

# Goring Gap News

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

## The opening moments of the new Gardiner Playground



*Photo: Ron Bridle*

## Cattle enjoying Goring Beach



Photo: John Boorman

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# Goring Gap News

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for Voluntary Service 2004

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## Media contributions

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](mailto: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.

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

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# GRAPEVINE

## Streatley Parish Assembly

The Streatley Parish Assembly will take place in the Morrell Room between 6.30-8pm on Thursday 4 June 2026.

As in recent years, the event will be in the format of a 'trade fair' and we are once again inviting all local interest groups to arrange presentations to highlight their activities in the area.

Last year the event was well received with the attendance of our local MP and a full room displaying the wide range of activities which are ongoing in and around our village.

The Parish Council will also present the 'State of the Parish' which can be handled by a short, and hopefully not too boring, speech. This is your chance to see what has been achieved and what is planned.

All Streatley residents are invited to attend and we hope to see you on the night.

*Colin Smith*

Streatley Parish Council

## Bonanza for Bloom

The Goring in Bloom committee is delighted to announce that a magnificent sum of  1,874.25 was raised at its annual sale held this year on May Day. The money will be used, as it always is, to fund the work that that our volunteers do throughout the village all the year round.

These days it is difficult to imagine Goring without the gardens and containers that provide the colour and biodiversity in the public areas. This did not exist before Goring's Bloom group was established, initially to provide the hanging baskets on the river bridge. We have come a very long way and raised (and spent!) a lot of money since then.

None of this success would be possible if it wasn't for the dedicated team of people who are involved in so many different ways. The quality and quantity of the plants and produce sold this year was exceptional. We would like to thank all those wonderful Bloomers and villagers who donated to the event and all those who came along to support us and to spend, spend, spend on the day.

## GAP Festival 12-21 June

I hope our readers managed to get their tickets and will enjoy the events they attend. Please share your photos and comments/reviews of the shows and activities with GGN and help us to record another momentous effort by the Festival team (and thank them for all the hard work). As ever, send your contributions to [goringgapnews@gmail.com](mailto:goringgapnews@gmail.com)

*Editor*

## South Oxfordshire District Council news

### Summer is coming

Work is underway at Riverside Park and Pools in Wallingford to get ready to open for the summer season towards the end of May. The maintenance checks to the site have started ready for the pool and splash pad to open to visitors on Saturday 23 May, just in time for the half term break. Pool users will be treated to some great activities over the summer, including aqua aerobics and swimming lessons.

### New planning system at SODC

The online planning system has changed following updating. Everyone currently signed up to the council's planning alert system will now have to register for an account. The council are currently catching up with applications received while the system was down. For up-to-date information see

[www.southoxon.gov.uk/news](http://www.southoxon.gov.uk/news)

### Rubbish survey

Residents across South Oxfordshire and the Vale of White Horse are being encouraged to share their views on how rubbish, recycling and street cleaning services are run in their area, via an annual survey. The survey is open until 4 June 2026. A link to the survey can be found on [www.southoxon.gov.uk/news](http://www.southoxon.gov.uk/news)



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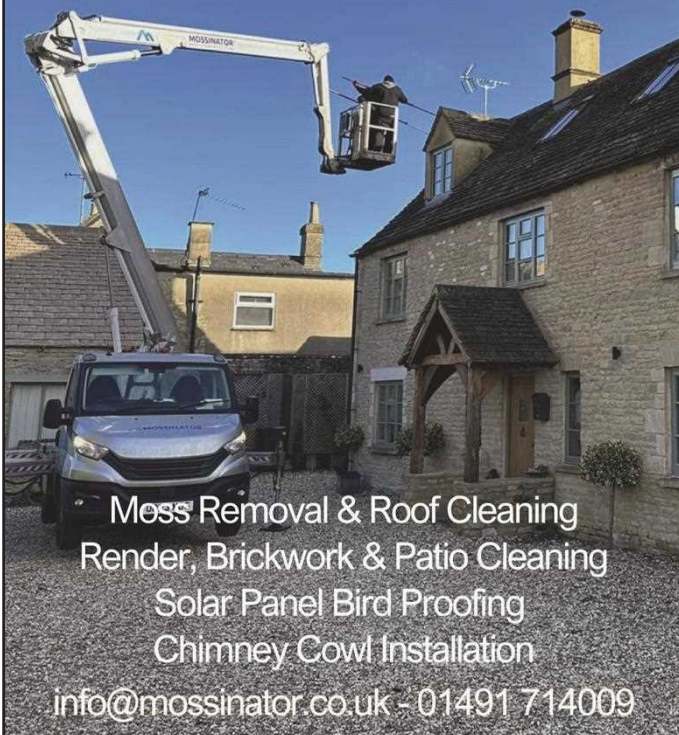
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## Goring Fire Station Open Day – A community celebration

Goring Fire Station was delighted to welcome the local community to its Open Day on Saturday 25 April, celebrating a very special milestone – 50 years of service at Icknield Road.

Opening at 10am, the day got off to a fantastic start, with families already gathering on the forecourt ahead of time, eager for the gates to open. The momentum didn't slow, with over 400 people joining us throughout the day and a brilliant community atmosphere right through to 3pm.

Visitors enjoyed a wide range of activities and displays, with fantastic support from partner organisations including Lowland Search & Rescue (and their ever-popular search dogs), Thames Valley Police, and South-Central Ambulance Service. We were also pleased to be joined by neighbouring crews from Henley and Wallingford.

The day was supported by some brilliant local businesses, with refreshments and entertainment provided by Jessie's Coffee Truck, Crown Ices and live music from The Mysteries – helping create a real community feel across the station.

Despite the event, operational readiness remained a priority. At 9.50am, shortly before the Open Day began, two Goring firefighters were mobilised to an incident in Sutton Courtenay alongside colleagues from Henley. Throughout the day, the station also provided on-call cover for parts of South Oxfordshire while other crews were responding to incidents.

The event was made possible thanks to the generous support of many local businesses and organisations, who contributed raffle prizes, supplies and services. We are extremely grateful to Goring Village Butchers and Goring Tesco for supporting the BBQ, as well as to all those who donated prizes and resources to help make the day such a success.

Special thanks must also go to the families and friends of Goring Fire Crew, whose hard work behind the scenes – from running stalls and preparing food to setting up



*Teamwork makes the dream work - FF Nitch, Freemantle and Evans*



*Oxfordshire Lowland Rescue and their dogs were a special attraction*

and clearing away – was invaluable. We were also very pleased to welcome back recently retired Watch Manager Sean Absolom and his family on the day.

Thanks to the incredible generosity of everyone involved, we are proud to announce that a total of £5,557.49 was raised for The Fire Fighters Charity.

Goring Fire Station would like to extend its sincere thanks to everyone who attended, contributed, or supported the event. It was a fantastic way to celebrate 50 years of service and a reminder of the strength and spirit of our local community.

*Lotti Cargen*



10

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## Kevin Armstrong Quartet with Imogen Ryall

Guitarist Kevin M Armstrong (the 'M' distinguishes him from his namesake who played with David Bowie, Iggy Pop *et al.*) brought his group to Goring Community Jazz on 10 April, comprising Martin Pickett on the Roland keyboard, drummer Ben Twyford and our own Howard King on bass. The talented and vivacious vocalist on virtually all the numbers was Imogen Ryall.

