Steve White will be previewing his new (and first!) book, looking back to the origins of the Players in the growth of Blewbury after

the second world war, in the tradition of drama and performance which became established in the village through the sixties and seventies, and in the legacy left by the Stockwell's Players in Aston Upthorpe. He will describe the evolution of the Players as an organisation, their plays and other shows, and their relationship to other productions in the village like the Blewbury Opera. There will be plenty of pictures, film clips, songs and scenes from shows. So many of you will have taken part in the Players' productions in the past or will have relatives and friends who have done so - come and join us and see if you can spot them in some of the photographs of past productions – or perhaps a younger version of yourself! The book will be published on 14<sup>th</sup> July. Tickets are complimentary to subscribed Friends of the Players and £5 for others. **Box Office is @ [blewburyplayers.co.uk](http://blewburyplayers.co.uk), or use barcode here.**

### Production Team members wanted

We are looking for people to become part of our summer production team. If anyone is interested in technical support i.e. lighting, sound, AVA, sewing, etc, do get in touch. We are prepared to support with training and mentoring etc. We are now fully cast for our performances of *The Wind in the Willows* at Orchard Dene, 15-18<sup>th</sup> July. Details of all our 2026 plans are at [www.blewburyplayers.co.uk](http://www.blewburyplayers.co.uk) or you contact us at [blewburyplayers@gmail.com](mailto:blewburyplayers@gmail.com). Do follow us on Instagram and Facebook.



## NATURE NOTES: THE HAZEL

Spring is making a welcome return. Despite all the seemingly chaotic events in the world and despite some parts of the country receiving a truly biblical 40 days and 40 nights of continuous rain, spring is inexorable.

One of the first signs of spring is the bright yellow catkins of the humble Hazel (*Corylus avellana*). More a shrub than a tree, Hazels were one of the first plants to recolonise the land after the retreat of the last Ice Age. The species cannot tolerate deep shade and so when the deep forest covered the land, Hazels moved to the edges of the woods, craggy cliffs and riverbanks. When man took up his flint and axe against the trees and opened the landscape up, Hazel once more flourished and we found many uses for this most utilitarian of plants.

Monoecious, literally meaning 'one house', is the botanical term for a plant that has both male and female flowers. The bright yellow catkins are the male flowers. Not many insects are on the wing at this time of year, so these flowers depend upon spring breezes to carry the pollen. The name 'Catkin' is derived from the old Dutch word '*katteken*' meaning kitten. However, when I was growing up in Suffolk we always called them 'lamb's tails', which seems more appropriate. To see the female flower the observant Blewbarian will probably need to reach for a spyglass or at least their very best reading glasses, for they are tiny. They are scarlet red and look more like sea anemones than conventional flowers.

Because Hazel can grow back rapidly from being cut, is straight, and can be cut lengthways and twisted, the plant has many uses. It lends itself to the construction of hurdles used in wattle and daub, used no doubt in many of the historical houses of the village. It is also the favoured wood for divining and Y-shaped dowsing rods. Staffs made from Hazel were, in folklore, thought to offer protection against evil spirits! Cultivated hazelnuts were often called 'Filberts', after Saint Philibert, whose day is 20<sup>th</sup> August, the day the nuts are said to start ripening. *Glen Meadows*

## BLEWSHED NEWS

BlewShed Community Projects: a damaged and dilapidated Cricket Club spectators' bench seat is now in pieces in BlewShed, drying out and being carefully restored and reinforced by BlewShed members. It will be finished in readiness for the season ahead, assuming rain doesn't stop play.

