

Goring Gap News

EVENTS, PEOPLE, BUSINESS, ARTS AND SPORT IN GORING AND STREATLEY

Goring United win the League



Goring United celebrating winning the League

Top row: Mark Sachse, Chris Pocock, Tom Canning, Sully Akers, Dan Franklin, Connor Coleman, Josh Monk, Rob Millsop, Harry Voice, Alex Fletcher

Below: George Scoffham, Rob Ellington, George O'Brien, Tommy Edwards, Ed Ardill, Matt Hayden, Archie Hela

Photo: John Douglass

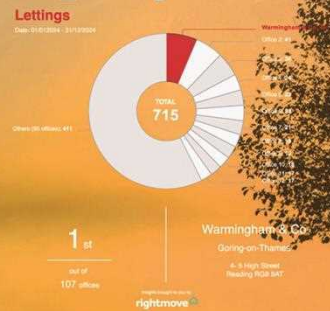
Jack and Varsha's retirement party



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News and articles of local interest, original poems, drawings and photographs are invited for the Editor's consideration. Articles and digital picture files (at as high quality as possible - at least 1.5MB for colour) can be sent to goringgapnews@gmail.com or submitted on memory stick, along with any handwritten or typed material, via the post box for Goring Gap News in Inspiration, 1 The Arcade, Goring, RG8 9AY, by courtesy of the proprietors. See website for more details.

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Distribution

We aim to deliver copies of the GGN to all households in Goring and Streatley.

June 2025 weekend of 28/29

July 2025 weekend of 26/27

August 2025 weekend of 23/24

If your copy has not arrived after five days contact Victoria Brandon. (See above.)

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GRAPEVINE

Corrections to April GGN

The images with the article by Pete Morton on Page 42 were credited incorrectly. The credit should have read: Image(s) created using Bing Image Creator.   Microsoft Bing. Used with permission.

The photo on Page 27 credited to David Slarks was actually taken by John Boler.

We apologise for these errors.

Garry Alder

Readers may recall the article on Page 24 in April GGN which recounted the story told by Garry Alder about his experiences while doing research in the Indian sub-continent. We are sad to report that Garry passed away in April. Our sympathies are with his family.

GGN volunteer opportunity

Do you enjoy reading GGN?

Do you have one Friday plus a few hours a month when you are able to volunteer to help produce GGN?

Are you comfortable with using PCs and software packages?

If so, would you like to volunteer to be part of the team that formats GGN by pulling together the submitted articles into a printable format, working in a small team in Goring?

For more information, please contact either Hazel Preston-Barnes, the Production Team leader on [07766 541577](tel:07766541577) or the Editor, Gill Haigh on [07979 686288](tel:07979686288).

Full training and an optional visit on a production day available.

Warning on new text scam for garden waste payments

Please be aware that South Oxfordshire District Council will not ask for garden waste payments by text. If you receive a text message apparently from SODC about garden waste, just delete it and block the number, because it is a scam. You can contact SODC about garden waste on [01235 422422](tel:01235422422) or gardenwaste@southandvale.gov.uk

SODC say that 49,000 garden waste permits have already been paid for. At  75 each, that's  3,675,000.

Community Speedwatch in Goring

A group of residents are looking to set up a Community Speed Watch in Goring with the support of Thames Valley Police. A Community Speed Watch Group is already operating in Streatley. Despite the illuminated speed signs at four sites in Goring, there remain places where vehicles frequently break the 20mph limit. Accidents involving pedestrians at speeds over 20mph result in significantly worse injuries than those at lower speeds.

We are looking for volunteers who would be able to give a couple of hours a week to join a team carrying out roadside checks. The team will need at least three members on each occasion to measure speeds and log details of vehicles exceeding the limit, so it would be helpful to have more volunteers than that to provide cover. Full training and equipment will be provided by the Police.

Please help if you can. If you are interested contact Michael Rowlands merowlands@aol.com

Bus stop upgrade in Icknield Road

Oxfordshire County Council Highways will be upgrading the bus stops on Icknield Road opposite and adjacent to Storton Lodge. The plans are to remove the old bus stop sign and timetable case from the lamp column at the entrance to Icknield Place and install a new pole, sign and timetable case nearby. Similarly, they will install a new pole, sign and timetable case adjacent to the Lodge but away from the entrance.

The change will be funded by a developer contribution from a nearby new development and is designed to increase the visibility and use of public transport. It is expected to be installed within the next few weeks.



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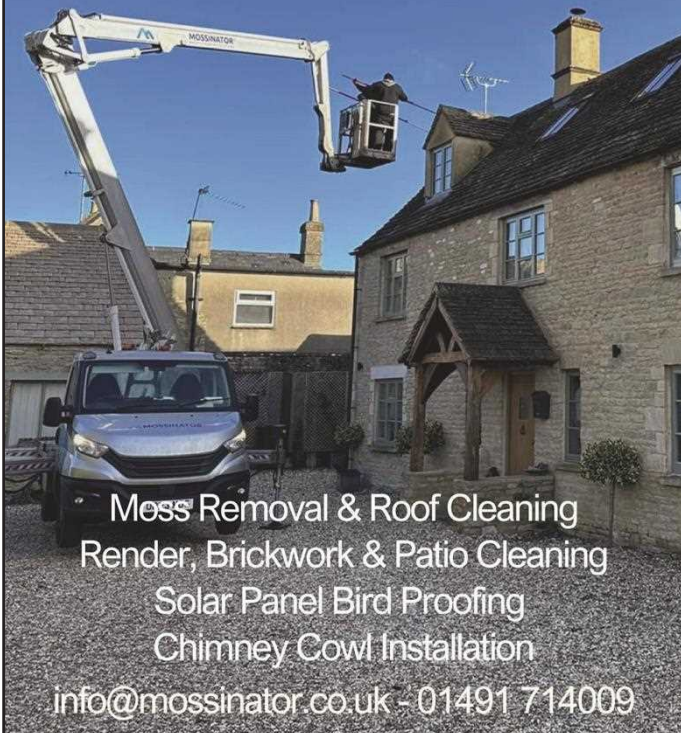
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Going Forward Buses

134 Goring to Wallingford service: likely change of operator from September 2025

The level of subsidy needed from Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) to continue operating the 134 service has been increasing steadily. It has now reached the level where the OCC feels obliged to include it in a number of routes in the county being 'put out for tender' from September. Unfortunately, for health reasons, Going Forward Buses does not feel able to take part in this process so OCC will be inviting bids from alternative operators to run it. The process is still in its early stages but we will endeavour to keep our Facebook and website pages up to date with any more information as soon as it becomes available.

If you have any helpful feedback about the current service, including the route, frequency and timings, please do let us know so that we can pass this on to OCC.

Instead of running the 134, we hope to be able to concentrate on trying to find ways to keep our other services going (133, 137 and 138), but we really need help if we are to do this. If you, or a group of people, are interested in getting involved, please let us know by contacting us by email littlebluebus@yahoo.com or write to us at 17 Elvendon Road, Goring, Reading RG8 0EA.

We wish to assure you that we are making every effort to ensure that a regular, reliable service can continue to be provided on all our routes. The more you use us, the easier that will be. Thank you for making such good use of our services over the past eight years – and please help us to keep going forward!

Mike Ward

Managing Director, Going Forward Buses CIC

Oxfordshire County Council Election on 1 May

A message from the new Goring & Woodcote County Councillor

Thank you to everyone who supported me in my election to the County Council. Seeing those crosses next to my name at the count was both a privilege and a reminder of the responsibility you've placed on me.

Regardless of how you voted, I am here to serve our whole community. As a division on the edge of a large county, we must ensure our voices are heard loud and clear.

Over the campaign, I knocked on around 3,400 doors and spoke with many residents across the Goring & Woodcote division. A common theme was how distant and inaccessible the County Council can feel. Concerns were raised about the decline in local services, not least the condition of our roads and access to public transport.

With the Liberal Democrats now in overall control of the Council, the spotlight is firmly on us to deliver meaningful change in the two or so years before the current two-tier system is reformed. One of my top priorities is supporting parish councils with projects that have stalled at county level. I'm also in active conversation with local schools to understand the challenges they face and to help ensure all children get the best possible start in life. I'm particularly committed to improving support for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and I look forward to helping drive progress on the improvement plan using my own lived experience.

As always, I'm just a phone call away and happy to support with casework or concerns you'd like to raise. Please don't hesitate to get in touch. I look forward to working collaboratively with you all.

Cllr Maggie Filipova-Rivers

07850 141623 / Maggie.Filipova-Rivers@southoxon.gov.uk

Election result for the Goring & Woodcote Division

Name	Party	Votes	%age of vote	
Maggie Filipova-Rivers	Liberal Democrats	1611	46.7%	Elected
Jim Donahue	Local Conservatives	946	27.4%	Not elected
Doug Hulbert	Reform UK	586	17.0%	Not elected
Caroline Jane Pierrepont	The Green Party	245	7.1%	Not elected
Isobel Louise Hollingsworth	Labour Party	61	1.8%	Not elected

Turnout: 42.4%: 3449 votes out of 8141 eligible voters

Overall result for OCC (elected councillors)

Party	Cllrs	%age of vote
Liberal Democrats	31	25.3%
Local Conservatives	8	13.9%
Labour & Co-operative Party	7	6.5%
Labour Party	5	6.4%
Liberal Democrat	5	4.7%
The Green Party	4	6.0%
Green Party	3	5.9%
Conservatives	2	6.3%
Reform UK	1	17.8%
Independent Oxford Alliance	1	2.7%
Independent	1	1.8%
Henley Residents Group	1	< 1

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Violins, mandolins and whistles

On Saturday 3 May, the Morrell Room welcomed back two old friends, duo Hilary James and Simon Mayor and their assortment of mandolins and other stringed instruments. These included the new violin Simon bought recently at an auction. Luck was with him for the sound it produced was beautiful with a captivating, rich tone. The mandolin pieces along with Hilary's vocals once again reached their now expected levels of excellence

Simon and Hilary usually bring guest artists of a high calibre to join in their performance but this time they exceeded themselves with their friend, Czech mandolin maestro, Radim Zenki.

Did I say mandolin maestro? Radim could make the mandolin do things that left the audience open mouthed, like double plucking to play both rhythm and melody on the same instrument at the same time, or by playing his black mandolin (that looked like something Darth Vader might play) with a speed and intensity that made his fingers disappear into a blur of movement. Then, on a ukulele with only two strings, he proceeded to master a complicated piece written for four strings.

What would he do next? Well, nothing with strings. Seduced by the Irish tin whistle, which he played like a native of Galway, Radim went on to investigate and master a whole series of whistles, some with few or no holes. One was a very long, hole-less, Czech shepherd's whistle which doubled as a walking aid (but not whilst playing – even Radim couldn't manage that). Last but not least was the didgeridoo.

Simon had warned us prepare to be surprised. We weren't; we were amazed (and delighted).

Rebecca Jennings



Radim Zenki and Hilary James

Photo: Jon Clifton

Goring Unplugged

On Saturday 26 April our community of volunteers set up tables and chairs, built a stage, and once again turned Goring Village Hall into an intimate cabaret of acoustic musical delights, still attracting a packed audience for Goring Unplugged after 23 years of these performances!

The evening kicked off with Rob Traynor and a witty song about IKEA, followed by Amanda Shora, accompanied on guitar by Jon Clifton to give us some classic folk tunes. There was a burst of fresh new talent this time around, with Langtree talent show winners Chazbags delighting with their own songs as well as crowd-rousing covers including *Hey Jude*. The 'bags' continued with local group Mixed Bag. Undercurrent delivered some impressive tunes; Evergreen brought some youthful folk and Steve and Mary Daniels brought something different again with a selection of popular musical standards. Cold Harbour capped off the night with some incredible vocals and skilful country guitar.

It was a buzzing night with a mixed audience from young children to more seasoned audience members. Goring Unplugged is great value at just £5, and free entry for under 14s.

If you are a young musician, or know someone who is, please get in touch as you too could be wowing the crowd soon!

Dates and details are on the website goringunplugged.co.uk

Joe Fairweather

Goring Jazz – Sarah-Jane Eveleigh

On Friday 18 April a full Village Hall welcomed the return of vocalist Sarah-Jane Eveleigh, with a backing group that included her husband Andrew on drums. Sarah-Jane sings in the classic style with echoes of Ella Fitzgerald, Lena Horne and Anita O'Day (whom she name-checked as one of her idols).

All Or Nothing At All was a torchy number in the Lena Horne style. An up-tempo *How Deep is the Ocean* featured the muscular tenor-sax of Phil Chaundy, who then switched to a more loose-limbed alto for *Easy Living*.

Tadd Dameron's *Whisper Not* (originally written as a bop instrumental) was Sarah-Jane's tribute to Anita O'Day, and *In the Wee Small Hours* Chaundy turned in a beautifully crafted tenor solo, followed by an equally inspired chorus from Howard King on bass – you could have heard a pin drop. The set ended with a frantically paced *Caravan*, showcasing an exciting drum solo from Andrew Eveleigh, who propelled the group with tact and skill throughout the evening.