It was immediately clear that the evening would be unlike the more usual fare of great American standards and modern jazz classics. Almost all the strikingly original programme was composed by Armstrong and/or Pickett. *Wavering* was an angular melody, hard to follow as it drifted from one key to another and I noticed a certain look of bafflement on the faces of the audience. *On Rose Hill* was another elusive theme, but the thoughtful and poetic lyrics were delivered by Imogen Ryall with great musicianship in dealing with the tricky cadences. For *When We Went Away*, Pickett switched to the melodica, a wind instrument with a small keyboard, which produced a rather mournful, nostalgic tone, somewhere between a harmonica and a concertina.

In the second set, the highlight for me was *Move* – a version of the track from Miles Davis's *Birth of the Cool* sessions (1949-50). Jon Hendricks' lyrics followed note-for-note the fast-paced theme and Davis's trumpet solo, and Imogen delivered these frantic tongue-twisters with great verve, followed by Kevin's nimble-fingered guitar solo. Several of the selections received their 'world première' that night, including one described as 'Van Morrison-esque', which contained the line: 'Old folks will feel like they were young again.' Other numbers were inspired by Czech and Danish music, while one titled *End of Longing* was an attractive melody in 3 / 4 time, with a Russian flavour. Between the vocals, there were improvised, jazz-infused solos on guitar, keyboard and bass, with one exciting one from Ben Twyford on drums. This was 'cross-over' music, which the audience clearly warmed to and enjoyed on its own terms.

Gus McGill

## A concert of sublime virtuosity

On 19 April at 4pm, St Mary's Church, Streatley, witnessed a wonderful treat of sublime piano playing by the multi-award winning German pianist Max Mostovetski.

The program was: *J.S. Bach's English Suite No 3 in G minor, (BWV 808)*, Alexander Scriabin's *Sonata No 4 in F sharp Major (Opus 30)* and Felix Mendelssohn, *Scottish Sonata in F sharp Minor (Opus 28)*. He played the lovely *Debussy Preludes No 5 Book 2 Bruyeres*, which means heath or heather, as his encore.

Max also introduced each piece with lots of very interesting, informative and amusing facts about the composers and the pieces.

These are all extremely difficult pieces technically and Max made them sound effortless and his expressive playing lifted them to another height. Playing such complex rhythms and multiple themes at very high speeds was virtuosity of the highest order and we all enjoyed a full immersion in the beautiful music.

The entire concert was a wonderful experience of sublime music. My personal favourites were: the *Sarabande* from Bach's English Suite, full of heart rending beauty and possibly thought to be a tribute to Bach's first wife; Bach's customary thematic acrobatics in the closing Fugue movement; the final section of the Scriabin sonata, which is a musical description of a human being absorbed by and becoming a star, and the first movement of Mendelssohn's sonata describing a misty Scottish landscape.

Max enjoyed playing for us too and he is planning to return for another concert in St Mary's in 2028, so if you are disappointed to have missed this concert there will be another chance.

The tea and cakes and social time that followed the concert was, as always, an excellent finish to a happy afternoon. Thank you to all the wonderful helpers who make these concerts possible and operational and to those who provide and run the tea and cakes and do the washing up! Especial thanks to John Rogers, Elaine Cox, Rosemary Mitchell and Linda Ogle. Any profits from the teas go to the Friends of St Mary's.

Finally, as always, thank you to our audience for being there, we could not run without you! Our next concert is by Emilija Karaliute playing classical music on the Lithuanian Harp (Kankles) on Sunday 17 May at 4pm.

Stella Robinson



Pianist Max Mostovetski

Photo: Stella Robinson

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## MUSIC and ARTS continued

### Goring Gap Players rise to the challenge

Goring Gap Players are to be commended on tackling Oscar Wilde's last and, one suspects, unfinished play, *An Ideal Husband*. The plot can be a little clumsy and, at least for a modern audience, somewhat melodramatic. Nonetheless, the themes are relevant today and Wilde's wit shines through.

This was Michael Saunders first major venture as a director and not an easy task. He is to be congratulated on his hard work in putting it together, although I'm sure he would be the first to admit that it was a steep learning curve!

The play features the wicked Mrs Cheveley threatening to expose the highly successful politician, Sir Robert Chiltern, whose career and fortune are based on corruption and insider trading. Not to worry, his friend Lord Goring rallies round and thwarts Mrs Cheveley, leading to Sir Robert's loyal wife eventually supporting him. Thus the rigidly principled and virtuous Lady Chiltern is happy to accept the rewards that go with Sir Robert's situation, once it is clear that his historic corruption and deceit can no longer be exposed.

At the end of the play, Sir Robert takes his seat in the cabinet, Lord Goring gets Miss Mabel, Mrs Cheveley goes back to Vienna and, as far as we know, they all live happily ever after. This is Wilde at his most brilliant as he highlights the hypocrisy of the era (perhaps of all eras?).

The main characters gave creditable performances with clear characterisation and some excellent interactions. Phil Davies, as Lord Goring, gained the biggest laugh of the evening with a knowing glance at the audience. The rest of the cast, many new to acting or at least to acting with Goring Gap Players, acquitted themselves exceptionally well.

Many of the costumes were excellent, particularly those worn by Mrs Cheveley, and the jewellery splendidly completed the effect, especially the diamond snake brooch.

The lighting and sound engineers, those unsung heroes of the theatre, performed their function flawlessly. The set too worked well and a lot of time and effort must have gone into its design and build. I rather enjoyed the secret door in the library, although it was hard to see what was gained by two lengthy scene changes when the resulting sets and furniture looked very similar, if not identical, from the point of view of the audience. More effective attention to reducing Wilde's verbosity could have cut some thirty minutes off the running time without impacting the action or the plot.

Goring Village Hall is a difficult environment for all involved and the play is not one easily tackled. All the more credit therefore goes to cast and crew for providing a most enjoyable evening of entertainment.



*Goring Gap Players curtain call*

*Photo: Alison Bulmer*



*A tense moment*

*Photo: Jean Betteridge*

*Chris Bertrand*

### A joyful evening with the Immanuel Gospel Choir

Goring's St Thomas' Church was packed with people on Saturday 3 May all looking forward to the concert by the Swedish Immanuel Gospel Choir.

This well-known singing group is currently touring England and we were thrilled that they were able to stop in Goring.

Our audience was rewarded with a fabulous evening in which the choir sang a range of songs from beautiful melodic tunes to hand clapping Gospel songs.

In the afternoon prior to the concert, Immanuel had led a workshop for anyone who wanted to learn their style and approach to music. The workshop certainly paid off and to our joy, our Goring and Streatley friends joined the choir for a couple of songs which left us asking for more. It was a truly delightful and joyful evening.

The Immanuel Choir joined us again the next day for the Sunday Morning Service, followed by tea and coffee, croissants and fruit and time for a nice chat together, which ended with a warm invitation to visit us again. A special thanks to Elizabeth Parkinson who played a big part in inviting the Immanuel Gospel choir to visit us.