Maintenance is a constant work in progress with the current top priority being upgrading of the electrical system in the Shed. Most of the equipment, apart from hand tools, requires a safe and reliable electricity supply, so work is in hand to ensure this. Last summer's repairs to the roof ridge tiling joints appear to have kept the rain out so far in this winter's testing conditions. A reminder: everyone is welcome to club nights on the fourth Tuesday of the month, 7.30pm at BlewShed. *Mike Wrottesley, BlewShed secretary* <https://blewshed.home.blog/news/>

A vertical advertisement for Applethorpe Developments. It features a dark background with a gold tree logo at the top and bottom. The text includes: 'APPLETHORPE DEVELOPMENTS', 'HIGH QUALITY RENOVATIONS &amp; BESPOKE NEW-BUILDS', a phone icon followed by '07803-789305', an email icon followed by 'info@applethorpedevelopments.com', 'LVT, Carpet &amp; sheet vinyl Flooring Specialists', 'KARNDEAN - AMTICO - POLYFLOOR', and another phone icon followed by '07803-789305' and an email icon followed by 'info@applethorpedevelopments.com'.

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**Repair café. Sunday 1 March, 2 to 4pm.** This will be held in the Melland Room at Blewbury Clubhouse and in BlewShed, with their kind permission. Bring your household and gardening articles for repair including clothing and electrical goods. Bicycles can be fixed and checked. We can also sharpen small tools, knives and secateurs but come early: we can only do one or two sharpenings per person if we are busy. Donations towards the hire of premises and refreshments welcome. Why not come along, see what we do and enjoy a cuppa with others from the village?



**Great Blewbury Litter-pick, Sat 7 March, 2 to 4pm.** Isn't the litter along our roads just awful to see? Come and help clean it up within the village. We will provide high-vis jackets, pickers and sacs. Please wear suitable footwear and your own protective gloves. Sign in and collect litter-picking equipment from Twin Trees, Bessels Lea at 2pm and have a cuppa when you get back. Children can help if accompanied by an adult but not on the roadsides. If you are unable to make this time but can help sometime else during the weekend, contact the secretary to borrow the equipment another time. This is part of the Great British Spring Clean happening across the country in March (see also the Parish Council notes on page 19).

**Nature Reserve volunteering, Sat 14 Mar, 9.30 am to noon.** We hope to have some yellow rattle plugs to plant in the grassland area to encourage more species to come into this area. We also need to continue hedge maintenance and mulch the plants. There are jobs for every level of fitness and everyone is welcome to come for a taster. Bring your own protective gloves and a drink. Meet at the Nature Reserve. More details from the secretary.

**AGM. Wed 22 April.** Please make a note in your diaries. Further details later.

If you want to join our volunteers mailing list or become a supporter who receives occasional newsletters, email [secretary@sustainable-blewbury.org.uk](mailto:secretary@sustainable-blewbury.org.uk)

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Two low garden tables at the Style Acre tea room, 28"x28" and 14" high; solid and weighty items	Contact the tea room manager (phone no. right) or <a href="mailto:johnadilley@hotmail.co.uk">johnadilley@hotmail.co.uk</a>	07391 048679
To freecycle your item please send a short description, email & phone number to Lydia Inglis ( <a href="mailto:lydandmuz@gmail.com">lydandmuz@gmail.com</a> ) – please put FREECYCLE in the title of the email.		

## BLEWBURY WI NEWS

Our next monthly meeting is Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> March which is also our Annual Meeting, at 7.30pm in the Vale Room. Annual Meetings give WIs the opportunity to review the previous year's programme of activities, tie up any business from the last year and make plans for the future. A revised committee will be formed and a new President voted in by the members. We will also be having a blind tasting of different brands of hot cross buns – no calories in these of course! Our talks during the last year have included Lord Byron and his women, Gertrude Bell, the history and culture of Myanmar, 'From page to stage', A cold war reporter behind the Iron Curtain, English Country churches and the life of Empress Matilda. Something for everyone. Blewbury WI goes from strength to strength. As well as our usual monthly meetings, we have a variety of 'ad hoc' gatherings where we play informal games of Scrabble, Mah Jong and Rummikub. A monthly craft get-together, a monthly coffee morning at Style Acre plus occasional walks when the weather allows. Support is always on hand from other members with whatever life throws at us – a brilliant friendship network. You need never feel lonely or bored if you are in our WI. Although our WI is currently full, we are running a waiting list and there may be a couple of memberships available very soon. To find out more, ring our Secretary, Joy, on 850543 or email [blewburywi@gmail.com](mailto:blewburywi@gmail.com).