In the second set, *I Ain't Got Nothing but the Blues* was a tribute to Ella Fitzgerald (containing the immortal line: 'Ain't got no fancy to tickle'). Phil Chaundy's rorty tenor solo (such a contrast to his alto style) was followed by a two-handed 'down home' piano chorus from Nick Hill. Other highlights included a fast samba version of *On the Street Where You Live*, and the slow ballad, *You Go to My Head*, with its evocative 64-bar chord sequence. Sarah-Jane's emotive vocal, matched by Chaundy's breathy tenor sax, built to a moving climax. A vintage evening in the company of fine, swinging musicians.

Gus McGill



Cold Comfort

Photo: David John Rubin Kin



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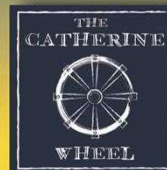
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MUSIC and ARTS continued

Murder at Midnight

It is an excellent thing when a new play by a new playwright makes it to the stage in front of a live audience. Hats off to local author Rita Butler for having the vision, daring and perseverance to see this work to completion. Not content simply to have written the play, Rita also co-directed with Helen McCutcheon. This is the second directorial collaboration for this dynamic duo who have clearly caught the directing bug. What next, we'd all like to know?

The tone was set early by Martin Leckie's safety announcement which, whilst serious business, also lightly set the stage for a bit of murder. It garnered him a nice round of applause – could this be a new career for him? The curtains opened on a cleverly devised setting inviting us into author Elizabeth's sitting room. Emma Jhita's Elizabeth was an unflappable, kindly presence whose home was interrupted by a constant flow of fellow villagers receiving fresh cups of coffee.

First up was Caro Armstrong's exuberant Suzy Turnbull, followed by Colin Gates (played with a bumbling kindness by John South); a hearty walker. Next came Mairead Herlihy's earthy gardener Bryony, while a subsequent knock brought in the marvellously annoying Grace Medlar (the hint is in the name) archly and rigidly portrayed by Kathryn Jackson-Day. In this way we were introduced to most of our villagers.

In the second scene, Helen Scurr's Daphne was a no-nonsense woman of the soil, with a curious knowledge of poisonous plants. Scene 3 introduced us to local shopkeeper Malcolm Whyte, an affable and helpful village merchant played by Michael Fielding. Visitors and meetings propelled the plot forward and a clever shadow-projection of the murder closed Act I.

Act I was a little too short and could usefully have been expanded by fleshing out the characters a little more. In Act II, the pace picked up as we met the police. First in was Phil Davies' charming yet sharp DCI Postlethwaite. Some friendly, but penetrating questioning elicited information as well as some embryonic flirting between Elizabeth and the handsome DCI.

This Act cut between the incident room set up in the village hall and Elizabeth's sitting room. In the incident room we met Daniel Evans' DS Daniel Selby; likeable and believable, he managed to bring together and make sense of all the clues. PC Pat Colman was played by Luke Goodyear as a very fussy and detail-orientated officer of the law. The incident room scenes were comically enlivened by the interplay between the DCI and PC which both added to and detracted from the storytelling. At times it felt a little as though the production team and cast were undecided as to whether this was a comedy or a thriller.

As each character was questioned and we drew nearer to solving the murder, a second murder was committed, which threw a real spanner into the works. We met the final character, Frank Yardley, played by a bombastic Michael Saunders, who stood up angrily to his interrogation and raised the energy level measurably, before the denouement.

Ian Shears' lighting design was effective, and big points go to Chris Hawes for his owl sound effect (as well as others). The set change music could have been more in keeping with the play, and different music for each change would have helped to tell the story. The costumes were good (did each actor come up with their own?), the set was modest, but worked.

The standing room-only audience clearly enjoyed the show and were very supportive. Well done, Rita and Co!

Dorothy Hirsch (abbreviated article)

Suzi Ruffell and Dinesh Nathan

Friday 25 April at Gap Comedy delivered excellent value, with a compelling double bill as Dinesh Nathan opened for Suzi Ruffell at the latest Gap Comedy night.

Nathan commanded the stage with his sophisticated yet accessible humour. Light-hearted, wry and affable, his warm-up set featured clever one-liners on ageing, racial misidentification and the surprising secret to long-term marital success. His laid-back confidence and relaxed delivery suggested an artist ready for headline status in the near future.

In a contrast of styles, Ruffell brought a different energy to the stage with her fast-paced, introspective set exploring the challenges of motherhood, the intimidating nature of teenage girls and the surprisingly progressive politics of children's television phenomenon 'Bluey.' Explicitly a work-in-progress show, Ruffell performed with more anxiety and skittishness than some of the more assured acts hosted recently, but her undeniable wit and earnest conscientiousness kept the audience thoroughly engaged throughout. A rapid-fire feminist manifesto towards the close was up there with anything we've seen at Gap Comedy and served as a clear reminder of Ruffell's fire and talent.

Gap Comedy returns after the summer with a full winter programme. Sign up at www.gapcomedy.co.uk to be the first to hear about the shows.

Max Kibble



Another murder!

Photo: Jean Betteridge



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MUSIC and ARTS continued

What connects an 18th century clown, an award-winning opera singer, and a Goring-based portrait artist?

It all starts with Pierrot. 'He's sort of a theatrical concept, really,' I'm told by Claire, over the phone. 'Pierrot really comes from the 1700s, or even earlier. In his first iteration he was the buffoon, the spare part, the servant not the master in that commedia dell'arte triangle – Harlequin, Columbine, Pierrot.'

Before I speak to Claire, Jenny sits across from me at the kitchen table. She explains: 'He's seen as the sad clown, but actually he has quite a mischievous side to him. In the original stories he is at times trying to steal someone else's wife, in some he actually murders somebody, and he's a bit of a cad and a bounder.'

Claire says this japester personality morphed into a darker world through the 19th century. His outsider quality became a muse for European artists. They used him to discuss 'out there' themes: 'It was much easier to think about them through the guise of Pierrot than yourself. In poetry he becomes a metaphor for an outsider who can say anything, do anything. He can murder, he's a bigamist, he's a thief, he's a liar, he's a cuckold.'

Pierrot as inspiration

Bowie declared: 'I am the everyman, I am Pierrot'. Bands like Placebo have taken inspiration. Claire too has been inspired: 'I was doing a project on a piece of music by Arnold Schoenberg entitled 'Pierrot Lunaire' (Based on Albert Giraud's poetry, translated by Otto Hartleben.) It looks at 21 different aspects of Pierrot's character. I suppose that's how I've come to Pierrot. Indeed, Jenny saw me at a concert performing that work and I think that was the inspiration.'

'I know Claire well,' Jenny tells me. 'She is incredibly impressive when she is on stage and singing. Claire has this ability to draw out the different facets of a personality.' For those who haven't yet realised, Claire is the opera singer. But what connects her to Jenny? 'We go back a long way,' Claire laughs. 'We were at university together. I have followed her creative career with much admiration and interest: how she manages to balance the many aspects of her life as a wife, parent and working woman. She's painted all my children, so I have paintings by Jenny in my home. I think that through my friendship with her I have learnt a little more about art.'

Claire as Pierrot

So, Claire is the singer and Jenny, the artist, but what is the project that connects them together? In short, it's a painting—Claire doing her make-up, 'becoming' Pierrot, blusher brush in hand. The picture is large, a tight moon-shaped canvas bearing Claire's face. Jenny says: 'There's something about the pose, the way you've got that beady eye coming out at you – she's really looking at you as if she were looking in a mirror... I loved that playfulness.' Pierrot is also depicted here as androgynous.

This painting has pushed Jenny: 'In a lot of the portraits I've done over the years people don't have this direct gaze because that's quite confrontational, it's not very normal. But because it's meant to be her in the act of getting ready, she has to be looking right at herself.' From Claire's ruff to her skullcap, tones vary. Jenny makes her own blacks and whites, pulling them in different directions. The skullcap merges with a deep indigo background. Multi-toned whites make the ruff appear 'semi-sheer'. Subtle shades reflect Pierrot's self.

Friendship and supporting each other's creative practices was at the heart of this painting. Claire says it was a joyful collaboration. It was (surprisingly) relaxing: 'I didn't feel any worry about needing to take any creative ownership because actually she is very very capable.' It seems that not only is Pierrot such an infectious idea for all kinds of artists, this strange, old yet new, funny yet sad, complex clown is universally inspiring.

Jenny Fay

Jenny is a practising artist who trained at the Heatherley School of Fine Art in London in 2014. She has been taking commissions for ten years from her home studio in Goring. She has painted portraits of numerous local people and taken commissions from clients such as St John's College in Oxford. Her portrait of Goring bagpiper Ian King hung in the Caledonian Club. Her painting 'Claire Booth As Pierrot' was part of the Oxford Art Society Members' Exhibition from 22 March-5 April at The Kendrew Barn Gallery, Oxford. To find out about commissioning a portrait and to view more of her portfolio visit: jennyfay.co.uk

Claire Booth

Claire is a soprano singer, actress and musician. She has won the Royal Philharmonic Society Singer's Award 2025 and is a presenter on BBC Radio 3. She lives in Brightwell-cum-Sotwell. Her album 'Pierrot Portraits' was released by Onyx Classics last year in collaboration with Ensemble 360. It is available to purchase via her website: claire-booth.com

Dan Gordon-Potts



Jenny and Claire below the portrait

Photo: Dan Gordon-Potts

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Fundraiser for Berkshire Women's Aid – thank you to our wonderful community

Albert Fields were absolutely overwhelmed by the generosity and enthusiasm you all showed at our fundraising sale on 6 April. By 10.45am, 15 minutes before doors opened at 11am, queues were already forming and for the next three hours our salon hummed with activity. Mimosas flowed and 'The Collective' provided an array of delicious cakes and pastries for everyone to enjoy.

Thanks to your support, we raised over £4,200 for Berkshire Women's Aid. Any remaining clothing was donated to local charities including Smart Works, Age Concern and the Salvation Army.

A special thank you to the businesses who made this event possible:

- Hope, Curated by Nayna Macintosh – clothing donations.
- Mary Galer – prosecco.
- Jean Hunter, Inspirations – balloon tower art.
- Davines – sustainable hair-care products for our goody bags.
- Helen Sturk, The Coffee Exchange – delicious brownies.
- Neil Horne, Eye Imagine Photography – for generously dedicating his time to capture every beautiful moment.

We are immensely grateful to every volunteer, donor and business partner who helped bring this sale to life. Your support will make a real difference in the lives of those facing domestic violence in our community.

If you or anyone you know needs assistance, please reach out to Berkshire Women's Aid at: [0808 801 0882](tel:08088010882)

Thank you, once again, for making this such a resounding success.

Albert Fields



Photo by Nick Horne

Business profile: Blue Lemon Dog Training

Greetings reader! I have a question: how do you see the world? Now, hold that thought and think: how does a dog see that same world? Whether you love labradors or can't stand poodles, I think you're going to enjoy reading this profile as much as I enjoyed writing it. Thanks, Cerys, for the eye-opening (or should I say nostril-opening?) conversation!

Business owner: Cerys Watson

Trading name: Blue Lemon Dog Training

Address: Gatehampton Road, Goring

Phone: [07428 433330](tel:07428433330)

Online: facebook.com/bluelemondogtraining

Opening hours: Tuesday and Friday: 9am-5pm

Wednesday: 10am-8pm

Thursday: 11am-9pm

Saturday: 9am-1pm

How did you get to where you are today?

A very circuitous route. I started as a lawyer many years ago. I worked as an employment law solicitor, married a diplomat and went travelling on postings abroad, which meant it was really difficult to keep up with UK employment law because it's case-based. When I came back to the UK, I had three young children so chose to not have a full-on career. When I got older it gave me the opportunity to decide: what did I really want to do? Way back on our first posting, I volunteered at animal shelters and realised that was where my passion was. But, because I had a background in learning, I wanted to study and understand more and so I studied the neuroscience of the dog's brain. Part of the reason I chose the name Blue Lemon Dog Training is because dogs have what's called dichromatic vision – they see blues, yellows and shades of grey. I wanted to have a business name that shows that I'm thinking about things from the dog's perspective; it's about stepping into the dog's world, an olfactory world. I studied with an organisation called PACT (Professional Association of Canine Trainers).

What is something you love about your business?

The opportunity to see the difference that scent detection can make. Scent detection – if I'm trying to explain it in a rudimentary way – is like if you've got tickets to Glastonbury and you rock up and you get ready to see the headline act, which happens to be one of your favourite groups, and there's a teeny tiny Walkman speaker. Suddenly the whole experience becomes much more muted because you know you're not being immersed with the surround sound; your auditory experience is vastly decreased. We have between three and five million olfactory receptors, whereas dogs have about 300 million... so when we bring dogs into our predominantly visual world, we sort of dampen down their ability to live a fulfilled life. When we step into their world with them, it can be amazing for repairing, strengthening, or even developing human-dog bonds. It allows people to see their dog's natural skillset. So instead of saying: 'Oh my dog always barks at other dogs and that's a problem for me,' we actually see people then saying: 'It's bloomin' brilliant – I couldn't believe they found this teeny, tiny odour and not only did they find it, but they've been able to communicate to us where it is, when we can't see it with our eyes because it's too small for us to see!' It can redefine how people see their dogs, it can re-brand their interpretation of their dogs and fundamentally, it can make their dogs really happy.