*Jonathan Clifton*

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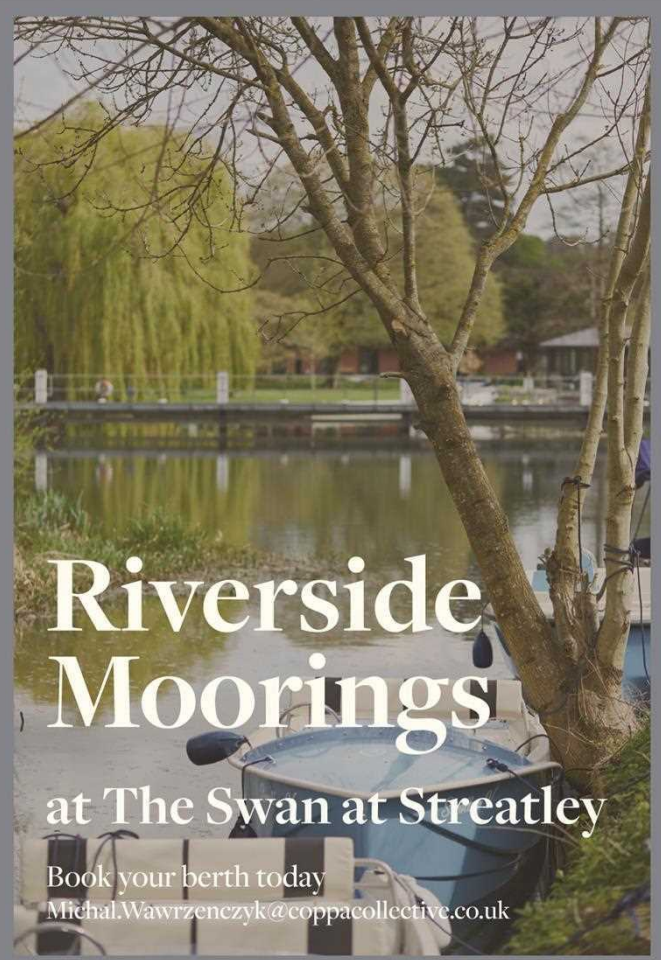
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## 6 June – Your next Goring Repair Café – with a ‘Bike Swap’ event in the Rectory Garden

As usual, between 10am-12.30pm on 6 June in Goring Village Hall, there will be up to 18 unpaid volunteer repairers on duty to try to fix your broken items free of charge at the Repair Café. At the same time, outside in the Rectory Garden, there will be a special event all to do with bicycles.

Bring your bike to get it checked over and fixed where possible by competent bike repairers – or exchange it for a different one if you find one which will suit your needs better for the future. There will also be a display stand there with members of the new Goring Gap Active Travel Group available to discuss their new organisation and the benefits of using your bikes more and your cars less to avoid carbon emissions and keep fit at the same time.

Repairers with a wide variety of skills, each set up with their own work station and tools, will try to fix more or less anything you bring into the Village Hall. The Goring Repair Café has a success rate of about 70% for getting products fully working again, or at least partially working, depending on whether it needs a spare part, so it’s well worth a visit. In addition to the repairers, there are up to ten support staff, who will register your products and allocate them to the most appropriate repairer. All residents are welcome to bring in up to two broken items. If you haven’t been to the Repair Café before, there is a video, photographs and more information about what happens there on: [goringrepaircafe.info](http://goringrepaircafe.info)

So, if your existing product can be fixed it all helps to protect our planet by reducing waste – and saves you money. We welcome any voluntary donations to cover the cost of the hall hire and other expenses. However, if you don’t have anything broken to be fixed at this time, you are very welcome to just pop in to have a look at what happens in the Village Hall at these events – and you can have a sit down with a coffee or tea and some wonderful homemade cake at *Café Bellème*.



*Bike repair on the Rectory Garden last year* Photo: Ron Bridle



Ron Bridle

## Bikeability achieved at Goring Primary



Photo: Mrs McCutcheon

Children in Year 5 Nightingale Class at Goring CE Primary School have successfully completed their Level 2 Bikeability training, demonstrating not only growing confidence on two wheels but also representing the school’s values of *belong, believe and achieve*.

The training began on the school playground, where pupils refreshed essential skills such as bike handling, signalling, and awareness of their surroundings. Once instructors were confident in the children’s abilities, the group progressed onto local roads, putting their learning into practice in real-life situations.

Riding through Goring, Streatley and South Stoke, the children tackled a range of road conditions and scenarios. From navigating junctions to understanding traffic flow, they showed determination and resilience, supporting one another every step of the way.

The children themselves spoke enthusiastically about the experience. One pupil said: ‘I was nervous at first, but once we went on the road, I felt really proud of myself.’ Another shared: ‘I liked learning how to signal properly and ride safely with cars – it made me feel more confident on my bike.’ A third added: ‘It was fun riding around the villages, and everyone helped each other if they were unsure.’

Throughout the course, the Nightingale Class believed in their ability to improve, even when faced with new challenges and ultimately achieved a significant milestone in becoming safer, more independent cyclists. The instructors praised the group for their positive attitudes and excellent behaviour, noting how well they represented both their school and the wider community.

Well done to all the children in Nightingale Class for this fantastic achievement – an important life skill gained and a wonderful example of learning in action beyond the classroom.

Mrs Mitchell and Nightingale Class



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## Masoom's Tandoori Restaurant

As the twentieth anniversary of the establishment of Masoom's approaches, I interviewed Abdul Haq, the head chef, about the past and the future of what has become an iconic part of the Goring and Streatley scene. Haq – as he is known – was, with his four brothers, including Mas after whom the restaurant is named, part of the original team and he was the driving force behind its focus on excellent ingredients, freshly cooked meals and a happy, friendly atmosphere.

He says that the greatest pleasure for him and the staff is that the restaurant has become part of the Goring community – and they love the rapport they have built up with families and customers. So many of the children from the early days are part of the loyal customer base who choose Masoom's for both special occasions and times when an Indian meal is absolutely just the right food.

Haq was born in Bangladesh and with his family came to England when he was nine. He was always very keen on cooking and learnt most of the recipes from his family. He has adopted and adapted not only Bangladeshi recipes but also Nepali and Indian meals. When they started the restaurant in 2006, it didn't take long for it to be an established part of village life, although when, for example, the Tamarind Tree opened in Lower Basildon, they had a period of reduced custom – but within weeks, their clientele returned. And Masoom's has flourished ever since.

Over the years Masoom's has become a well-known and favoured restaurant, not just in Goring and Streatley but much further afield – and over the years has embedded itself in the Goring Gap, at one time sponsoring the Goring Cricket Club, and alongside Goring in Bloom has become well-known for its floral hanging baskets. As may be imagined, great care is taken to match the rest of the village's hanging baskets – and this year is no different.

The meals that Haq and his chefs prepare are the main reason for the continuing popularity of Masoom's – and as Haq hands over the head chef role to his nephew he is anxious to stress continuity while welcoming some innovation. While Zia has been for many years – in fact since 2009 – the front of house and will remain as the face of Masoom's for diners, Haq will be spending more time away from the stove and in the restaurant getting to know more of the clientele.

Regulars at Masoom's might be slightly surprised to realise that over the years the menu has changed in usually subtle ways to meet changing tastes, and Masoom's is always keen to meet any individual requests for different Indian – well actually Bangla Deshi – meals. Haq also explained that the biggest real change for the restaurant over the last twenty years was recognising the importance of allergies – and they go to great lengths to ensure that anyone with an allergy to, for example, nuts or gluten is catered for and that Masoom's is absolutely focused on ensuring that no-one with an allergy is affected by their food.

Masoom's has also provided outside catering for many different events, from weddings to birthday parties – and this is something that Haq finds especially rewarding. Providing all the plates and cutlery and serving dishes and warming stations is a natural part of it – but as always Haq's focus is on ensuring that the meals are of the highest quality.

So as the twentieth anniversary approaches, with the restaurant still a focus of the community, Haq is looking forward to the next developments and to welcoming both new and old customers again.

To contact the restaurant, call **01491 875078** or go to [www.masooms.co.uk](http://www.masooms.co.uk)

*Paul Davies*



*Haq and the team celebrate 20 years in Goring Photo: Ron Bridle*



*The Masoom's team in 2006*

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## BUSINESS continued

### Albert Fields preloved £5000 success

We had another resounding success with our preloved clothing sales. It wouldn't have been possible without the support of our entire team, friends, family, and local businesses.