Mondays	2.30pm	Mah Jong	Sharon
Friday 27 February	7pm	Book club	Lyn
Monday 2 March	7pm	Scrabble	Joy
Thursday 5 March	10.00am	Coffee morning	Trish
Friday 6 March	7pm	Craft club	Karen
Thursday 19 March	2.30pm	Rummikub	Judy



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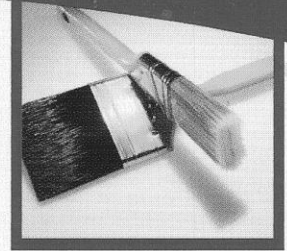
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## OLLY GLOVER MP

Following the fourth wettest January on record, I am not surprised to have received a flurry of concerns about potholes and flooding from across the constituency. While individual cases are all followed up, I have also been looking into longer term solutions and funding. With services such as adult social care experiencing huge levels of demand, and Oxfordshire County Council facing a £24.1 million cut in government funding, I raised the need for additional resources to repair potholes at Prime Minister's Questions. I didn't get much of an answer, but I will continue working with our local councils to secure the funding required to keep our roads, cycle paths, and pavements safe and serviceable. In Parliament, I also questioned a



Home Office minister about the mishandling of a domestic violence case by Thames Valley Police, highlighted the lack of safe cycle routes along the A417 and A338, and spoke about the impact of changes to Indefinite Leave to Remain rules on valued employees in local scientific businesses. I was pleased to present a bill to create a Rail Passengers' Charter, aimed at securing better train services, including high-speed Wi-Fi, improved accessibility at stations like Cholsey, and adequate seating. Train travel isn't cheap, and passengers deserve a better deal.

It was great to welcome Dark Horse Roastery and Hendred Vineyard to Parliament as part of an event promoting Oxfordshire's independent hospitality businesses. I also met students from Uffington Primary School during their visit to the House of Commons. Schools and other groups that would like an educational tour of Parliament can learn more at [www.parliament.uk/education](http://www.parliament.uk/education) or email me if you need a hand to book a visit.

Returning to the issue of water, I wrote to the Environment Secretary requesting a meeting to discuss the spiralling costs of the proposed reservoir, which appear to undermine the business case for such a large project, one that bill payers would ultimately fund. We have, however, had some success with Thames Water on a smaller scale. For example, they joined me, business leaders from Didcot, the Environment Agency, and local councils to unblock measures needed to prevent flooding on Milton Park and Trident Business Park.

As always, if there is anything you feel I can help with, please do not hesitate to contact me and my team at [olly.glover.mp@parliament.uk](mailto:olly.glover.mp@parliament.uk) or leave a voice message on 0207 219 7657. *Ollly Glover, MP for Didcot and Wantage*

# EGG ROLLING

**Blewbury's Annual Competition**  
FREE ENTRY. PRIZES FOR THE LONGEST ROLL AND BEST DECORATED EGG  
**EASTER SUNDAY,**  
**3pm @ THE CHALK PITS**

# Moonrakers

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**St Michael's Church, Bank Holiday Monday, 4<sup>th</sup>  
May**

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[bernardmat@btinternet.com](mailto:bernardmat@btinternet.com)  
Or see details on page 7

# REQUIEM

FAURÉ  
DURUFLÉ

**Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> March 2026, 7:30pm**  
St Michael's Church, Blewbury

**Tickets £12**  
Free to school age children  
See article on page 5 for details or visit  
[www.didcotchoralsociety.org](http://www.didcotchoralsociety.org)

**BlewTube**  
**Wed 11<sup>th</sup> March**  
Blewbury Village Hall (Vale Room)  
Doors open 13:45  
Screening 14:00  
Tickets £6 (on the door only)  
Licensed bar.