What advice would you give to people wanting to set up their own local business?

You have to do your market research about what else is in the area: is it saturated? Then I think it's worth getting social

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BUSINESS continued

media savvy, because when you identify your target audience you can pick the appropriate social media channel. For the younger generation that might be TikTok or Snapchat, but for different generations it might be more about Facebook or Instagram. And working out your USP (Unique Selling Point); why would people choose you over anyone else? And is it something that you really passionately believe in, because if you are not prepared to put in a lot of the preparatory work when you set up and you're looking for a quick turnaround, I just don't think that really exists and I don't think you're going to feel very fulfilled either.

Anything else you'd like to share?

I operate regular scent detection beginner courses which are limited to four dogs so you get lots of individual attention. The courses are also accessible for dogs that would otherwise be excluded from group dog courses, because they're not comfortable around other dogs or big crowds, so I can make lots of adjustments to make it accessible for dog-reactive dogs or people-reactive dogs. There are lots of adaptations we can make to include all ages of dogs, all breeds – I'm lucky enough to teach a huge variety of breeds and work with everything from Pugs to Finnish Lamphunds, Labradors and Springer Spaniels.

Do you own a business in the Gap? Are you barking for business? Do get in touch, I promise I don't bite: [07877 425814](tel:07877425814) or email dpgpotts@gmail.com

Dan Gordon-Potts

Growing stuff is great!

Here is some news from Village Greenfingers Gardening Club (VGF). Our members have been growing stuff in and around the Goring Gap, in gardens great and small, for more than 30 years.

We get together every month (apart from January and August) and our programme covers as many aspects of gardening as possible. In 2024/25 we covered topics as diverse as biosecurity, glorious roses (and how to keep them looking glorious!), preserving vegetables for the winter (yes, we made our own kimchi), via how to look after houseplants, advice on planting for autumn colour and the best gardens to visit in 'The Fall'.

Our speakers have great knowledge and enthusiasm and prepare talks with lovely pictures, whether they're talking about the making of the fabulous 10-acre garden at Malverleys (we certainly plan a visit for the club next year) or (rather further afield), biosecurity work in Papua New Guinea or (rather closer to home now), the dangers of the invasive Asian hornet. Our meetings are friendly with time to chat over tea or coffee and ask questions, buy plants and gardening necessities from the plant stall, try your luck at the raffle and admire the competition entries.

We hold a monthly competition, with the Challenge Cup presented at the end of the year for the person who's won the most points – this year Alison Broadbridge won and her name will be the next to be engraved with past winners. We also reward those who've entered five or more competitions (but may not have won) with a garden gift token, because it's lovely to have lots of entries. Six people were given an 'end of year' token this year – Alison Broadbridge, Rosie Brook, Krys Knox, Sara Boorman, Sandra Anness, and Margaret Robson – congratulations to them and to everyone who entered competitions during the year.

Through our affiliation with the Royal Horticultural Society (RHS) we're also able to award the Banksian Medal and a Recognition Award. This year the Banksian Medal just had to go to Christie Leary who founded the club and who is a talented grower of fuchsias – she won a prize for her fuchsia at the Malvern Show this year! The Recognition Award was given to Helen and Barry Rosier who look after the wildlife friendly area by the Wheel Orchard car park and have taken on running the plant stall at our meetings – and even offer a garden tool sharpening service (almost while-you-wait!).

As well as talking about gardening it's great to get out and about – last summer we enjoyed a visit to Lower Bowden Manor with its amazing designer planting and wonderful views. In July 2025 we have arranged a private tour of the gardens at Worcester College, Oxford. If you like visiting gardens and plan to go to one of the wonderful RHS gardens, but aren't an RHS member, you can get a reduced entrance fee via membership of VGF.

We have a great programme for 2025/26, starting with a talk on gardening for wildlife. There is a talk on the greening of London after the Blitz and another on a year in the vegetable garden – go to villagegreenfingers.uk for full details. And do come along to a meeting – the annual membership fee is £30 and the visitor fee is just £5 (including refreshments). Whether you're just starting out with gardening, whether you have a window box or a wisteria walk, whether you want to learn more about something in particular or simply sit and enjoy an illustrated talk from someone with enthusiasm and expertise, you'll be very welcome.

Come and grow stuff with us!

Sara Boorman



Prize winners Christie Leary, Helen and Barry Rosier and Alison Broadbridge Photo by Sara Boorman






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Streatley School's annual egg roll

We are excited to share some wonderful highlights from our annual egg roll event held on Tuesday 22 April. It was a fantastic session, filled with laughter, excitement, and, of course, the beautiful spring sunshine.

Families and children began the session with a lively hike up the daunting Lardon Chase. Once we reached the top, we took a moment to catch our breath and soak in the stunning views, which always reminds us of the beauty of our local area. The anticipation built as our headteacher blew the whistle, signalling the start of the races.

This year, our Year 2 students kicked off the celebrations. They lined up eagerly, ready to launch their decorated eggs down the hill and then race after them. The laughter and shouts of encouragement filled the air, and we all held our breaths, hoping that no one would accidentally step on their egg – or a friend's!

Next, it was Year 1's turn. As the children took off down the hill, we were treated to the sight of red kites swooping and diving overhead. It is always a sight to behold, and their presence only adds to the excitement of the day. The atmosphere was electric, with shrieks of joy echoing from the slopes as all the seven year groups took their turns running, tumbling, and giggling their way to the finish line.

The gorgeous weather played a key role in making the session memorable. David Marsh from Digital Safaris was there capturing the magic of the event and the graceful flight of the birds. It's worth mentioning that in Miss Roberts' nine years at the school, we've only had to contend with poor weather on one occasion. Even then, some brave souls took the slippery slopes as an opportunity to embrace the experience, proving that our community spirit truly shines through.

As we look back on the session filled with joy and community, I encourage everyone to mark your calendars for next year's event! It's a wonderful opportunity for families to come together and enjoy the great outdoors while creating cherished memories.

Streatley School



Egg roll

Photo: David Marsh

Easter fun at Goring Library

Over the Easter fortnight, our library was buzzing with creativity and celebration. We offered a delightful variety of crafts for children and families to enjoy – from making cheerful chickens out of paper plates to decorating colourful foam Easter eggs.

A collaborative group colouring project added a splash of springtime spirit to the space, while our popular chick-themed trail encouraged young visitors to explore the library in search of hidden fluffy friends.

To round off the festivities, we hosted a series of heartwarming Easter story times, and a special yoga session led by Emma, celebrating animals that hatch from eggs.

All of this took place in our newly refurbished library, which now offers a bright, flexible space – perfect for bringing our community events to life.

Jacqui Gray

Chair, Friends of Goring Library



St George's Day parade and service

On 27 April the 2nd Goring & Streatley Scouts, Wolf Cubs, Beavers and Leaders joined the congregation at St Thomas' Church, Goring, as part of their annual St George's Day parade and service. During the service the Scouts, Wolf Cubs and Beavers read prayers and assisted. This included solemnly re-affirming The Scout Promise and Law, as they are required to do each year on St George's Day.

Before the service the scout group assembled in Goring car park before parading to the church, led by the group's flags, forming the colour party. After the service the scout group formed a very smart guard of honour for the appreciative large congregation to pass between.

David Cooksley

Group Scout Master,

2nd Goring & Streatley Scout Group

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Flag party Photo: Clint Tessendorf

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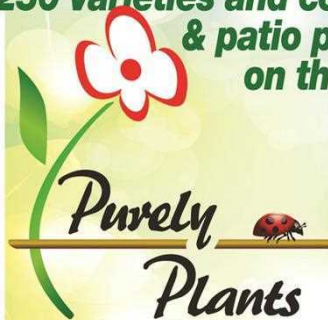
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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

who accepts no responsibility for views expressed

The Editor welcomes your letters – normally no more than 350 words please – but reserves the right to edit them

The delights of friendly personal service

Dear Editor—We are very fortunate in this lovely village to have retailers who understand how much we older people value personal service. Recently two things happened which I would like to share with you.

I had a written note from Jack and Varsha Patel, owners for 38 years of Westholme Stores and running a very friendly shop, with politeness and charm and always welcoming their many customers. They recently retired. In the note which their customers received it said: ‘Thank you again for being such a valued part of our business. We wish you all the best.’ May I, on behalf of all your readers, say a huge thank you to them for all those years of excellent service and to wish them a long and happy retirement from us all.

The second thing is a big thank you to the owners of another great shop, known for miles around, Goring Hardware. A little while ago I was struggling to separate numbers for our wheelie bins; the lady at Goring Hardware dealt with this for me when the shop was pretty busy. I also needed to straighten an iron latch to an outside gate, bent by the strength of the wind. A man in the shop said he would have a go, at my risk, of course. He placed the latch in a vice and with six mighty blows

with a heavy hammer straightened the latch.

When I asked what I owed them they said nothing! How kind, in an age when I had thought nobody in business does anything for nothing. How wrong I was.

Anthony Rowberry

Danger from new parking places?

Dear Editor—I am wondering what the thinking was behind the new parking places in Cleeve Road? Driving from Cleeve Mill end towards the High Street, the new spaces go too near the junctions by approximately two cars. Anyone turning left into Cleeve Road from Glebe Ride are likely to come face to face with another car. The same is true turning from the High Street left into Cleeve Road. Surely a health and safety issue?

Also, when we have so many potholes all around the village, which need the roads to be fully tarmacked rather than filling the odd individual one, why are we painting lines around the village? No one checks up on illegal parking. It was rumoured that a painting team turned up to find that the kerbs hadn’t been cleaned, so could not complete their task.

Is this a good way to use our money in these hard times?

B Barker

100 attend Jack and Varsha’s retirement celebration

The weather was ‘just right’ on Sunday 27 April, when everyone, from former paper boys to staff, customers from as far as Little Stoke and wider family, came to join Jack and Varsha Patel outside Westholme Store on Wallingford Road.

From 10am until just past twelve around 100 people from Goring, Streatley and beyond dropped in to wish the former convenience store owners all the best as they now head into retirement. Their daughter Nikita, who, with her siblings, organised the event tells *GGN* that it went really well. Although the timing wasn’t perfect, just after the Easter holidays, the London Marathon on the same day, she said: ‘We’ve been inundated with cards – it’s been really sweet!’

Jack seemed particularly pleased with how it went. All generations came to celebrate and really enjoyed themselves and the food, of course. Speaking of which, the menu consisted of Swaadish Curry Naan, fresh from a bright pink gazebo, and made by Jez, who now runs the curry sauce company that Varsha set up. Prosecco flowed from the garden and people had the chance to give their thanks, as well as meet new owners, Thushy and Daren.

The newspapers cake

It was an emotional time, particularly for Varsha, as Jack conceded: ‘I think she spent much more time in the shop than anyone.’ Nikita added: ‘It should have really been called Varsha’s!’ A particularly touching moment for the family was the speeches, spoken to a sea of familiar faces, many of whom have gone from being just customers to close family friends. The cutting of the cake was also significant, memorably made to look like a stack of newspapers with the couple on the front page. Made by Anna Utah, of Giggles & Crumbs, Jack and Varsha’s other daughter Shrina helped come up with the concept. The cake was complete with ribbons, tied to look just like the plastic ties that Jack and Varsha would cut on all those early mornings and put out for customers before opening up their doors for another day’s business.

Thanks and best wishes from all

Notable attendees included first-on-the-scene Rob Jones, who founded Stop Tesco In Goring, which rallied to support Jack’s when a Tesco shop was first proposed for the former Queens Arms pub by the station. Also in attendance was Helena Farhie, who led the Street Champions initiative during COVID-19, helping Jack’s deliver food and supplies to locals who had to self-isolate. Beloved neighbours from Mountfield and close family friend Susan Warden popped across to celebrate. Ever-supportive Sarah and Catherine Ducker made it to the party, as well as 91-year-old (and loyal 37 year customer) Mrs Sheila Seymour. Jack said she spent the morning sitting with him and has been coming to the shop all this time. Also in attendance was the recently retired Dr Goode from Goring and Woodcote Medical Practice, former store staff member Freya Hunt and several paper delivery staff. The Patels would like to thank everybody who attended and those that have sent them cards.

See Photo P2.

Dan Gordon-Potts

A new playground for Goring's Bourdillon Field gets the go-ahead

We are excited to announce that Goring Parish Council have signed a contract with Proludic for the replacement and refurbishment of the Bourdillon Playground, with the aim of it being completed for this year's school summer holidays. Yes, that's right, this summer!

The new playground will have an expanded footprint to maximise play opportunities for children aged 2-12 years and will include accessible play features.