As before, we had high-quality preloved clothes and accessories, with many a bargain to be had. We were blessed with good weather, and queues formed well before opening at 11am. (See photo on P44.) Eager shoppers were kept entertained with refreshments, including mimosas and sweet and savoury bites.



*The Team*

*Photo: Neil Horne*



*Gift Bags*

*Photo: Neil Horne*

Special thanks to all the local businesses that supported us with generous donations of food, drinks, vouchers, services and flowers: Goring Grocers, Pierreponts, Inspirations, The Garden Design Company, Masooms, Miller of Mansfield, Catherine Wheel, Goring Butchers, Coppa Club, Neil Horne Photography, Applegarth Blooms, Hope curated by Nayna McIntosh and Davines.

We managed to raise an astonishing £5,000 for BWA (Berkshire Women's Aid), surpassing last year's total.

We would like to say a huge thank you to everyone involved and to everyone who attended.

*Albert Fields team*

### Sup Life on the Thames

Along the quiet, winding stretch of the River Thames that threads through the Goring Gap, early morning mist rises from the water, kingfishers dart between the reeds, and runners and walkers greet each other along the towpath. It's here, in one of the most picturesque reaches of the river, that The SUP Life has found its home.

A seasonal paddleboarding business run by long-time local resident Lorraine Rose, The SUP Life offers beginner lessons to guided river adventures, SUP yoga and corporate team events, their paddleboarders have become a familiar presence on the water from April to October.

Paddleboarding was introduced at The Swan at Sreatley in 2016 as a one-off event for gym members. Everyone loved it, and it quickly became apparent that a more permanent, regulated facility would be welcomed. Enter The SUP Life, a British Stand Up Paddleboarding Association school. 'We didn't just want to start a business on the water; we wanted to be part of river life in the Goring Gap,' says Lorraine.

Lorraine is no stranger to this part of the Thames. In 2013, she ran the Boathouse Café & Deli at The Swan at Sreatley before joining the project team redeveloping the gym and bringing wellness and lifestyle events to the hotel.

The SUP Life was founded in 2021 and employs local instructors, creating flexible, outdoor-focused jobs for residents, many of whom grew up playing in and on this stretch of the Thames. Their knowledge adds something special to every session, whether that's pointing out hidden swim spots, sharing wildlife sightings, or simply understanding how the river behaves on a breezy afternoon.

Taster SUP sessions will be offered in partnership with the Goring Gap Festival as part of the wellness event schedule. Many a first-time paddleboarder has been tempted onto the water as the recipient of a school raffle prize.

Of course, none of this paddleboarding activity would be possible without the river itself. The Thames is more than a scenic backdrop; it's the lifeblood of the Goring Gap. For centuries, it has shaped the landscape, supported livelihoods, and provided a place for recreation and reflection. Today, it remains a gathering point for walkers, swimmers, rowers and those discovering it for the first time on a paddleboard.

By encouraging more people to experience the river from a different perspective, and in a low-impact, accessible way, The SUP Life aims to foster a deeper appreciation for this shared natural resource.

As the summer months return and the Thames once again becomes a hub of activity, The SUP Life stands ready with a warm welcome for anyone curious to step on a board. Contact The SUP Life: [hello@thesuplife.co.uk](mailto:hello@thesuplife.co.uk)

*Lorraine Rose*



*Mother's Day SUP*

*Photo: Dave Conway*

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## BUSINESS continued

### Move it or lose it goes from strength to strength

Since launching my over-60s keep fit classes this year, I have been overwhelmed by the response from our spritely seniors. I'd like to say a huge thank you to everyone who has joined our friendly crew so far; it has been a joy to watch everyone getting stronger and improving their balance, all while having fun to some great music as seen in the photo on page 44.

Following the fantastic feedback from my Goring regulars, I am delighted to be adding an extra session to the village timetable this spring! Classes now take place in Goring Village Hall on Mondays and Fridays at 11-15am, in Woodcote Village Hall on Mondays at 1.30pm and in Cholsey Great Hall on Tuesdays at 1.30pm.

The FABS programme which stands for Flexibility, Aerobics, Balance, Strength is specifically designed for seniors. It is completely inclusive, every exercise is fully adaptable and can be done seated or standing, so you can work at your own pace regardless of your current mobility.

As we get older, staying active isn't just about fitness; it's about maintaining our independence and quality of life. My classes follow the FABS framework, focusing on four pillars of healthy aging:

Flexibility helps to keep joints supple, making everyday tasks like reaching for a cupboard or putting on shoes much easier.

Aerobic movement supports heart-health, boost energy levels and keep us feeling vibrant.

Balance work is essential for fall prevention and builds confidence with every day activities like walking to the shops or playing with grandkids.

Strength exercises help build muscle power making it easier to stand up easily from a chair.

Just as importantly, these classes are sociable and enjoyable. Research shows that exercising with others is one of the best ways to combat loneliness and improve mental wellbeing – the 'feel-good' factor is just as important as the physical work.

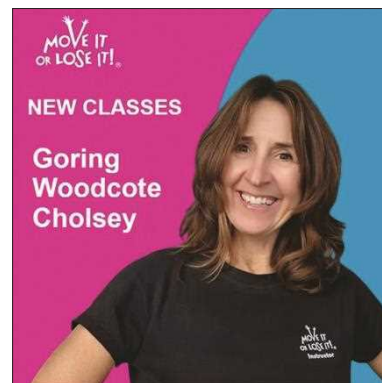
There is no need to book a long course. I offer a flexible drop-in style so you can come whenever you feel like it, with no pressure to commit every week.

First session is free, £8 per class (or £45 for a block of six).

Whether you want to improve your fitness or just meet new friends, you'll be made very welcome. Simply pop along on the day or get in touch to find out more.

*Victoria Mills*

07887 531354 [victoria.mills@moveitorloseit.co.uk](mailto:victoria.mills@moveitorloseit.co.uk) [moveitorloseit.co.uk](http://moveitorloseit.co.uk)



### Diamond year for the Woodcote Rally

This year our 60<sup>th</sup> Woodcote Rally will take place over the weekend 10-12 July at the rally site off Church Lane, Ipsden, OX10 6BZ. It's a festival of steam, vintage and veteran transport with entertainment for all the family. We have a wide range of exhibits on show all weekend, including large and miniature steam engines, stationary engines, cars, motor bikes, tractors, military, models and commercial vehicles. During both days, the exhibits will display in the main arena and there will be a separate tractor working area.

We have a large craft marquee with lots of hand-crafted goods. Outside the marquee is the country area where you can see a range of demonstrations. The funfair is a great attraction for all ages.

During both days live bands will play on the main stage and continue long into the evening. A range of food and drink is available all weekend.

All of these attractions combine to make the Woodcote Rally South Oxfordshire's premier event of its kind. Since 1964, the Rally Committee has donated a total of £555,000 to local charities and other deserving organisations.

Please visit us at [www.woodcoterally.org.uk](http://www.woodcoterally.org.uk) for further details and admission prices (advance price only £28 for a family of four), noting that advanced ticket prices carry a good discount to the on the day prices.

Please note that on Friday 10 July the Rally opens its doors at 6pm for the benefit of all the local villagers around the area. There'll be free entrance and free, excellent entertainment. The bar and food areas will be open, as will the fun fair which will have reduced prices for the evening.

Please also note that on Saturday 11 July entrance will be free from 5:30pm.