## BRIDGE CLUB

**Wessex League:** Blewbury's team has probably won Division 2 of the Wessex League. (The season ends in April, but we've completed our matches and our average makes it hard for the second-placed team to catch us.) Next year, we'll return to Division 1.

...which might seem scary to some! Thus, in Sept-Oct, I'm considering starting a second Blewbury team, which would start in the bottom division against weaker opponents. Or, alternatively, there's a Daytime League, mostly retired people who can play on weekday afternoons. However, I need to gauge numbers. **If anyone's interested, contact us!** The only criterion is that everyone in a Blewbury team must also sometimes play ordinary club games (face-to-face or online).

### Fit Jumps

They're my favourite convention. They occur all the time and describe 70% of your hand in one bid, allowing judgements you couldn't make with normal methods. Imagine you open 1C and partner replies 2S. What's that? Traditionally, it's a big spade suit and 17+ points. That's great when you pick up the right hand, but one hardly ever does! If playing fit-jumps, though, that's a trump fit and a long side-suit that might be useful. You're showing 9+ of your 13 cards.

BOARD 23 (above) gained us 800 in 4Hx-3 on a part-score hand, which would have been impossible without fit-jumps. We had fewer points than East-West. My final double would have been suicidal had my partner and I only bid clubs... but the "clubs and spades" fit-jump meant we had something useful in all the side suits. Incidentally, I disapprove of East's 4H. He had his takeout double, sure, but only three trumps, no shape and mediocre spades under South's announced spade suit.

BOARD 19 saw us miss a slam... and not 6D, but 7D! Is the grand biddable? I think so, with fit-jumps. North opens 1D. South jumps to 2H ("diamonds and hearts"). North shows his second suit with 3C, South says 3NT ("don't worry about spades!") and now North's on fire. Partner's promised 9+ red cards and some spades, so probably has club shortage and all the suits are sewn up.

TECHNICAL DETAILS... fit-jumps are encouraged on weak hands, but you can also bid them on strength if partner's guaranteed to return to his suit (e.g. 1H 3C). The convention's only downside is that a dozy partner might miss it! Let's say you open 1S, opponents overall 2C and partner bids 3D. It's possible to have a brain fade and not notice that partner's jumped... *Finn Clark*

♠ 4		N Finn Clark	
Bd 23, Dir S	♥ A73	Other table	
4♥X-3 W	♦ Q1032	3♣= N	
W	♣ KQ1093	E	
♠ K105		♠ QJ87	
♥ J10952		♥ KQ6	
♦ K75		♦ AJ98	
♣ J2		♣ 75	
	♠ A9632	W N E S	
	♥ 84	P	1♠ X 2♠
	♦ 64	P	3♥ 4♣ 4♥
	♣ A864	P	X P P
	S	P	P

♠ 65		N Finn Clark	
Bd 19, Dir S	♥ A	Other table	
5♦+2 N	♦ AKQJ98	6♦+1 N	
W	♣ AQ87	E	
♠ Q32		♠ K1084	
♥ 654		♥ Q1073	
♦ 4		♦ 53	
♣ K106432		♣ J95	
	♠ AJ97	W N E S	
	♥ KJ982	P	1♠ P 1♥
	♦ 10762	P	3♣ P 3♦
	♣ -	P	3NT P 5♦
	S	P	P

## CANADIAN CORRESPONDENT

I was surprised to discover from watching a Canadian detective series that there is a part of France in the Gulf of St Lawrence, just off the coast of Newfoundland, named St Pierre & Miquelon. A self-governing overseas territory since 1976, consisting of an archipelago of 8 islands covering 242 km<sup>2</sup>, where French is the official language and the Euro is the official currency! It can be reached either by boat or by air from Halifax and St John's, as well as long-haul flights from France. It retains a unique 17th century charm, with colourful houses and French cuisine, and tourism now has become an important part of the economy. You can visit with a valid passport, and visas are not required for stays of less than 90 days, but importantly, although technically part of the European Union, it is not part of the Schengen Area on the European mainland, which only requires a photo ID.