With three distinct zones the new playground will offer exciting play opportunities. Each zone has been carefully developed to promote imaginative play, social interaction and inclusive experiences for children of all ages and abilities. The 'River Adventure Zone' will feature a boat shaped structure with nets, slides and inclusive and sensory play opportunities. The 'Village Hub', with a mini playhouse and market square, will offer younger children imaginative and social play experiences. The 'Woodland Escape', with a bespoke 4m tall tree house with climbing platforms, slides and nets, will provide challenging play for older children. There'll also be a zip wire along the back edge of the playground for further adventure. Tables and benches are part of the new design and will provide a family space to allow parents to watch activities.

As part of the design concept there are two panels on the Woodland Escape play frames which will have a custom collage design based on entries to a competition for local children (see article below).

The build of the playground follows several years of work by the Parish Council Playgrounds Committee, which comprises both councillors and parent members. This included a formal tender process, the brief for which incorporated the original ideas and feedback given to the parent members of the committee and the ideas voted on at last year's Annual Meeting of the Parish. We undertook a rigorous scoring process which considered the overall design, as well as materials used, installation and value for money. During the negotiation phase, we were able to include work to re-surface the basketball/goal area which we hope will mean children of all ages can continue to enjoy the Bourdillon play area.

The designs for the playground will be on display at the Annual Meeting of the Parish on 31 May. Construction is expected to start on 2 June. The Parish Council has plans in place to minimise disruption during the construction of the playground and will keep local residents informed. Access to the school via Bourdillon will be kept open during school drop off and collection times.

We want to thank former members of the Parish Council who initiated the playgrounds project and helped push it forward. Although funding was not available to include refurbishment of the Gardiner playground this year, the Playgrounds Committee will be developing plans and looking at funding options to give this important village centre play area the revamp it deserves.

We hope you are as excited as we are to see the Bourdillon playground project come to fruition!

Barbara Newman

Chair of Playgrounds Committee Goring-on-Thames Parish Council

Local children's artwork used to create beautiful collage for new Bourdillon playground equipment

As part of the playground re-design, we had the chance to add bespoke artwork to the main tree-house climbing frame. A competition was suggested for local children, and we came up with the idea of creating a collage of items to represent a wildflower meadow, akin to the artwork at the train station. We ran the competition over the Easter holidays with entries due on Friday 25 April, asking for them to design a flowerhead, bug or butterfly to help create the collage. We were inundated and received more than 65 individual entries with some children submitting multiple designs.

We worked with the design team from Proludic, giving them a tight brief and even a pencil drawing as guidance for how we envisioned the final design coming together – amazingly they were able to include almost every single item sent to them. This way, everyone who wanted to take part should have a little bit of their entry on the final designs – they'll be available to view in large scale at the Annual Meeting of the Parish on 31 May.

Special mention goes to entries from the youngest artists, the two Cassies, 13 and 14 months old respectively (clearly with some help from parents). Two very creative entries using real flowers and grass from Alba and Ammie (8), a beautiful mural from Anna (10), an image plucked from my own mind of a wonderful wildflower mix by Leighton (9) and to Maya (Year 3 Robin class) for her multitude of entries and lovely replica of one of the inspiration images. I also particularly like the collection of 'Bees with Personality' that we now have dotted throughout the design.

See P44 for the final design and some details from the children's artwork. Hopefully everyone will enjoy seeing these community artworks adorning the climbing frame for years to come.

Anna Povey

Playground Working Group

More space for parking in Goring

Residents in Goring will have noticed that changes to parking restriction came into effect last month. They follow from a survey carried out by Goring Parish Council and the resulting recommendations to the Highway Authority, Oxfordshire County Council. The key objective has been to limit commuter parking and provide more space for shoppers and people using local businesses in the village during the day and also for those using our open spaces and sports facilities. This has resulted in new single yellow line areas and additional marked parking bays. Please remember that parking is permitted on single yellow lines except during the times specified on the roadside notices.

The main changes are:

Lockstile Way: New single yellow lines to prevent all day parking by commuters using the railway station.

es Parish Council

Cleeve Road: North of Glebe Ride, double yellow lines have been replaced by a single yellow line and a two-hour bay before the junction with Glebe Ride. In the southern part of Cleeve Road, double yellow lines have similarly been replaced with single yellow lines and a two-hour bay at the junction with the High Street.

Glebe Ride: Unlimited parking space has been increased.

Thames Road: The existing two-hour parking bay has been lengthened by the removal of double yellow lines.

Croft Rd/Manor Rd: The introduction of a pedestrian priority lane in Station Road necessitated removal of parking bays there and the extension of the double yellow lines along the road. To compensate for the loss of those bays, new two-hour parking bays have been provided in Croft Road and Manor Road.

Upper Red Cross Road: The existing single yellow lines on the eastern side are to be re-positioned closer to the boundary fence but this is awaiting repairs to the road surface. The Parish Council expects that repairs will be made to the surface on the western side so that the single yellow lines there can be re-marked.

The Parish Council will also be pressing Highways to re-mark the double yellow lines on Station Road at the station entrance.

The Parish Council hopes these changes will have a positive impact on Goring but if residents notice problems, please do report them to the Highway Authority at Oxfordshire County Council.

Mike Harper

Assistant Clerk, Goring-on-Thames Parish Council

Editor's note: Contact OCC Highways online at www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/contactus/contact-highways-team#no-back

If you can't go online or it is an emergency try 0345 310 1111. If it is a matter for the police, the non-emergency number to call is 101.

A new permissive path for walkers

Thanks to the generosity and helpful cooperation of the Elvendon Estate, Goring Parish Council are delighted to announce the opening of a new permissive foot path that adds a very useful missing link to our network of public paths.

The new path runs alongside the Reading Road from the bridleway that comes up from Great Chalk Wood to the footpath that leads down from Park Farm to Elvendon Lane. The path runs along inside the hedge, so it is safely separated from the fast-moving traffic.

The path is not a formal public right of way and will be closed at least one day a year. Any closed days will be advertised in *Genie*, and they are likely to be in the winter, on days when the Estate are holding a shoot. The path is for walkers only at present. Walkers are asked to keep dogs on a lead along the path, and to leave no litter.

Cllr Toby Thurston



Walking the new path

Promoting your event in Goring – signs and posters

We're very lucky to have such an active community in Goring, with many events going on throughout the year. The Parish Council recognises the importance of advertising signage for village businesses and events but like all local councils we must be mindful of our legal obligations and the need to protect the village environment from inappropriate visual clutter. That's why, like most Parish Councils, we have adopted a Posters and Signs Policy that is available goringparishcouncil.gov.uk

Why do we need a Posters and Signs policy?

The aim of the policy is to manage signage within the parish to prevent clutter, maintain the beauty of the area, and ensure that signage serves its intended purpose without causing distraction or harm.

What does the policy cover?

The policy sets out clear guidelines for where signs can be placed, how large they can be, what kind of content is allowed, how long they can remain in place. It aims to prevent visual clutter and ensure that signs do not obscure historic features or natural beauty spots or compromise safety at important junctions by causing visual distraction. The intention is not to restrict community engagement but to ensure that any signage is both functional and respectful of our environment.

In practical terms, this means that anyone wishing to place a sign – whether for a charity event, a local business, or a community initiative – should check whether approval is required from the owners of a site, parish council, utility (eg telegraph poles) or a private landlord and check the Council policy regarding any restrictions on size etc. This ensures that all signs are carefully considered and placed in a way that complements the village's aesthetic and safety. And please add contact details to your sign or poster so that you can be contacted if there's a problem.

We understand that many of you are passionate about supporting local events and businesses, and we want to encourage that spirit! The signs policy simply ensures that these important messages are shared in ways that enhance, rather than detract from, our community's appearance. If you're planning an event and want to put up a sign or poster, please do check the policy first. We're here to help and can provide advice on where signs can go, so if in doubt, do get in touch. Let's keep Goring a village we are all proud of.

Cllr Barbara Newman

Unlocking access in the Gap – on two wheels

Remember the first bike ride you took beyond adult supervision? The excitement and independence? Cycling nurtures exploration and problem-solving. It's also simply fun. Unfortunately, children's freedom has greatly reduced over the last century. The average distance children are allowed to wander from home has declined from six miles to 300 yards, a reduction of 97%. This is due partly to the 'Stranger Danger' campaigns of the 1970s and 1980s. These are now seen as over-simplistic and even counter-productive, as the fear induced in some children knocked their confidence. Another major factor is of course the increase in road traffic, and the perceived danger of cycling on our roads.

Oxfordshire's population rose by 10.9% between 2011 and 2021 (compared to 6.6% for England as a whole) and is forecast to rise by a further 11% by 2031. We can all see the new housing, particularly around the fringes of Wallingford and Benson, but also in Goring and Sreatley. Oxfordshire has one of the highest rates of cars ownership in the UK, so it's no surprise that our roads are getting busier and busier. Lots of new houses, but little corresponding investment in transport infrastructure.



'Where can I take the kids for a ride now that they're bored with going to the South Stoke shop and back?'

The growth in traffic has led to the ironic situation in which parents would like their children to cycle or walk to school, but perceive the roads to be too dangerous, so they take them by car instead. Places to learn to cycle in Goring and Sreatley are limited. There are relatively few quiet roads where new riders can practise (whether children or adults) and develop their skills. There are even fewer opportunities to start travelling further. The best available route currently is the bridleway to South Stoke which, after a little climb away from Mill Lane, is a good ride for novices when it's not too muddy. Wouldn't we like our children to have the same sort of opportunities for independence and exploration that their parents and grandparents enjoyed? Could we dare to hope that it's possible?

The times they are a-changin'

Countries around the world have begun to realise that the answer is not more roads. More roads simply lead to more traffic and more congestion, a phenomenon known as induced demand. Average cars speeds in central London decreased from about 12 miles per hour between 1977 and 1982 to 9.5 miles per hour in 2021.



Most trips are relatively short: 25% of trips under one mile, and 71% under five miles. Cycling and walking use much less road space and are more efficient for short journeys. Cities have introduced clean air zones, reduced speed limits and increased charges (eg vehicle tax, parking) for larger cars. Air pollution in Paris has been cut by half in the last 20 years, mainly due to restrictions on vehicles and increased public transport and cycling infrastructure. Casualties in Wales fell by 35% in the 12 months after the introduction of the 20mph speed limit, with 100 fewer people killed or seriously injured. Research also suggests that journey times do not significantly increase.

Locally, Goring has had a 20mph speed limit on all its streets since May 2023. Government research has shown that 'you are seven times more likely to survive if you are hit by a car driving at 20mph, than if you are hit at 30mph'. The removal of parking spaces from Station Road in Goring is an example of reallocating road space to people. It has made Station Road safer for cyclists and pedestrians as

well as for users of mobility aids. New bike stands around the village enable more short trips.

Active Travel

The government buzz-phrase for investing in cycling and walking infrastructure is 'Active Travel'. It means making journeys in physically active ways – like walking, wheeling (using a wheelchair or mobility aid), cycling, or scootering. Governments are interested in Active Travel because of reduced costs of healthcare (physical and mental), less reliance on fossil fuels and quicker progress to net zero:

- Happier. Mental health is boosted by activity and time outdoors in nature
- Healthier. Increased activity improves fitness and health. Less traffic pollution means fewer respiratory problems
- Greener. Reduced congestion on the roads means lower carbon emissions

In February 2025 the Government announced: 'Almost £300m to gear up new walking, wheeling and cycling schemes' in England. Not that much in the big scheme of things, when you think that the M25/A3 junction improvement alone cost £317m, but enough to make a difference, including £500,000 for Active Travel in rural areas.

Chris Boardman CBE, National Active Travel Commissioner (and Olympic gold medallist) said: 'Making it simple and safe to walk, wheel or cycle to schools, shops and workplaces is one of the most effective actions we can take to improve the nation's health, economy, and get to net zero, all in one.'

What's happening locally?

Better cycling infrastructure in our cities is resulting in more people using their bike instead of the car. The City of London has reported an increase of over 50% in daily cycle journeys between 2022 and 2024. Government investment is now filtering its way down into local authorities' budgets. The capital budget of Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) for 2025/26 includes: '£1.8m for active travel measures to encourage walking and cycling including £500,000 for active travel in rural areas.' West Berkshire's budget has £1.65m for Active Travel.

In April 2024 OCC published its Strategic Active Travel Network, which includes a Strategic/Primary link between Goring and Wallingford. OCC is now moving ahead with preparation of Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIPs) for those urban areas that do not already have them. A consultation on the Wallingford area LCWIP closed in March, but its geographic scope did not extend as far Goring, despite there being a significant number of local residents who shop or work in Wallingford and would like to be able to get there more easily by bike.

In February 2025, Mend The Gap published a report commissioned by the Chilterns Conservation Board, looking at both existing public access and potential improvements in access provision within the Mend The Gap project area: 'One of the strategic priorities of the Mend the Gap programme is to improve access for all, making it easier for local communities and visitors to access and enjoy this part of the National Landscapes' (The Chilterns and North Wessex Downs). The report recommends: 'the development of safe, continuous active travel corridors, such as Goring to Wallingford.'