*Andy Crockett*

Publicity Officer, Woodcote Rally [publicity@woodcoterally.org.uk](mailto:publicity@woodcoterally.org.uk)



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## Children give the new Gardiner Playground a big 'thumbs up'

There was a real buzz of excitement as children rushed to explore the new playground at Gardiner Recreation Ground. Within minutes, it was full of laughter and happy voices, with children – and quite a few parents – trying out the swings, slides, climbing equipment, trampoline and sensory games. The beautiful wooden mallard duck quickly became a favourite spot for games of hide-and-seek.

The playground was officially opened on Saturday 25 April by Goring-on-Thames Parish Council, alongside District Councillor Maggie Filipova-Rivers. It's the second new playground to open in the village within a year, highlighting the council's ongoing commitment to improving local play spaces. Designed especially with younger children in mind, it's a place that encourages imaginative play, sharing and making new friends.

Accessibility and family use have been key priorities. The playground includes:

- Wheelchair-accessible picnic benches
- Wide, level paths suitable for buggies and wheelchairs
- Sensory panels and interactive games
- Accessible swings and roundabouts, including parent-and-child options
- A trampoline
- ...and, of course, the now much-loved wooden mallard duck



Sonia Lofthouse, Chair of Goring Parish Council, said: 'We're really proud to open another high-quality playground right in the heart of the village. Gardiner Recreation Ground is already a much-loved space, and this new addition makes it an even better place for families to spend time together. Our Playgrounds Committee – made up of councillors and local parents – has put in a huge amount of work to make sure it reflects what our community wanted. It's a space where every child can feel welcome.'

Councillor Maggie Filipova-Rivers added: 'This playground shows what can be achieved when a community pulls together. My congratulations to the Parish Council for securing the funding and delivering the project so quickly. A big thank you also to the parents and carers who have helped make the case for it – it really has been a shared effort. I hope children enjoy it, and that everyone helps take care of it so it can be enjoyed for many years to come.'

The playground has been partly funded through a grant from South Oxfordshire District Council, using developer contributions. We are so happy to see children enjoying the new playground. It makes all the hours of planning and work worthwhile.

*Cllr Barbara Newman*  
Chair Playground Committee

## 2<sup>nd</sup> Goring & Streatley Scout Group

### St George's Day parade and service 2026

The 2<sup>nd</sup> Goring & Streatley Scout Group were honoured to have a leader of the 1<sup>st</sup> Goring Scout Group with us for the St George's Day Parade and Service, accompanied by her daughter, who is a member of the 1<sup>st</sup> Goring Group. Madeleine Bastawrous, the leader, is a Queen's Scout, the highest youth honour in UK Scouting.

The Scouts assembled in Goring car park ready to march off at 9.10am to St Thomas' Church, where we were greeted by the Vicar for the service. During the service the Scouts, Wolf Cubs, Beavers and leaders renewed their Promises and members of the congregation who had been in the Scouts were invited to join the Promise renewals. After the service the Scout Groups formed a Guard of Honour for the congregation to pass through.

### Beavers' nature walk at Withymead Nature Reserve

Despite the weather suddenly turning very cold, with a few drops of rain, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Goring & Streatley Beavers bravely carried on and completed their nature walk in Withymead at the end of March. The walk was led by Pete Morton, reserve warden, and Skip, along with three parents. The Beavers were in good spirits and enjoyed their nature walk, which was part of completing their Nature Beaver badge.

### New leaders found for the Beavers

Miranda Elsom (Maz) has enthusiastically agreed to take on the role of Lady Beaver Master (Ahmeek) at the 2<sup>nd</sup> Goring & Streatley Scout Group, after assisting with the Beavers for the last two years. Miranda was one of David Cooksley's Senior Scouts and now has four children in different sections of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Goring & Streatley Scout Group. We are so very pleased that Miranda has taken on the role.

Additionally, three other leaders have come forward to assist Miranda, they are Vicki McDonald (Otter), Michelle Rowley (Hawkeye) and Debbie Bevan (Sunshine).

The Beavers have been working towards obtaining their Kiro Badge. For this they had to know The Lord's Prayer and its meaning, discuss the Ten Commandments, answer quiz questions on both, been attending most of the Scout Group's Church Parades and preferably, be a regular attender at their own church.



*Beavers' Nature Walk at Withymead*  
Photo: David Cooksley

*David Cooksley (Skip)*

Group Scout Master [07789 938291](tel:07789938291)

## GAP Festival: Tickets selling fast — book now for 12-21 June

With the GAP Festival now just around the corner, excitement is building across Goring and Sreatley. This year's programme is the most ambitious yet and ticket sales are extremely strong. Several events have already sold out and many more are filling up fast, so now is the ideal moment to secure your places and plan your Festival week. We're using this opportunity to highlight a selection of fantastic events you won't want to overlook – each offering something special, whether you're drawn to theatre, music, conversation or community celebration. Full details of all the Festival events can be found at: [www.thegapfestival.org/events](http://www.thegapfestival.org/events)

On 18 June, *On a Role* brings us *The Secret Life of Enid Blyton*, a compelling one-woman play exploring the extraordinary life of one of the world's most successful children's authors. Enid Blyton sold over 600 million books and remains culturally relevant today – *The Magic Faraway Tree* has just been adapted into a major film – yet her personal story is far more complex and controversial than many realise. This production offers a fascinating insight into the woman behind the stories generations grew up with.

Fans of Terry Pratchett will be delighted by *Stephen Briggs in Conversation* on 15 June. As a long-time collaborator and the adaptor of many Discworld novels for the stage, Stephen brings a unique perspective on Pratchett's imagination, humour and creative process. It promises to be an unmissable evening for Discworld devotees.

Music-lovers have a real treat on 19 June, when dynamic singer-songwriter George Montague takes to the stage. Known for his high-energy performances and original songs, George will be joined by local favourites David Caswell and The Moonseeds, creating a vibrant night of live music that deserves a packed audience.

Our local churches, with their beautiful acoustics, host two early-evening musical performances. On 13 June, *Queentet* – five exceptional brass musicians from the Royal Academy of Music – offer a fresh and compelling programme in St Mary's Church, Sreatley. Then on 18 June in St Thomas' Church, Goring, Festival Chairman Geoff Brown presents a reflective piano recital featuring mesmerising works, including compositions by Philip Glass. Both concerts offer wonderful opportunities to escape from the world for a beautiful hour of music.

The Festival's final day, 21 June, offers two wonderful community gatherings. The Big Riverside Breakfast at Goring Sailing Club provides a relaxed start to the day, complete with river-taxi access, if needed. Later, everyone is invited to the Festival Finale Picnic Concert in Rectory Gardens – a joyful afternoon of music from local performers and schoolchildren. Bring your own picnic or pre-order one in advance.

Could you help at an event? The Festival simply couldn't happen without volunteers. Whether you can spare an hour or an afternoon, your help makes a huge difference – and it's a great way to meet people, support the community and enjoy the Festival from the inside. We welcome all offers of help but especially need volunteers on 13 June, 20 June, and 21 June. Register at: [www.thegapfestival.org/get-involved/volunteer](http://www.thegapfestival.org/get-involved/volunteer) or email: [help@gapfestival.org](mailto:help@gapfestival.org) Katie Gristwood

## A day of creativity for all ages at the GAP Festival – come and join the fun!

Looking for a fun, creative day out with the children this June? On Saturday 20 June, the GAP Festival invites you to *Discover. Create. Perform.* – a full day dedicated to the joy and energy of the performing arts. It's a chance for all ages to explore something new, build confidence and simply have fun, with workshops running throughout the day and a relaxed community performance to round things off. Thanks to generous sponsorship and grants (from Goring-on-Thames Parish Council, South Oxfordshire District Council Everyone Active Grant Scheme and the Arts Society Goring), every session is completely FREE.