It used to be a paradise for rum runners during the prohibition days of the 1920s and 30s but now leads a much more sedate life, with attractions such as the Musée Heritage, a Cathedral and an abandoned historic village on Île-aux-Marins. St Pierre (named after St Peter, patron saint of fishermen), is the busier more populated island, while the larger more rural Miquelon-Langlade (a derivation of Mikelon, the Basque version of Michael, the islands were visited by Portuguese explorers back in 1520, and Langlade is an adaptation of Englishman's Island) is known for the Grand Barachois lagoon, frequented by seals and seabirds. From an initial population of 4 residents in 1670, it rose to 5,819 at the January 2022 census, but during 17th 18th and 19th centuries they suffered a lot of burning of settlements and deporting of residents back to France, after which the islands were finally ceded to France in 1816. During World War II, Free French Forces seized the islands from Vichy France and later, after a referendum on both islands, the population endorsed France's takeover by 98%. Its residents are French citizens; they elect their own deputy to the National Assembly and participate in senatorial and presidential elections. France appoints a Prefect who is in charge of national interests, law enforcement and public order. In the TV series we are watching, the Prefect is a woman who is very unpopular with the local police department! Tourism and some fish farming and crab fishing has replaced deep sea fishing after this was prohibited by Canada. *Angela Hoy (ahoy2343@gmail.com)*

## PARISH COUNCIL

Notes of Blewbury Parish Council meeting: 7pm, **Wednesday 18 February 2026**, Melland Room, Blewbury Clubhouse. **Present:** Sheila Austin, Andrew Calder, Andy Evason, Anne Millman, Sarah Parkin, Lee Robinson, Julia Saunders (chair), Ben Scott, Mark Shayler and Iain Wood (lengthsman). Also present Michelle Taylor-Parish (clerk) and county councillor Rebekah Fletcher. There were apologies from district councillor Hayleigh Gascoigne and district councillor Andy Cooke.

**Local news** – The zipline on Tickers Folly Field has now reopened. Thank you to Mark Shayler for the excellent job he has done of repairing this. The skatepark is temporarily closed due to damage. This is due to be fixed over the next month. Thank you to the Speedwatch Group for their hard work which has helped achieve the funding from the County for the new bollards. These are to act as a visual speed deterrent so that people can cross the road more safely. The Great British Spring Clean takes place on 7<sup>th</sup> March, from 2-4pm. If you would like to help clean up the village please meet at Twin Trees, Bessels Lea at 2pm to collect litter pickers, high vis jackets etc. Children are very welcome as long as accompanied by an adult.

**District council news** – The councils across Oxfordshire are being reorganised. To have your say, the online survey is here: <https://consult.communities.gov.uk/local-government-reorganisation/oxfordshire>. *More details on page 9.*

**County Council news** – The 2026/2027 highways budget includes provision for a puffin crossing outside Savages.

**Planning Applications:** Enquiries regarding planning in the parish may be sent to [blewburypc@gmail.com](mailto:blewburypc@gmail.com). All planning applications, decisions and BPC responses, including items under consideration, can be found in the planning section of the Vale of White Horse website.

### Responses to the District Council

P26/V0114/LDP: 6 Chailey Gardens Blewbury Didcot OX11 9FL. Formation of habitable room in roofspace with front and rear velux rooflights. No objection.

P26/V0336/S73: Fieldside Farm Westbrook Street Blewbury OX11 9QB. Variation of Condition 2 (Approved Plans) on planning application P25/V1979/S73 (Variation of conditions 2 & 7 on application ref. P24/V2620/S73 - internal layouts & window/door positions revised; revert to previously approved Ashlar stone materials to rear single storey extension; additional chimney; outbuilding repositioned and alteration of opening from 3 arches to one arch Variation of conditions 2 (approved plans) and 7 (External materials) on application P24/V1397/FUL - to make changes to the internal and external design and materials in order to improve living accommodation and aesthetics. (Self-build replacement dwelling with garage and outbuilding)) - to amend the plans to add a design studio to the first floor of the garage with external staircase and rooflights; and reposition the ASHP. No objection.