Where does this leave us?

The article on Page 24 of March GGN showed the progress there has been on improving accessibility to walking routes in the Gap for those with mobility issues. We also need to improve accessibility for another marginalised group – our children.

The bridleway route to South Stoke is one journey that is relatively accessible to new riders, as it is fairly flat and mainly traffic-free. The logical answer would be to carry on along to Wallingford, but this is not possible at present, despite there being plenty of demand. The path through the fields from South Stoke to Little Stoke is a footpath with stiles, and not legal for cycling. The alternative is to use the B4009, which most parents (and some experienced cyclists) find too dangerous. Implementing the Mend the Gap report recommendation for a safe continuous active travel corridor will make it possible for young riders to travel further safely. It would also enable people to cycle to Crowmarsh and Wallingford for shopping or work instead of driving.



Would you let your child cycle here? Leaving South Stoke on the B4009 towards North Stoke



What's not to like? The track from Manor Road to Gatehampton functions like a bridleway, so should be classified as one.

As a start, some simple changes could be made to enable more cycling in the villages, instead of discouraging it:

- Reclassify the footpath from the end of Manor Road to Gatehampton as a bridleway. It's a wide track already and makes a flat exercise circuit, easily accessible from the village.
- Resurface the footpath from Lockstile Way to the Bourdillon Field, and reclassify it, to make it easier for Goring pupils to cycle or scoot to school. It will be better for parents with buggies also.
- Reclassify the footpath from the Morrell Room to the top of the Cleeve Court access road via Streatley Rec. A short stretch of new path is needed, to exit the Rec through the gate to the east of the children's playground. This provides an alternative route towards The Ridgeway Trail along Rectory Road, and removes the need for cyclists to dodge the traffic on Streatley High Street.

Goring's MP, Freddie van Mierlo, has spoken out to say that: 'We have a golden opportunity to improve rural cycling infrastructure, and must not squander it.'



The countryside around the Goring Gap is a lovely area for cycling, with lots of quiet roads and bridleways. The goringgapcycling.co.uk website has details of these, and has recently been upgraded to include more information for both would-be and experienced local cyclists. Scan the QR code. These days it's always good to be able to check the facts. All the sources quoted here are referenced in the online version of this article, with links to the actual source documents, available at www.goringgapcycling.co.uk/active-travel

Steve Rock

A retired civil engineer and the developer of the goringgapcycling.co.uk website

VE Day under threat of friendly fire – the story of Bill Armstrong

Much has rightly been done to celebrate the 80th anniversary of VE Day, when World War II ended officially in Europe, at least among the Western allies – the UK, USA, Canada and France.

We are often reminded that our troops (the ‘forgotten army’) fought on in Burmah (now Myanmar) and Siam (Thailand) and that the war in the east did not end until August 1945, after the atom bombs destroyed the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, on 6 and 8 August respectively. What is more often overlooked is that, for some months after VE Day, British troops continued to face the dangers of war in a far corner of Europe, on the Yugoslavia border, in north-east Italy. One such soldier was Bill Armstrong, who lived in the Gap for 47 years and died in Sreatley in his 103rd year, in April 2022.

In 2020, as part of our local celebration of the 75th anniversary of VE Day, GGN featured Bill’s account of how he spent VE Day under cover from friendly, as well as unfriendly, fire. At this time of reflection, it is a salutary read and is reproduced below. The other stories in John Boler’s article can be read in July GGN 2020 Page 15. See www.goringgapnews.co.uk/ggn-archive

Bill’s story

I remember very little of VE day. After the cessation of war there was general celebration of it at home, I believe. On that day I was with a few others in the Yugoslav/Italian mountains, fixing Allied positions against the Russians. That didn’t lead to a happy bunch of laddies, I can tell you. I don’t recall any celebrations in Italy or Yugoslavia. Quite honestly, we’d had enough.

I was in northern Italy with the 3rd Survey Regiment, Royal Artillery. We had landed at the toe and worked our way steadily to 30 or 40 miles south of Trieste, mainly up the Adriatic coast but occasionally on the Mediterranean side. Our job was to determine among other things the positions of enemy guns, to fix the enemy gun positions and calibrate guns; anything connected with enemy activity. We had to know where a target was before it could be fired on.

We pulled into somewhere, I couldn’t tell you the name of the place, and it was on that day war was declared finished.

What did I do? We thought it best to stay inside, behind a brick wall, because the Italian partisans must have had quite a lot of spare ammunition...and they were using it up! So, on VE day I was keeping out of the way of Italian partisan bullets that were fired with great joy but not at me. That was the actual cessation of war.

Within a few days we had to pack up very quickly and, with a considerable amount of other people, dash up towards Trieste. We were accompanied by the London Black Cats (1st & 56th London infantry divisions) and the New Zealand 6th armoured brigade. An awful lot of people went up there. Who the rest were I’ve no idea.

We were stationed near Gorizia and Monfalcone and were able to go into Trieste. The reason for our going towards Trieste was that it was right near the Yugoslav border. The Russians had no open port and wanted to get Trieste. And, of course, they had the Yugoslav Communist party fighting with them and looking after their interests.

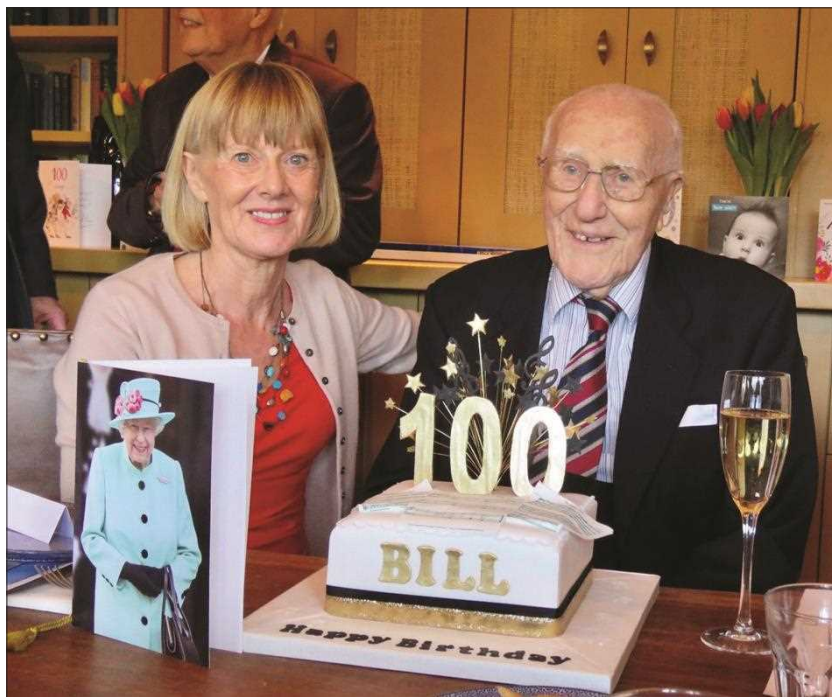
At the Yalta conference the heads of state at the time had laid down the boundary beyond which the Russians and Yugoslavs would not advance. In the event the Russians encouraged the Yugoslav partisans to break this rule. They broke the boundary and took over Trieste and nearby parts of northern Italy. We went out with a relatively small force to push them back. Allied motorised transport and aircraft were doing nothing else except driving and flying around as a show of force.

If one came to a little brook or river over which there was a bridge, at our end there would be a Sherman tank with 75mm gun pointed at the other end of the bridge where there was a Yugoslav Communist machine gun. It was such a ding-dong that it only needed someone to fire a shot and we would be away again.

We had no need to remember any of these things after the war. What one saw of the war was very much what lay in front of one and not much to the left or right.

What I do recall is we pushed them back somehow. Whether it was a political thing I don’t know but it did not open into war. Very few people knew anything about it. It was something that was kept under the counter. The Yugoslavs withdrew and the Italian government took over Trieste and right up to the old Yugoslav border.

That is the last thing I remember because, shortly after, I came home on rehab leave expecting to go back to Italy but never did, as I was demobbed in November 1945. We still occupied that part of Italy until June 1946, so it had a long history after I left.



Bill on his 100th birthday in January 2020 with daughter Carolyn

Photo: Adrian Turner

VE Day at Cleeve Lodge – a celebration of community and remembrance

At Cleeve Lodge Residential Care Home we recently marked a very special occasion – the 80th anniversary of Victory in Europe (VE) Day – with a joyful springtime garden party that brought our residents, their loved ones, and the wider community together in a truly memorable way.

Beneath the blossom-filled trees and bright blue skies, our gardens were alive with music, laughter, and conversation. Residents and guests enjoyed the uplifting sounds of live performances, shared stories over a sizzling BBQ, and raised a glass from our cheerful drinks bar. Homemade cakes and sweet treats added a comforting touch, reminding us of all of the simple joys that connect generations.

The event was not only a tribute to the enduring spirit of the wartime generation but also a celebration of the warmth and unity we cherish at Cleeve Lodge. We were especially touched by the generous gifts from Jack and Varsha – thank you both for your kindness. And of course, no celebration would be complete without Marcie, our much-loved therapy dog, whose calming presence brought smiles to everyone she greeted. She was joined by our resident guinea pigs, Bryan and Stitch, who also made a few special appearances, much to the delight of our guests.

At Cleeve Lodge we believe that care goes far beyond daily support – it's about creating moments of togetherness, joy, and reflection. This VE Day celebration was a beautiful reminder of the strong bonds we share with our residents, their families, and our local neighbours.

To relive the day's highlights, visit our Facebook, Instagram, or YouTube channels, where you'll find a heartwarming video capturing the spirit of the event.

Thank you to everyone who joined us – your presence helped make the day truly unforgettable.

Sunni

Cleeve Lodge Residential Care Home



Photos: Peter Crane

A blooming good sale

Goring's Bloomers would like to thank the community for their incredible support for the annual Bloom plant sale in the Rectory Garden on 3 May. They say that the sun shines on the righteous and it seems that, as more people than ever came along to the event, Goring is full of worthy people because the weather was absolutely perfect!

The sale of the hundreds of plants that we grow specifically for this event fund the horticultural and environmental work that the Goring Bloomers do in the village throughout the year. This year we introduced a 'Farmer's Market' which proved to be very popular, with home grown produce and delicious edibles flying off the stall. Our 'Garden Paraphernalia' stall was groaning under the weight of the numerous beautiful garden pots, big and small. The tools, that had been donated and renovated by one of our team, all found happy new homes. By the time the sale had finished at noon it seemed that, while the stalls were almost empty, the coffers were hopefully replenished.

So we are delighted to report that, thanks to the generosity of our supporters and the hard work and enthusiastic commitment of the dedicated Bloom team, this year's sale was the most successful ever – raising the grand sum of £2,361.44, which was a record!

We are now in the run-up period preparing the village for another visit by the Britain in Bloom judges in July. There is much to be done, in terms of getting the village spick and span again. As the competition is community focused everyone's help is very welcome, particularly if you can work with your neighbours to weed and tidy your local patch. Many hands make light work and it can be fun! Thank you.



The Plant Sale

Photo: Stephanie Bridle

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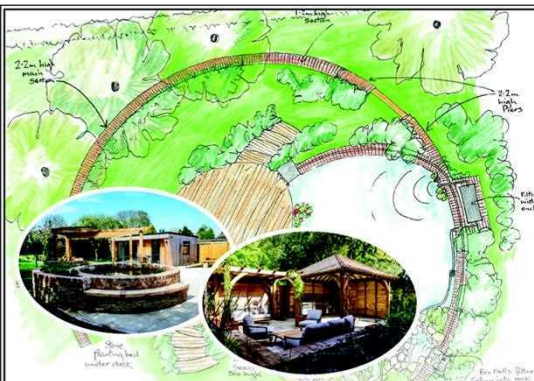
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Children's author/illustrator at Withymead on 8 June

My name is Emma Shoard and I'm a London-based illustrator and author living on board a 19th century Dutch Barge on the Thames. The river that inspired my book, *Life on the Thames*, has been my home for most of the past ten years. I have sketched goslings paddling past my boat, written passages from camping spots beside the water and worked from a home studio rocked by passing boats and the Thames tide. I have loved learning more about this amazing river, full of life.

Since I was a child I have been passionate about animals and the natural world, and I'm not sure I could live in the city without the space for wildlife that this river offers. For readers, I hope my book inspires, maybe surprises and teaches readers to have a new appreciation for the whole of the Thames. My illustrations are most often inspired from observational sketches and I love to use ink, watercolour and pencil to create textures and keep the feeling of movement and life in my work.

I'm looking forward to sharing drawing techniques and making some art together at Withymead in my free children's art workshop on Sunday 8 June (age 5+). Join me anytime between 11am and 3pm to learn all about life on the Thames, enjoy some hands-on creativity and of course enjoy a stroll around the reserve.

Registered assistance dogs only, children must be accompanied by an adult.



Sobell House Hospice

Could you be a Bereavement Volunteer?