The programme offers something for everyone. Children can dive into imaginative mime with crafts and magic workshops



The Theatrical Legacy of Terry Pratchett with Stephen Briggs



Queentet



designed especially for younger participants. Families can get creative together in friendly sessions on singing, poetry and percussion – perfect for parents, grandparents and children to share a new experience side by side. And for those who want to join in regardless of age or experience, both ukulele and dance fusion are open to all.

All workshops are led by experienced performers and teachers who specialise in creating warm, encouraging spaces where people feel able to experiment, express themselves, discover new skills and enjoy the moment. It's a wonderfully low-pressure way to try something new: no long-term commitment, no need to join a club and absolutely no experience required. Many people find that even a single creative session can boost wellbeing, spark imagination and build self-belief.

At the end of the day, everyone is invited to come together at Goring Fire Station for a relaxed community performance, sharing new skills and celebrating the creativity of the whole group. It's informal, joyful and open to all.

If you've ever thought 'I'd love to try that one day', this is your moment. Places are free but limited, so early booking is recommended. Find out more and apply for your free ticket at: [www.thegapfestival.org/events](http://www.thegapfestival.org/events) Katie Gristwood

## The wartime work of women inspires GAP Festival musicians

It is only in recent years that the full story of Bletchley Park has been revealed, including the role of women in decoding the secret codes and it wasn't until 2015 that historian Christine Wall uncovered photographic evidence to prove that during World War II women played a large part in the construction of Waterloo Bridge.

This led to the film documentary *The Ladies' Bridge*, and Jan Casey's popular novel *The Women of Waterloo Bridge* (recommended). Following the discovery, Historic England re-listed Waterloo Bridge to formally acknowledge the role of women in its construction!

The bridge now stands not only as a functional landmark but also as a symbol of women's wartime labour and engineering skill.

We now know that during World War II local women in the Oxfordshire and Berkshire areas also took on a new role with the operation of narrow boats carrying vital supplies on the river and through England's canal network. Their work involved long hours, heavy loads of up to 50 tonnes and minimal rations. They were young women from diverse backgrounds, from upper class debutantes to bombed-out city residents. They wore badges with the letters IW, for Inland Waterways, but some men, not used to seeing women working on a boat, made fun of their efforts and claimed the letters stood for 'Idle Women.' At the time, they received no official recognition, but today, finally, a plaque honours these women at the National Waterways Museum.

A few years ago three professional female musicians from Oxford chose to call themselves 'Three Idle Women' in memory of the boat women. These 'Idle Women' are also far from idle. They have toured all over the country, singing traditional folk songs in exquisite harmony, while playing an array of musical instruments and telling stories of life on the river. They released a successful album *All Hands Together!* and gained new fans with their TV programme *Narrow Escapes* on Channel 4.

The Three Idle Women are booked for this year's Goring Gap Festival and will appear in Goring Village Hall on Tuesday 16 June, singing songs and telling tales of river life. Doors open at 7pm and tickets at £15 are available at: [www.thegapfestival.org](http://www.thegapfestival.org) – but they are going fast!

Jonathan Clifton



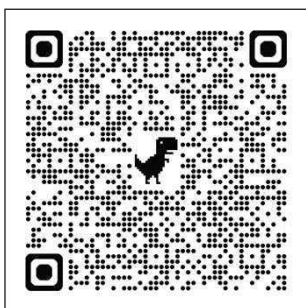
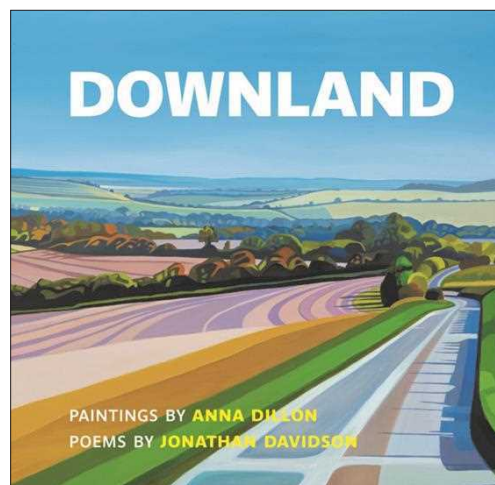
## Downland, a pre-GAP Festival treat

On Wednesday 10 June, Friends of Goring Library are delighted to present an evening with artist Anna Dillon and poet Jonathan Davidson, introducing their book, *Downland*. This is an opportunity to enjoy the beautiful, vibrant and colourful work of local artist Anna (you may remember her striking picture of Lowbury Hill, that she loaned to the library for our archaeological event a few years ago) complimented by gentle poems from Jonathan. Anna and Jonathan have both known and enjoyed the Downs, from Wiltshire to Oxfordshire and Berkshire, for most of their lives and have been inspired to produce this book by memories of cycling and walking with friends and family here.

*Downland* celebrates the path of the Ridgeway through the Goring Gap in both paint and word.

The evening will include short readings, a chance to enjoy projections of some of the paintings in a larger format and a conversation about what happens when poetry meets painting. Both Anna and Jonathan will be happy to sign copies of *Downland* which will be on sale after the event and, of course, answer questions about their work and collaboration.

Please join us for this fun and different evening in Goring Library. Doors open at 7pm with the talk starting at 7.30pm. Tickets are £10 (to include refreshments) and available from Eventbrite via the QR code, or from the library.



# Volunteer your story: The National Trust

Volunteers contribute a lot to The Gap and the communities that call it home.

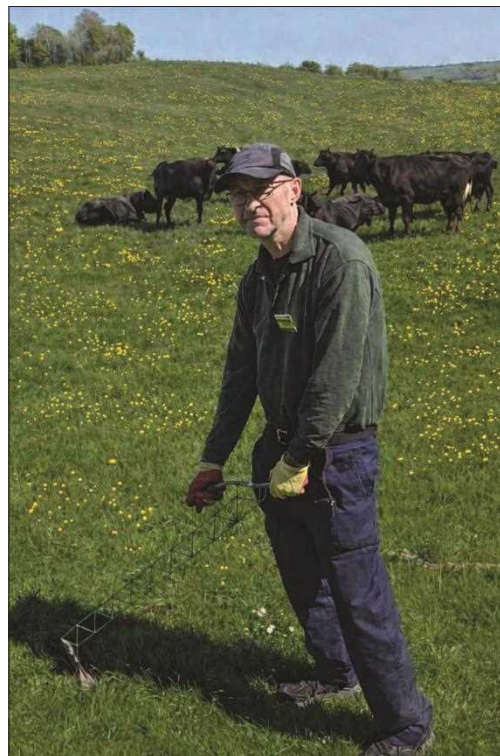
On a warm spring Friday, I sat down with three National Trust volunteers. Beyond bluebell dotted banks at Basildon Park, inside the maze-like offices of the 18<sup>th</sup> century mansion, Volunteer Coordinator Zoë Thomson and staff welcomed me to chat with Martin, Diana and Mary.

We discussed how they became volunteers, their roles and what they like most about it. They have written their own headings and provided photos of their work so everyone can follow along.

Thanks to all of them for their time and to Communications Officer, Becky Griffith, for helping to arrange this.