### Decisions from the District Council

P25/V1831/LDP: Granary House London Road Blewbury Didcot OX11 9PF. Determine whether installation window W1 on drawing 0223MJA/100 will constitute 'Material Commencement' of the works covered by Planning Applications P23/V2066/HH and P23/V2067/LB. Granted 23rd January 2026.

**Need to contact your parish councillors?** **Sheila Austin** 3 Ladycroft Park, **Andrew Calder** Trefagus, Chapel Lane, **Andy Evason** The Manor, Berry Lane, **Anne Millman** Brook Cottage, Church End, **Sarah Parkin** Lowmans, South Street, **Lee Robinson** 6 Chailey Gardens, **Julia Saunders** Charity School House, Church Road, **Ben Scott** Little Morters, Dibleys, **Mark Shayler** 2 Eastfields. **Michelle Taylor-Parish** (clerk) is at 07968 772935 [blewburypc@gmail.com](mailto:blewburypc@gmail.com)  
The next parish council meeting will be at 7pm on **Wednesday 18 March 2026**, in the Melland Room.

## WILD OXFORDSHIRE

The Great British Spring Clean is one of the simplest actions we can take to help wildlife. But there are also some wildlife-friendly things you can do in your own garden.

1. **Leave some areas undisturbed.** Sometimes what really matters is what you *don't* do. Leave dead leaves, log piles, and dead flowers where they are. These provide vital shelter and resources for hedgehogs, insects, and small mammals, and are crucial habitats as wildlife becomes active in early spring.
2. **Feed the birds.** Providing food for birds is a great help, but make sure all bird feeders are cleaned weekly to prevent the spread of disease. If you won't have the time or energy to do that, it's better to grow native plants with berries and seeds, such as Elder trees, Hawthorn, and fruit trees, all of which provide natural bird feed.
3. **Grow food for bees and butterflies.** Sow native wildflower seeds in trays or modules now to grow plants for your own mini meadow later in the year.
4. **Keep an eye out for emerging wildlife**  
As slumbering hedgehogs begin to wake, you can support them by providing suitable food (meaty cat food) and water (not milk) in shallow dishes. Avoid disturbing wild corners and log piles where a hedgehog may be hibernating, and create gaps under fences to encourage safe movement in and out of your garden.

Check our website for more details: <https://www.wildoxfordshire.org.uk/guidance/helping-nature-on-your-patch>.

**Autumn Leaves** The dates for the Bingo Sessions in the Vale Room, Village Hall at 2pm are Mar 3<sup>rd</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup>. For further information, or if anyone would like to join Autumn Leaves, call Cilla Maguire on 01235 851966. We would welcome any new members to come and join us.

**Astons Online CIC** supports people who want to be digitally confident on the Internet, with smartphone apps or online services like health and banking. **Astons Online** CIC events and support are free and open to all. There are in-person one-to-one sessions in Aston Upthorpe Village Hall (OX11 9EQ) on Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> March from 10:00 to 12 noon. Please book an appointment by email [theastononline@gmail.com](mailto:theastononline@gmail.com) or by phone 07780 958249.

Didcot based charity, **Getting Oxfordshire Online**, would love to have your **unwanted laptops, tablets and smartphones** to distribute to others who are not able to have their own. Demand in the county is greater than supply so any used devices would be welcome. Contact us by email or phone as above.

**BLEWBURY FLYING SQUAD** is a volunteer hospital car service for Blewbury residents. We cover appointments in hospitals, doctors' surgeries, dentists, opticians, chiropodists, physio etc. As the Flying Squad is a voluntary service which relies entirely on people's personal time and vehicle availability, we need as much notice as possible to arrange a driver. Please note that journeys to the Horton Hospital in Banbury are not available from the Flying Squad. To make a booking, telephone **07891 768197**. If the Flying Squad telephone holder is not available, you will be prompted to leave a voice message. Wait for the beep at the end of the BFS phone message then give your name and telephone number. Please speak clearly. You will be phoned back as soon as possible.