At Sobell House Hospice we are currently recruiting volunteers for our Bereavement Service, to provide support to family and friends who have lost someone close to them.

Would you be able to offer someone the opportunity to share their experience of grief and their memories of the person who has died?

If you would like to find out more information, visit <https://sobellhouse.org/support/become-a-volunteer/> alternatively, please contact us at: [PallcareVolunteerServices@ouh.nhs.uk](mailto: PallcareVolunteerServices@ouh.nhs.uk) to request an application form. Full training and ongoing support are provided.

Mark Lymn

Pathway Coordinator (Bereavement and Voluntary Services)
Sobell & Katharine House Hospices
Oxford University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust



Author talk: Gill Hornby

Friends of Goring Library (FoGL) are delighted to welcome Gill Hornby to their next author talk on Friday 27 June. Gill will be talking to us about her very new novel, *The Elopement*, which is published in May 2025 – approximately 250 years after Jane Austen was born.

Gill is president of the Jane Austen Society and is known for her books *The Hive* and *All Together Now* as well as a biography of Jane Austen for younger readers called *The Story of Jane Austen*. Her recent novels *Miss Austen* and *Godmersham Park* were both Sunday Times best sellers and you may have enjoyed watching the 4-part BBC adaptation of *Miss Austen* which starred Keeley Hawes as Cassandra.

Gill is another person whose life was changed by going to a library as a child. In a recent interview in *The Guardian* she remembers being dropped off at Maidenhead Library every Saturday morning – she describes it as ‘a gateway to another world’ and in the same article she also pays tribute to her English teacher who ‘saw something in her’ and introduced her to the books of Jane Austen. Perhaps the rest is history!

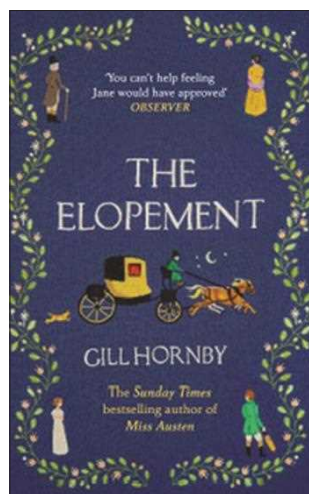
The Elopement has had great reviews – Ferdinand Mount says that it ‘has all Austen’s wit and unnerving powers of observation with an extra twenty-first century zap’ and Waterstones describes it as: ‘A spell-binding follow-up to Hornby’s best-selling *Godmersham Park*.’

We are very lucky to have such a talented and well-known author coming to speak to us. Our evening together will be held in the Morrell Room. Doors will open at 7pm for refreshments and the talk will start at 7.30pm. Tickets cost £10 and are available via Eventbrite. Gill’s books will be available for purchase (and signature) via our friends from The Wallingford Bookshop.

Here is the link for Eventbrite:

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/an-evening-with-best-selling-author-gill-hornby-tickets-1350028986039?aff=oddtcreator>

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Marking a moment in history: Goring Gap Local History Society's visit to Southwick House and The D-Day Story

To commemorate the 80th anniversary of VE Day (8 May 1945) and the 81st anniversary of D-Day (6 June 1944), on 15 April members of the Goring Gap Local History Society embarked on a memorable and thought-provoking excursion organised by our Programme Secretary, Fiona French and General Secretary, Janet Hurst.

The trip offered a powerful reminder of the events that shaped the course of the ending of the Second World War, with visits to two exceptional sites: the D-Day Map Room at Southwick House, near Fareham and The D-Day Story museum in Southsea, Portsmouth.

Southwick House: where history was made

Our day began with a visit to Southwick House, a Georgian stately home with a unique wartime legacy. Now under the stewardship of the Royal Military Police, the house served during the Second World War as the forward headquarters for the Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Force (SHAEF) under General Dwight D. Eisenhower.

This historic setting was where some of the most consequential decisions of the war were made, with none more important than the final go-ahead for Operation Overlord.



The group in the Map Room

Photo: John Boler

The centrepiece of our tour was the famed D-Day Map Room, a time capsule of military planning. Dominating the room is the original wooden wall map used to coordinate the Allied landings. Manufactured by the Chad Valley toy company, the map spans the Channel from England and Wales to Brittany and Normandy and allowed naval staff to track ship movements and convoys in real time. It was here that Eisenhower postponed D-Day by 24 hours due to adverse weather, before giving the final order: 'OK – Let's go!'

Remarkably preserved in its original location, the map remains a tangible link to that pivotal moment. Mike Tickner, our guide, was exceptional in bringing the room to life with stories of tense meetings and last-minute decisions, as we stood in the very place where history turned.

The house itself, originally built in the early 1800s, played host to key wartime figures such as Winston



The Map Room in wartime

Photo: John Boler



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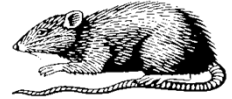
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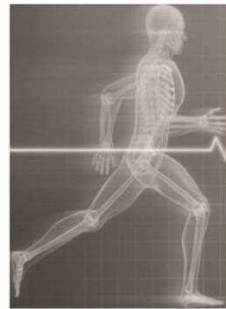
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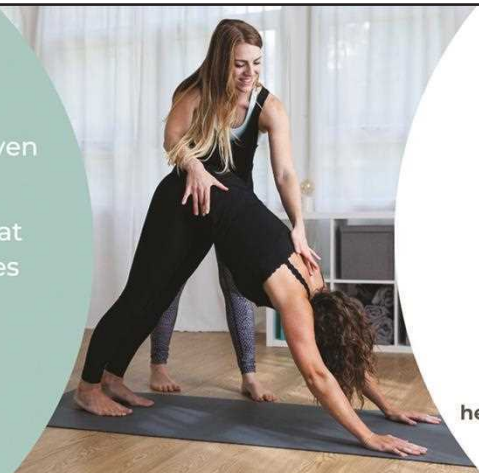
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Churchill and Charles de Gaulle in the lead-up to the invasion. For those of us with a passion for history, standing in the Map Room felt like stepping into the pages of a living chronicle.

The D-Day Story, Southsea: A personal perspective on a global operation

Following a convivial pub lunch, we journeyed onto Southsea to visit The D-Day Story, the UK's only museum dedicated solely to D-Day and the Battle of Normandy. Reopened in 2018 following a major refurbishment funded by the Heritage Lottery, the museum offers a modern, interactive experience that brings personal narratives and military strategy together in a powerful way.

The visit began aboard Landing Craft Tank (LCT) 7074, the last surviving example of the vessels that carried tanks to the beaches of Normandy. Standing on the deck and exploring the crew quarters and the formidable Sherman Grizzly and Churchill Crocodile tanks on board, we gained a visceral sense of what it might have been like to face the crossing on 6 June 1944.

Inside the museum, the story unfolded in three main sections:

- **Preparation:** Detailing the meticulous and secretive planning of Operation Overlord.
- **D-Day and the Battle of Normandy:** Offering a powerful immersion into the experience of the landings, told through audio-visuals, personal accounts, and original artefacts.
- **Legacy:** Here, the centrepiece is the Overlord Embroidery, an 83-metre-long, hand-stitched tapestry inspired by the Bayeux Tapestry. Completed over seven years, this stunning artwork honours those who took part in the operation.

The museum's strength lies in its focus on personal stories, from letters and uniforms to oral histories, reminding us that this massive operation was carried out by thousands of individuals, each with their own fears, hopes, and acts of courage. We felt humbled by the bravery of all those involved and felt inspired to informally exchange stories of our own parents' and grandparents' wartime experiences.

A personal connection discovered

While visiting the museum, Pat Bradstock was surprised to recognise a label on a Queen Alexandra's Imperial Military Nursing Service insignia that once belonged to Pat Stephens (née Bradley), her former neighbour from Lycroft Close, Goring. Pat Bradley (as she was then) had served as a nursing sister in the QAs, as the corps is affectionately known, which in 1949 was renamed the Queen Alexandra's Royal Army Nursing Corps.

On 12 June 1944, just six days after D-Day, Pat Bradley came ashore at Arromanches via Mulberry Harbour B, also known as Mulberry 2. This extraordinary feat of engineering was one of two artificial harbours built by the Allies to speed the delivery of troops, supplies, and equipment into Nazi-occupied France.

Pat was attached to the 74th General Hospital, setting up a 600 bed hospital that was one of the first fully operational tented hospitals on French soil. These frontline teams worked under immense pressure, often just miles from active combat, treating a constant stream of Allied and German wounded soldiers from the fierce battles in Normandy.

By the time Pat arrived, the fighting was intense and the need for medical care critical. In canvas tents whipped by sea winds and with the rumble of distant artillery ever-present, she and her fellow QAs worked tirelessly – performing surgeries, administering treatment, and offering comfort amid the chaos. Their skill and dedication saved countless lives.

02

**Nurse Pat Bradley's
QAIMNS insignia**

In June 1944 Pat Bradley helped set up a 600-bed hospital in Normandy. The staff treated Allied and German wounded until moving to Belgium in October.

Reflections

This excursion was far more than a day out: it was a journey into the heart of history. It left us with a deep appreciation of the sacrifices made and the intricate planning that shaped the path to victory in Europe and reminded us not only of the scale and complexity of the operations that led to the end of the war but also of the human courage and international cooperation that made it possible.

The Goring Gap Local History Society are planning a number of other visits and talks later this year and if you would like details, please contact our Secretary, Janet Hurst, on goringgaphistory@gmail.com

Alan Winchcomb
Chairman, Goring Gap Local History Society

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- **Doctor**—to contact a doctor between 8am and 6.30pm ring **01491 872372**. When the surgery is not open, at night and at weekends (i.e. 6.30pm-8am Monday to Friday and throughout the weekend and Bank Holidays) **111**. This number is also available on the surgery answerphone. You may be asked to attend Abingdon Hospital, or Townlands Hospital in Henley. For the most up-to-date information see www.goringwoodcotemedicalpractice.nhs.uk
- **Nearest Casualty Department:** Royal Berkshire Hospital, Reading **0118 322 7020**
- **Nearest First Aid Units:** Townland Hospital, Henley **01865 903755**, or Abingdon Community Hospital **01865 903476**
- **NHS Direct** is available for medical advice 24 hours a day, on **111**. Your local pharmacy can also offer you a range of services, including advice and medicines to relieve symptoms of minor ailments.
- **Emergency Dentist** – Weekdays 6.30pm-10pm, Weekends and Bank Holidays 9am-9pm. **0845 345 8995**
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Scientists in the making

During the first week of term, children from Greenfinch, Owl and Robin class went on a fantastic trip to the Science Oxford Centre in Headington. The children were able to experience and participate in a range of STEM (Science Technology Engineering Mathematics) activities and workshops that were led by the Science Centre staff.

Exploration Zone

All the children loved their time in the Exploration Zone. Lots of the younger children were fascinated by the Scarf Shooter and spent lots of time feeding scarves and plastic balls into giant tubes and watching the items fly out.

Many of the children spent time exploring the Air Table where they could create their own models to test in the air current. The children loved seeing how high their models could fly and enjoyed making alterations to improve them.

Within the Exploration Zone was a fantastic range of circuit equipment where all the children had lots of fun plugging in wires to make lights and bells work. Some of the circuits were complicated and the children had to use their problem-solving skills to work out how to accomplish each task.

Exploring thermal imaging was also an exciting part of the Exploration Zone. The children loved using ice packs and hot air to cool and heat their hands or face and being able to visibly see the temperature differences.



Experimenting with circuits!

Photo: Mrs Dryden

Theatre show

The Science Centre had a brilliant theatre where we watched an amazing show. The Science Centre leader demonstrated a range of experiments that helped the children to understand how different liquids can be more or less viscous, as well as what happens when you mix oil and water with citric acid and baking powder. The children loved watching the experiments where there were minor explosions, bubbles and mess!

Water explorers

In the water lab the children enjoyed investigating dams, water wheels, boat building and sinking and floating. Hook a duck was a favourite activity, and they really enjoyed capturing both floating and sinking ducks. Some of the children made exciting dams and sent boats and ducks floating through it. It was lots of fun and definitely an exciting way to explore water.

Topple, bump and roll

Year 3 children took part in a problem-solving activity where they had to create their own chain reaction machine. They rose to the challenge and made some amazing creations based on Rube Goldberg Machines.

Everyone had a brilliant trip. There were so many interesting and exciting activities to take part in; the day flew by.

Mrs Thomas

Editor's note: The Science Oxford Centre is open to the public on Saturdays and Family Days for booked visits. For information see scienceoxford.com

George Michael concert event in Goring in June

A very special celebration is coming to Goring this summer, as fans from across the country and Europe gather to honour the life and music of George Michael at OUTSIDE25 – a unique event set in the garden of his former home, Mill Cottage. Taking place on Sunday 22 June 2025, the concert will celebrate the iconic singer's incredible career in a location that holds deep personal significance for both the artist and the local community.