## 'Nature and people' – community ranger

'I've always been interested in conservation', says Martin, 72, a community ranger on The Holies,



*Martin keeping the creeping thistle in check within a sea of cowslips*

She describes her role as room guide and confirms it's very public facing. Luckily she likes people. She says: 'You can be allocated a room for the day (you can really get to know it), or you can be tea relief.' She now prefers the latter as she gets to see more of the house, including her favourite: the Drawing Room. She volunteers in gluts, sometimes three times in one week, then perhaps a month later. She sums it up: 'You get a nice feeling when you know that visitors have had an enjoyable time.'

Diana regularly encounters new people, inevitably making curious connections. For instance, she met the man who installed the original boiler and a chap in the village who worked for Smallbones and painted sections of the house years ago. Now, with all the films and TV shows featuring the grounds, she meets lots of photo-eager fans. She isn't expected to know everything: 'If people want to know the nitty gritty, we have great handbooks.'

## 'Camaraderie...and satisfying' – volunteer gardener

'I like the camaraderie... you feel you're doing something worthwhile.' That's what Mary, 86, says about being a volunteer gardener at Basildon Park. A retired pharmacist from Goring, Mary remembers first seeing a meeting of volunteers advertised in The Arcade. She had always fancied gardening at Basildon but they weren't looking for a gardener – the then resident Lady Iliffe already had one. That didn't stop Mary making her case by clearing drains and proving herself useful:



*Mary, Martin and Diana on the Basildon Park balcony*

Lardon Chase and Lough Down. Martin is now retired after a career in IT and lives in Streatley. He volunteers two or three times a week in half hour chunks or a whole morning. His role involves all sorts: from checking up on the grazing cattle to securing fences and scything overgrown vegetation. It's a more seasonal role since grazing happens between spring and autumn. This works well for him as he also volunteers at the Earth Trust over winter. Despite following seasonal patterns, being a ranger is not predictable. One morning he may find a stray dog, on another a cow somehow got in somebody's garden...

Officially his volunteering role, like all at the National Trust, provides a link for visitors between the Trust and the places they steward. This means Martin is able to educate people about these habitats, two of which are chalk grasslands and designated Sites of Special Scientific Interest. As well as telling you about horseshoe vetch (essential for feeding Adonis blue butterfly populations), he is there to hear your feedback, conserve these natural spaces and potentially befriend your dog too! He recalls one instance when he was invited to share a moment with a family as they scattered a loved one's ashes on Lardon Chase. It's not surprising he finds the work 'satisfying and important.' This year will be his tenth in the role.

## 'Interacting with people' – house volunteer

'It's important to keep history alive,' says Diana, 77. A retired local pub landlady, supermarket employee (and banker!) from Goring, Diana is now a house volunteer at Basildon Park and has been volunteering for eight years. She explains: 'When I was about to retire, I thought: 'I've got to have something to fill the day.' Many years ago, she once worked in the house kitchens and apparently baked a decent scone. Since then, she says: 'I always fancied being part of the house again.'

'It grew from there.' She used to volunteer for whole days. She now spends three to four hours a week with a group of five others. The Trust's gardener briefs them on what needs doing, assigning tasks based on their ability. This may be planting in the greenhouse, pruning, washing plant pots or by trying to free cyclamen corms from grass sods lifted from the lawns at Greys Court, to be replanted in the Basildon Park tufa bed!

Like Martin's, her role links the Trust with the public. This year is her 26<sup>th</sup> volunteering and she enjoys listening to people: 'Visitors are remarkably knowledgeable.' She remembers Lady Iliffe as 'tall, French and imposing', and someone who continued to borrow old books from the shelves, despite having given the house to the Trust in the seventies. Mary has also witnessed celebrities candidly 'on set'. For instance, on a drab day during the filming of *Pride and Prejudice* she saw Donald Sutherland in costume but also wearing wellingtons and met Kiera Knightley in the ladies' port-a-loo...

Mary says 'there's nothing lost' in giving volunteering a go and on days when gardeners aren't needed, you can find the volunteers catching up over a coffee in the village.

### National Trust volunteering

From medieval castles to Georgian mansions, dinosaur footprints to protected grasslands, across the country and on our doorstep, the National Trust plays a key role in conserving historic places and ecologically important sites. The Trust relies on 40,000 volunteers across the UK. This dwarfs the 6,000 employed staff. At Basildon Park 360 volunteers support the 38 members of staff. Since the COVID-19 pandemic, volunteering has become more flexible. Volunteers are required to contribute a minimum of three hours of their time a month and at Basildon Park they're always looking for people to lend their time.

If you like the sound of getting involved with any of the above roles, or perhaps something different, contact:

[volunteer.basildonpark@nationaltrust.org.uk](mailto:volunteer.basildonpark@nationaltrust.org.uk) or to see listed opportunities: [www.nationaltrust.org.uk/support-us/volunteer](http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/support-us/volunteer)

Dan Gordon-Potts



*Before the volunteers got to work ...*



*After volunteer planting in the gardens*



## Streatley Parish Council Litterpick 18 April

This year's litterpick took place on a glorious sunny morning, which perhaps encouraged more volunteers to take part than in previous years.

In total we had 25 volunteers, including a number of children, with the result that several bags of rubbish were collected. The rubbish included the usual cans, crisp packets, fast food wrappers and various broken parts from cars, lorries and vans. The overall impression was that there was relatively little rubbish compared to previous years, but we are curious to understand why we keep finding discarded ladies' underwear in Wantage Road.

This year's standout find was an impressively large collection of wires – clearly a glowing testament to the recent efforts to upgrade telecoms and lighting at the top of High Street. Either that, or the local pigeons are finally getting into electrical engineering.

Meanwhile, a particularly dense cluster of cigarette butts has formed around the pedestrian lights. This appears to confirm a long-held scientific hypothesis: the average waiting time for a green signal is directly proportional to the number of cigarettes one can get through while staring at it. Rectory Road provided an unwanted collection of

dog poo bags and evidence of the crisps, biscuits and fizzy drink-based diet of the walking fraternity; finally, we think we can calculate the exact time and distance it takes to eat confectionery after stepping off the school bus.

Many thanks to all the participants who took part in making our village a neater and tidier place. Dare we hope for more volunteers next year?

*Jeremy Spring*  
Streatley Parish Council

# River Thames water quality in the Goring Gap

During the past few years, water pollution in our rivers and seas has been much in the news. In some places the water is visibly polluted, or people have become ill after entering the water. To gather information about the state of our stretch of the Thames from South Stoke to Pangbourne, I and other volunteers in GGEO (Goring Gap Environmental Organisation charity), have been taking samples of the river water since early 2024.



Water sampling

Photo: Ron Bridle

In 2024 and 2025, the sampling concentrated on bacteria in the river and whether they were likely to make people ill. This was part of the *Reclaim our Rivers – Pangbourne 2025* project led by Thames21 (another environmental charity) in conjunction with GGEO. Water samples were taken every week during the Environment Agency-designated Bathing Season in England, from May to September. After collection, the samples were sent to a government-accredited laboratory which measured the levels of two types of bacteria in the water (*E. Coli* and another one called *IE* for short).

The bacterial levels varied from site to site, week to week and according to the amount of rainfall. To give an overall water quality rating for each site, the data was combined using a calculation method set out in the *Bathing Water Regulations 2013*. In October 2025, the results were used to support an application to the EA (Environment Agency) for Recreational Water Designation at Pangbourne Meadow, which was chosen because it is a particularly popular place for swimmers and boaters. When a place is designated as a

Recreational Water (previously known as a Bathing Water), official EA inspectors must take water samples at set intervals and publish the results of the measured bacteria.