**BLEWBURY POST OFFICE OPENING HOURS**

**Monday:** 9am-3pm. **Tuesday:** 9am-3pm. **Wednesday:** 9am-12 noon. **Thursday:** 9am-3pm. **Friday:** 9am-3pm.

**VILLAGE DIARY for March 2026**

			<b>Page</b>	
Sunday	1	2 - 4 pm	Sustainable Blewbury Repair Café, Melland Room and BlewShed	15
Monday	2	10 - 11.30 am	Coffee & Kids!, Vale Room	3
Tuesday	3	2 pm	Autumn Leaves Bingo etc., Vale Room	20
Saturday	7	2 - 4 pm	Great Blewbury Litter-pick, meet at Twin Trees, Bessels Lea	15,19
Saturday	7		BVS Comedy Night, Village Hall	5
Tuesday	10	8 pm	Local History Group meeting, 9 Westbrook Green	
Wednesday	11	2 pm	BlewTube film: <i>The King's Speech</i> , Village Hall	7
Friday	13	2 pm	<del>Death by Shakespeare</del> -CANCELLED	3
Saturday	14	9.30am-12 noon	Volunteering at the Nature Reserve, Nature Reserve	15
Tuesday	17	2 pm	Autumn Leaves Bingo etc., Vale Room	20
<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>7.30 pm</b>	<b>Editorial and advertising deadline for April Bulletin</b>	
Wednesday	18	7 pm	Parish Council meeting, Melland Room	19
Friday	20	7 pm	Celebration of the Blewbury Sphere, Play Close	1
Friday	20		Fifty Years of the Blewbury Players, Village Hall	13
Tuesday	24	7.30 pm	BlewShed meeting, The Shed, Recreation Ground	13
Wednesday	25	7.30 pm	WI Annual Meeting, Vale Room	15
Saturday	28	2 - 4 pm	Farewell party for Dave the postie, Village Hall	1
Saturday	28	7.30 pm	Didcot Choral Society concert, St Michael's Church	5
Tuesday	31	2 pm	Autumn Leaves Bingo etc., Vale Room	20

**HOW TO ADVERTISE IN THE BULLETIN** The Bulletin welcomes advertisements from organisations and individuals based in Blewbury and immediately neighbouring villages. Space permitting, we also welcome ads from further afield if they do not duplicate existing local services, are not widely advertised elsewhere and are likely to be of interest to residents. Acceptance of advertisements does not imply endorsement of the products or services offered. Display advertisements **must** be submitted in one of three rectangular sizes:

- 60mm wide x 40mm high (cost: £2.00)
- 60mm wide x 85mm high (£4.00)
- 90mm wide x 65mm high (£6.00)

Please note that artwork is printed in black and white only. You can also send plain text for us to fit into an appropriately sized box. If you are advertising a village event you can also present it as plain editorial, i.e. not highlighted in a box, for no charge.

All advertisements should be submitted to the Editor at [editor@blewbury.co.uk](mailto:editor@blewbury.co.uk) in the first instance, ideally as a Microsoft Word, Microsoft PowerPoint, JPEG or PDF attachment. If your advertisement is accepted, please note that payment **must** be received before the Bulletin goes to press. If you require repeat insertions over multiple months, you will be referred to the Advertising Manager to make the arrangements.

**WRITTEN CONTRIBUTIONS** We are always happy to receive editorial contributions, submitted in the same way as advertisements – see above. We ask for a maximum length of 500 words (closer to 400 if there is an accompanying photo). Anyone supplying information for publication must be responsible for its accuracy. We require name and contact details in all cases, although if requested these will not be published. The editor reserves the right to reject submissions. Opinions expressed by contributors are not necessarily those of the Bulletin.

To see the Bulletin online visit [www.blewbury.co.uk](http://www.blewbury.co.uk)

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