The announcement of OUTSIDE25 comes after a previously planned tribute event was unfortunately cancelled. (Please note, tickets for the cancelled event are not valid for this event.) Determined not to disappoint the many fans who were looking forward to honouring George Michael, a team of local people worked swiftly to create a new and even more meaningful experience. The headline performance will come from Celebrating George Michael, a renowned band and show fronted by acclaimed vocalist Steve Mitchell and featuring Dave West, ex-Wham! bassist. Fans can expect a powerful and moving show, covering all the greatest hits from upbeat Wham! classics to George's soulful solo ballads.

In addition to the main event, a special community concert will take place on Friday 20 June 2025, for the people of Goring. This evening will feature a live band and aims to bring residents together in celebration and community spirit.

All profits will be donated to Childline (one of George Michael's favourite charities), Samaritans and to several recipients within the Goring community, including both Streatley and Goring C of E Primary Schools.

With tickets expected to sell quickly, both evenings are set to be highlights of the summer calendar and fitting tributes to a music legend who called Goring his home. Tickets available at: tinyurl.com/muyjkh5w

The Catherine Wheel will also be celebrating George Michael at their 'Spinning the Wheel' event on 28 June.

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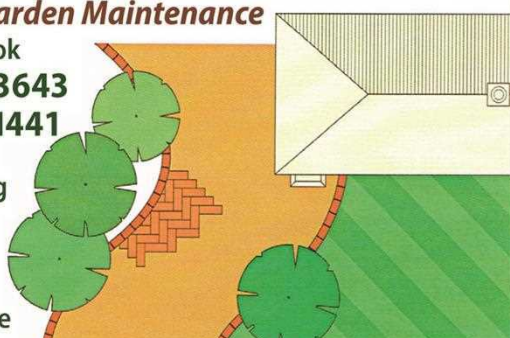
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Record breaking season for Goring United

Goring United started the season with three men's and two women's teams.

After five years as first team manager, in which time the club had firmly established themselves in the first division of the Thames Valley Premier League, Tim Monk stepped down at the end of the 23/24 season. Mark Sachse stepped up from the reserve team role to become joint first team manager along with former chair and Sunday team manager Alex Fletcher.

The team had an outstanding season; they are currently ten points clear in the division with one fixture remaining. This is the highest

position the club have ever achieved in the league and means that for the first time in their history they are eligible to play in step 7 of the national league system – the first automatic step on the way to the highest levels of the game.

To make this leap the club must satisfy certain ground conditions. Unfortunately, this means that the team will have to leave their traditional home at the Gardiner Recreation Ground; however it is hoped that due to the ongoing support of the Parish Council, it will be possible to stay in the village.

The reserve team will continue to play at the Gardiner, ensuring that the historic link remains.

The whole team performed at an exceptional standard throughout the campaign and congratulations are due to everyone involved. Goalkeeper Tom Canning played every minute of the season whilst the outstanding Matt Hayden has so far contributed thirteen goals and fourteen assists.

Ryan Webb took over as reserve team manager from Mark Sachse. They had some outstanding results during the season but were unfortunate to lose several tight games by the odd goal. Due to the reorganisation of the league, it is unclear which division they will be in next season; however, it is anticipated that Ryan will have a strong squad who will be pushing for promotion.

Rob Eaglesham top scored with nine goals from nine appearances. Dan Carter, Will Graham, Michael Langridge and James Plumridge all made in excess of twenty appearances.

Tom Canning, at the tender age of twenty-two, took on the managership of the men's Sunday team. Being Sunday morning, football availability was variable; however Tom picked up some excellent results and did a remarkable job of ensuring that a competitive team was fielded every week. Tom will be standing down as manager next season due to work commitments. If you would be interested in managing the team, please email tim.monk@yahoo.co.uk

With three games remaining, Sully Akers is top scorer with five goals closely followed by Bertie Spencer and Tommy Edwards.

The women's first team endured a difficult season. Under the continued management of Iestyn Llewellyn they had an exciting start to the season competing, for the first time, in the Women's FA Cup. Numerous injuries and variable player availability in the latter half of the season led to difficulties in fielding a strong enough side to compete in the top division of the league,



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SPORT continued

the team eventually finishing in ninth position. Forty-two players made league appearances, Rosa Maitland being the top scorer with eight goals.

Louise Axon managed the women's development team. The season started promisingly with the side winning several games, however the idiosyncrasies of the league rules restricted player availability leading to the last few games being forfeited. The women's section will be restructured next season, and it is hoped that we will have a strong squad available.

The club is ambitious to progress and is always looking for new players, if you are interested please email tim.monk@yahoo.co.uk for further details.



Photo: John Douglass

Tim Monk, Chairman

Goring & Streatley Golf Club's Aplin in seventh heaven

I am very pleased to announce that for the 7th consecutive year, Matt Aplin has won the 59 Club 'Greenkeeper of the Year' award, an absolutely amazing achievement for him and his team. I am very proud of what the greenkeeping team have achieved against some tough competition and a true testament to the consistent high standards Matt and his team deliver to provide a first-class golf course.

The Club also won for the first time ever a Golf Club 59 Club 'Silver Flag Award' which was a goal we were striving for after winning the Bronze flag for the last two years in a row. I am extremely proud of the whole team and thank them for all their hard work and efforts to achieve this award for the Golf Club.

This award is awarded to golf clubs who deliver exceptional Customer Service/ experiences across all departments within a club. The 59 Club have three flag awards; Bronze, Silver and Gold and a golf club is awarded these from the combined result of the five mystery shop visits we have through the year. The higher combined percentage result you get, the better flag you can win.

Next year we will certainly all be striving for a Gold flag.

Please join me in congratulating all of our teams from the greenkeepers, pro shop, office, kitchen, hut and bar team. We are very lucky to have such amazing talented people working at our Club. Well done team; you are all superstars.

Sarah Heath General Manager



Matt and Sarah with their 59 Club awards

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FORTHCOMING EVENTS

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GORING SOCIAL CLUB GOLF SOCIETY

Join the friendly Goring Social Club Golf Society for our summer event at The Springs Golf Club on Friday 27 June – if you are a member of Goring Social Club and enjoy golf then you are able to join the society and enjoy organised golf days at various local courses. Contact Jim Cheshire on [07803 711827](tel:07803711827)

MINDFULNESS & MEDITATION

Saturday 28 June, 10am-12pm, Morrell Room. A morning of Mindfulness & Meditation. The practice of mindfulness and meditation is an evidenced based means to relieving stress and improving wellbeing. Andy Taylor's experience goes back over forty years and he has been teaching mindfulness for fifteen years in the form of a 10 week course and one-off sessions. The mindful morning will offer a silent space in which we can meditate, go out and about to experience mindfulness in action and explore the practice through discussions during a mid-morning break for refreshments. It will be suitable for beginners and those with experience. Cost – pay what you can. We suggest around £20. For further info call Andy on [07999 407705](tel:07999407705) or email andycounsellor@gmail.com

WITHYMEAD NATURE RESERVE, OPEN DAYS 2025

Open every Sunday 10am-5pm until 31 Aug. Serving cream teas 2-5pm on 29 Jun, 27 Jul, 31 Aug. No need to pre-book for any of these dates, just turn up and enjoy – it's free entry, but donations are welcome! Also offering pre-bookable visits on Fridays for up to two hours at a time between 10am-4pm during the same period. Visit www.withymead.org for more info. We look forward to welcoming you to this gem by the Thames.

Further afield

WALLED GARDENS OF WALLINGFORD 2025

The very popular Walled Gardens of Wallingford are opening again this year on Sunday 8 June. St Leonard's and St Peter's churches will also be open. There are 13 gardens to see in a small area of old Wallingford. Three are new this year and two more are returning after a year's absence. Three gardens are next to the river.

Several gardens offer teas and cakes and you can also have a glass of Pimm's. Short boat trips on the river are available from one garden. Some of the gardens have a number of stalls. You will find wine by the glass, strawberries and cream, a local artist, honey from Wallingford bees, locally grown cut flowers, plant sales and much more. All proceeds will go to local charities. These include Style Acre, the Corn Exchange and Wallingford Museum. The event is generously sponsored by Root One Garden Centre, Champions, PureBoating, PC Technicians and Homebase Property. Advance sale of tickets are available at £7 from Root One Garden Centre, KP Stationers and online. You can buy tickets on the day at £9 from 13 Wood Street. www.walledgardensofwallingford.co.uk for details.

READING BACH CHOIR CONCERT – WITH HEARTFELT JOY

An exciting new venture for Reading Bach Choir and instrumentalists of Concerts in Caversham. In the magnificent setting of Douai Abbey on Saturday 12 July at 7.30pm. The programme will feature Bach *Christ lag in Todesbanden*,

Caroline Shaw *To the Hands* and *Entr'acte* and the Telemann Viola Concerto. Tickets £18 / Under 18's £5, via the website www.readingbachchoir.org.uk or on the door.

PANGBOURNE CHORAL SOCIETY CONCERT

The Society presents *Better Peace than Always War*, Falkland Islands Memorial Chapel, Pangbourne College, Saturday 21 June at 7pm. This concert reflects on the 80th anniversary of the end of World War II, at a time of considerable unease in the world today. The main work will be PCS's debut performance of *The Armed Man* by Karl Jenkins. Also included will be *Five Days that Changed the World* by Bob Chilcott, which focuses on what can be achieved when mankind works together in peace for the greater good. Jenkins' work will be supported by a number of percussionists and three ex-military trumpeters, plus some orchestral parts and an organist, all of whom will feature in other sections of the programme. There will be a specially commissioned work entitled *Voice of a Generation* with text composed by 14-year-old Lucy Hann and music by Choir member Jacky White, reflecting a 21st century perspective on perhaps the most important 20th century occurrence. The intention is to contrast the observations of a younger person with the musical interpolation of someone who recalls the aftermath of World War II on subsequent generations. Music Director, Sara Benbow says: '*We hope to reflect on the grimness of war but reflected positively against a calm and bright mood engendered by everyone working together in peaceful harmony*'. Apart from the brand new *Voice of a Generation*, Sara intends to finish with her own adaptation of two nostalgic period pieces: *Edelweiss* and *When They Sound the Last All Clear*. A fitting finale to a special anniversary concert. Tickets (£17 – £5 for under-18s) are available from Garlands Organic & Natural, Pangbourne, PCS website, PCS members and on the door.

AFTERNOON TEAS St MARY'S CHURCH ALDWORTH

These will start on Wednesday 2 July and then every Wednesday in July, August & September, 2.30–4.30pm. Delicious homemade cakes in the company of The Aldworth Giants. For further details and to book groups contact: Gill Wilding [01635 578624](tel:01635578624) or gillwilding@hotmail.com

CONCERTS IN CAVERHSAM

Saturday 28 June 6.45pm, St Andrew's Church, Caversham. Concerts in Caversham present their Mostly Mozart programme for the Summer Concert. The serene *Flute Quartet in A major*, the bubbly *Piano Quartet in Eb major*, the masterpiece *Clarinet Quintet in A major* – all by Mozart and then as a counter balance, Ravel's *Introduction and Allegro for string quartet, flute, harp and viola* – sometimes described as a 'miniature harp concerto'.

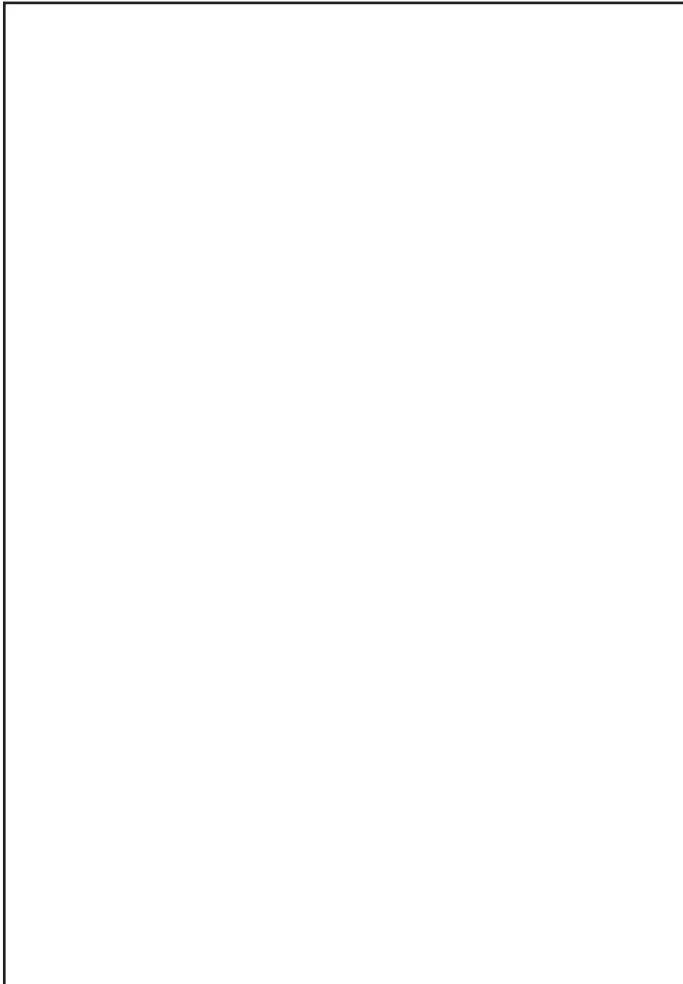
Tickets £18-£26, under 16s free. Available from Box Office www.concertsincaversham.co.uk or Caversham Picture Framers from 24 May.

GUIDED BUTTERFLY WALK

The Upper Thames Branch of Butterfly Conservation are holding a number of free Guided Butterfly Walks this season. We are keen to include local people in these walks.

Details: Lardon Chase: Saturday 24 May and Saturday 9 August.

Hartslock: Tuesday 27 May. Booking is essential and can be made on Eventbrite, where further details can be found by searching using the location of the walk (Lardon Chase or Hartslock Wood).





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Sunday 25 May

Withmead Nature Reserve, Cream Tea
10am-5pm, Cream teas served 2-5pm. No need to pre-book, just turn up and enjoy. For info www.withmead.org

Monday 26 May

Genie News Copy Deadline. Genie is published twice a month. Email us: news@genienews.org

Wednesday 28 May

• **The Arts Society Goring.** 11am and 2pm GVH. *The Mayan Civilisation of Central America*. Speaker Duncan Pring. Guests welcome £5 please contact Membership Secretary: membershipgoringarts@gmail.com

• **Lego Workshop.** 10-11am, GL. Please book [01865 815155](tel:01865815155).

Thursday 29 May

• **Goring Gap U3a.** 10.30-12noon, GVH. Speaker: Sarah Somerville: *Shaw House, Newbury*.

• **Elmer Storytime and craft.** 10.30-11am GL. Drop In. All Welcome.

Saturday 31 May

4-7pm Goring Annual Parish Meeting GVH.

Monday 2 June

• **Goring Mobile Post Office.** 8-11am, Westholme stores, Wallingford Rd, Goring. Open every Monday and Thursday.

• **Goring and Streatley Bridge Club.** 6.45pm, GVH. Held every Monday.

Tuesday 3 June

• **Glib Library Book Group.** 5-6pm, GL. See library staff if interested.

Wednesday 4 June

• **Stay and Play.** 10-11.15am GL. Toddler Group and Rhyme time for pre-school children. Drop-in.

• **Goring Village Green Fingers.**

7.30pm, SL. Anthony Powell: *The Scented Garden*. Competition: *Heaven Scent* – your favourite scented flower or shrub from your garden. Visitors are welcome £5. See www.villagegreengreenfingers.uk for information.

Thursday 5 June

• **Goring Mobile Post Office.** 8-11am, Westholme stores, Wallingford Rd, Goring. Open every Monday and Thursday.

• **Storytime.** 10.30-11am GL. Drop-in. Every Thursday.

Friday 6 June

• **Greadies Library Book Group.** 10am GL See library staff if interested.

• **Goring and Streatley Wine Society** 8pm, GVH. GSWS is excited to announce a visit in June from Luca Wine Ltd. Luca offers a range of high quality wines from Italy, mainly from Piedmont, wines are mostly organic certified. They are made by small winegrowers and in limited quantities. The wide range of wines are

of lesser known wine varieties. The wines have been recognised in several Italian wine guides, several of them have been awarded a bronze medal and three of them a silver medal by December in the last two years. gswswine23@gmail.com

Saturday 7 June**Goring Repair Café and Exchange.**

10am-12.30pm, GVH. The aim is to reduce waste and unnecessary consumption by providing opportunities for anyone to bring one or two items to get them looked at and hopefully repaired. www.goringrepaircafe.info

Tuesday 10 June

Lego Club. 4.45-5.45pm, GL Please book.

Wednesday 11 June

• **Cleeve by Goring WI.** 7.30pm, SL. Louise Brown: *Tiggwinkles Wildlife Hospital*. Competition: An item featuring British Wildlife. Just come along on the night or contact Katrina Cooper [01491 875334](tel:01491875334).

• **Goring Gap News.** Copy deadline for July events. News and articles of local interest to goringgapnews@gmail.com

• **Gap Textile Group.** 7-10pm, CR.

The Gap Textile Group has an exciting and varied programme of textile related activities at the monthly meetings. If you are interested in joining, please get in touch. Merete Hawkins, [07747 780158](tel:07747780158).

Thursday 12 June

Genie News Copy Deadline. Genie is published twice a month. Email us: news@genienews.org

Tuesday 17 June

Social Scrabble. 4.45-7pm, GL. Drop-in and play. All welcome, with refreshments.

Wednesday 18 June

• **Coffee Morning.** 10.30-12noon, St Andrew's South Stoke. Every 3rd Wednesday of the month.

• **The Arts Society Goring.** 11am, GVH. Annual General Meeting followed by refreshments in the garden. All welcome.

Thursday 19 June

Pick a Flick. 10.30am-2pm, CR. *Educating Rita* (2018). Liverpoolian working-class young woman, Rita, wants to better herself by studying literature. Her assigned jaded, alcoholic university professor develops misgivings about her ability, but her enthusiasm reignites his passion for literature. Pick a Flick is held every 3rd Thursday of the month. £5 per event including a light lunch. Please contact Sarah Fraser [01491 871838](tel:01491871838) or Jenny Boyd on [01491 872109](tel:01491872109) to book in and to ask for transport if you require it.

• **Saturday 21 June**
5aside Chess. 10-11.30am, GL. Drop-in. Adults and children welcome.

Wednesday 25 June

• **The Arts Society Goring.** 11am and 2pm GVH. *The Queen of Sheba*. Speaker

Christopher Bradley. Guests welcome £5 please contact Membership Secretary: membershipgoringarts@gmail.com

• **Cleeve by Goring WI.** 6.30pm, Nun's Acre River Garden. A midsummer evening with strawberries and fizz. Contact Katrina Cooper, [01491 875334](tel:01491875334).

Thursday 26 June

• **Goring Gap U3a.** 10.30-12noon, GVH. Speaker: Colin Wade: *The Joys and Perils of being an Author*.

• **Genie News Copy Deadline.** Genie is published twice a month. Email us: news@genienews.org

Friday 27 June

Goring Unplugged 7.30pm for 8, GVH. Entry is £5. BYOB + nibbles.

Saturday 28 June

• **Mindfulness & Meditation** 10am-12noon, MR. For info call Andy Taylor [07999 407705](tel:07999407705) or email andycounselor@gmail.com See P39.

• **5aside Chess.** 10-11.30am, GL. Drop-in. Adults and children welcome.

• **Little Lights.** 10.30-11am, St Mary's Church Streatley. An informal group for parents, carers and pre-school tots aged 0-4 years meeting for songs, Bible stories and fun. Contact Rev. Ben Phillips: vicarofgsandss@yahoo.com

• **Moonrakers.** 7.30-9.30pm, St Andrew's Church South Stoke. Tickets £12 to include interval refreshments. Moonrakers is an Oxford-based group of four musicians who pride themselves in having brought traditional and contemporary folk music to new audiences in village halls, churches, arts centres and festivals across the UK.

Sunday 29 June

Withmead Nature Reserve, Cream Tea Sunday, 10am-5pm, Cream teas served 2-5pm. No need to pre-book, just turn up and enjoy. Reserve open on all other Sundays from 1 Jun-24 Aug. 10am-5pm. No need to pre-book, just turn up and enjoy. For info www.withmead.org

See more events on the Events Calendar at www.genienews.org

The following abbreviations are used:

Bellême Room	BR
Canterbury Room	CR
Free Church Hall	FCH
Goring Community Centre	GCC
Goring Library	GL
Goring Social Club	GSC
Goring Village Hall	GVH
Morrell Room	MR
Storton Lodge	SL

Goring on Thames Parish Council meetings report

The principal points of the Goring Parish Council meetings on 24 March and 14 April are summarised below. The draft minutes are available at www.goringparishcouncil.gov.uk

- At the EOMPC on 24 March, the Council voted to approve a budget of £205,000 for the Bourdillon playground refurbishment.
- The recommendation of the Playgrounds Committee to use the supplier Proludic was approved and this information was uploaded on Contracts Finder.
- Detailed information about the Bourdillon redevelopment will be on display to the general public at the Annual Meeting of the Parish on 31 May.
- A vote of thanks was passed for the work of John Boler, MIGGS and all previous councillors who helped progress the Station Road pedestrian path project.
- It was reported that initial feedback about the virtual pedestrian lane and the new parking alterations in the village had been overwhelmingly positive.
- The Travel & Transport Committee identified three key areas for potential future development – a traffic island for the Manor Road and High Street junction, parking redesignation and a parklet on the High Street outside the old sorting office and a pedestrian crossing on the High Street in the middle of the village.
- Approval was granted to display VE Day commemorative Tommy plaques on lampposts.
- The Places and Assets Committee explained the ongoing street lamp replacement campaign, replacing sodium bulbs with greener, more efficient LEDs.
- A trial, with certain conditions, was approved for Goring Tennis Club to investigate the feasibility of introducing pickle ball.
- Goring Free Church was granted permission to use the Rectory Gardens on Friday 18 July for their annual Teddy Bears' Picnic.
- The challenges of green waste were discussed. The skip at WHBG continues to be the recommended point of disposal.
- Traffic access prevention measures to the Bourdillon field were approved to safely support the redevelopment project.

Next Meeting: 7.30pm Belleme Room, Goring Village Hall, 9 June See www.goringparishcouncil.gov.uk for the agenda, a few days before the meeting.

All Goring residents are welcome at the Annual Meeting of the Parish in Goring Village Hall, Saturday 31 May, 4-7pm (see Page 5 April GGN).

Community Centre hosts seventh defibrillator

The Community Centre in Station Road is the latest place in Goring and Streatley to have a 24-hour, seven-days-a-week heart defibrillator (often called an AED) installed. This brings the total in the villages to seven, located at:

- Community Centre Car Park
- Goring Village Hall
- Pavilion, Gardiner Recreation Ground
- Goring & Streatley Railway Station
- Goring fire station
- Sheepcot Recreation Ground
- Coombe House, Streatley

Defibrillators are also available during opening hours at Tesco in Gatehampton Road, the surgery in Red Cross Road and at Streatley Primary School.

A defibrillator is a device that gives a jolt of energy to the heart. It helps get the heart beating again when someone is in cardiac arrest and their heart has stopped.

You might also hear it being called a defib, a PAD (public access defibrillator) or an AED (automated external defibrillator).

You do not need training to use a defibrillator in an emergency.

In the event of a cardiac arrest, ring 999 to call an ambulance, then simply turn-on the AED and follow the instructions supplied by the defibrillator. Most machines are programmed to talk you through the process, or a 999 operator can assist you.

The British Heart Foundation (BHF) says: 'If someone is in cardiac arrest, call 999 and start CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation). If you're on your own, do not interrupt CPR to go and find a defibrillator. If it's possible, send someone else to find one.'

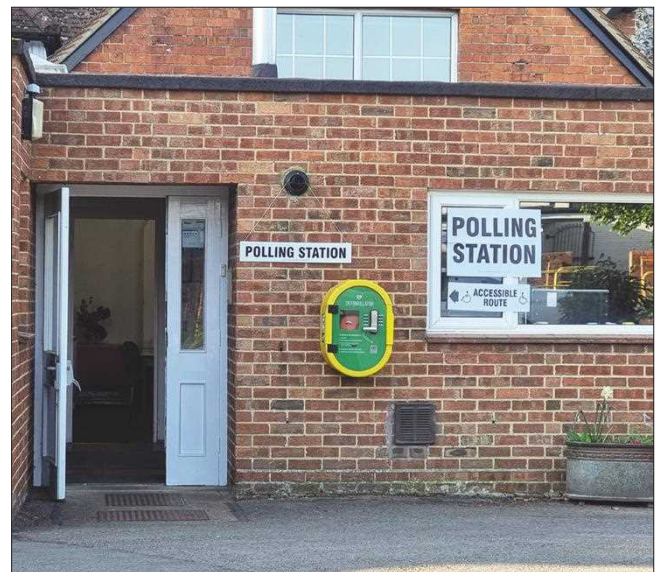
'When you call 999, the operator can tell you if there's a public access defibrillator nearby.

'Once you turn it on, [the defibrillator] will give clear step-by-step voice instructions.

'Many defibrillators also have visual prompts and images showing how to use them.

'The device checks the person's heart rhythm and will only tell you to give them a shock if it's needed. You cannot shock yourself or someone else accidentally.'

The BHF website provides an interactive tool for learning/revising CPR in 15 minutes, using a cushion and a mobile phone. See: www.bhf.org.uk/how-you-can-help/how-to-save-a-life



Public defibrillator outside the community Centre

Photo: John Boler

John Boler

For Goring Community Centre

Lest we forget



Photo; Ron Bridle

VE Day 80th-Anniversary in Goring



Photo Ron Bridle

Bourdillon collages designed from children's artwork



See article P20. Details from the contributed artworks are above the collages. Can you find the matching flowers and bugs?