The bacteria that may cause human illness appear to have little or no known effect on wildlife. This year the focus of the sampling has changed to measuring factors important for wildlife, specifically chemical pollution. As most wildlife is in the river all the year round, this year's sampling is being done once a month from January to December, rather than once a week in the summer. Preliminary results are mainly showing high levels of nitrates, probably from agricultural run-off of artificial fertilisers and wastewater released from sewage treatment works.



The Goring water analysis laboratory

Photo: Ron Bridle

With the help of a generous grant from *Goring Gap News*, GGEO has recently been able to purchase two important pieces of equipment enabling the volunteers to create Goring's own water quality laboratory and take measurements of bacteria and dissolved substances etc. This will enable us to analyse samples faster than having to send them off to a laboratory. Hopefully this will be quick enough to be of practical use to river users and will also offer education and training opportunities to the community.

If you would like to get involved or like more information, visit [ggeo.online/project/water-quality-monitoring-project](http://ggeo.online/project/water-quality-monitoring-project) and/or call 07789 871620.

Jonathan Dewsbury  
Volunteer

## Village Greenfingers – from lambs' ear to lettuce – we grow stuff!

At Village Greenfingers, your local gardening club, we enjoy exploring all aspects of gardening and all sorts of gardens: from tiny plots to large country gardens, from indoor plants to wildlife gardening. Some of our members have been gardening for years and some have only recently discovered the joys of growing stuff for yourself (and others). We'd love you to come and join us at our friendly monthly meetings (1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday of the month except January, August and December, at Storton Lodge, Icknield Road, 7.30pm, visitors welcome, just £5, pay at the door. Your £5 includes refreshments. We also have a plant stall and a monthly raffle for you to try your luck).



VGF is now over 30 years old and ideas about gardening have changed a lot in that time, with much more understanding of and emphasis on the role that gardening and gardeners play in providing support for nature and the environment. It is calculated that our UK gardens together cover an area about 20% the size of Wales and, as well as being lovely places for us, can be home to or visited by thousands of species!

At our meetings this year we will have speakers from far and wide – Jane Steward an expert on Medlars, a rare fruit tree, talked about her specialist subject in May. In June we welcome excellent speaker Timothy Walker, who will enthuse us about *Planting a Small Garden*. In July Anna Steven from Oxford will be showing us some beautiful slides as she talks about *Gardens of the Cotswolds*. Later in the year, Dr Steven Head of The Wildlife Gardening Forum will talk to us about *Practical Wildlife*

*Gardening*. We'll also be looking at how to plant a small garden, the ups and downs of gardening our local chalky soil and how to care for houseplants. We also organise garden visits locally and further afield – with priority booking for members. Membership is only £35 for the year so offers very good value.

We hope that you'll be tempted to come and grow stuff with us.

We have posters around the village with details of our talks but our website, [villagegreenfingers.uk](http://villagegreenfingers.uk) is undergoing a bit of redevelopment at the moment so if you have any queries do feel free to contact me at [secretary@villagegreenfingers.uk](mailto:secretary@villagegreenfingers.uk) and I will get back to you as soon as I've weeded my lettuces!

Sara Boorman

## Orchids and fungi – the magic match

In 2024, we saw record temperatures over the summer months and keeping lawns and gardens green in a hosepipe ban was quite a challenge. So, something had to give and Plant Life's *No Mow May* initiative came into its own with many lawns left to grow longer. And whilst I



Anacamptis morio (*Green-winged orchid*)  
Photo: Allan Davey

know this isn't for everyone, something very special happened as a result. In a small back garden in Goring that I manage for wildlife, we saw the first appearance of pyramidal orchids and year on year ever since then their population has increased.

Wild orchids are really quite a marvel and whilst I'm by no means an expert, I am lucky enough to care for a number of gardens where different species flower. When they do, it's made all the more special by the fact that, whilst once they flower they seed easily, their propagation relies entirely on the existence of the specific mycorrhizal fungi that that specific orchid associates with to be present in the soil on which the seeds land, in order for those seeds to germinate and become new orchid plants. So, when they pop up in a lawn or wildflower meadow, there is something quite magical about it.

There are around 57 orchid species native to the UK. They are usually found growing on calcareous soils and grassland meadows. From an ecological perspective, orchids are very much a canary species. If there is a significant change to a landscape, orchids are usually the first species to disappear from it. So they are definitely one to keep an eye on as an indicator of the health of our local ecosystems.

The best time to go on a hunt is between mid-spring to late summer. If you want to be guaranteed of a sighting in the coming months, why not head over to Hartslock nature reserve and see what you can spot.

Jenny Loudon



Pyramidal orchid to look out for in summer  
Photo: Jenny Loudon

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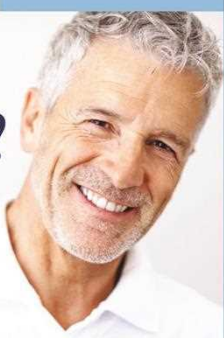
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## 'Good family's the basis of getting old well'

That's what Bill, 99, told *Goring Gap News* on 23 April, just three days before his 100<sup>th</sup> birthday.

Bill Dadds and his wife Wendy live at Waltham Court on Mill Road, Goring. Between living room and garden, we talked as the sun shone and bulbs peeped out of the soil under still-green hydrangeas. Bill explained how he reached this milestone birthday, his views on happiness, how he endures life's challenges, his hobbies, career and more. Scattered throughout this article I record his words, insights and advice. Special thanks to granddaughter Emma for helping to arrange this and for her input.

### What keeps life humming? Family ... and a tot of rum!

Born the youngest of eight brothers and one sister (!) in Colchester, Essex on 26 April 1926, Bill describes childhood briefly. His family were not wealthy: 'I can remember turning the handle on the mangle (to wash their clothes).

'We learnt a lesson to say to ourselves: We're going to have a better life.' Whether dressing before school or, in the holidays, sharing one pair of football boots with his brother, parenting was very much: 'A slice of bread and cup of tea and out you go!'

Yet from these experiences, WWII service, and a 40-year career, it became clear to Bill that family kept him going. He says: 'When I give up, they boost my spirits.' He also can't forget his 'dear wife' whose constant support, particularly in the food department (flapjack and spaghetti bolognese) buoyed him.

His granddaughter Emma shared fond memories of



*Bill mowing the lawn*



*Bill and Wendy with their family at the celebration*

*Photos: Dan Gordon-Potts*

family holidays on the Gower: 'We would go every year to Curlews House (a holiday home). I remember him by the cliff carrying his cool bag, cricket set and fishing net down to the beach.'

### Didcot Athletic and dribbling (not in a senile way)

When theorising about the reason for his longevity Bill initially said something different. He revealed: 'A naval tot of rum every day' was surely a factor! The other was playing for ten years at Didcot Athletic FC. Though dismissing suggestion of talent, he 'can't have been that bad' as he was picked to represent the Reading & District League. He says: 'Every year I played against the Reading Combination.' If he had skill, it was as a dribbler. He then smiles, pointing to this mouth: 'Not that kind I mean!'

Along with football, Bill loves golf, which he took up when retiring to Cannington, Somerset. 'I wasn't very good at it mind, but I played the lovely grounds.' He also played for a bowls club and enjoyed fishing, mainly catching the odd pike.

### Listening, Tommy Cooper and 'Always ...'

What brings happiness? Bill answers quickly: 'Listening to others' point of view, and give and take. Also' – he adds – 'my wife.' Pleased, Wendy chips in: 'In our family we have a song we sing.' She then starts singing *Always look on the bright side of life*.

I find out Bill is a Tommy Cooper fan. I pick up the brick-sized biography of the fez-wearing comic from the coffee table. I, being a 'Gen Z', have no idea who the man is. Bill expresses genuine shock.

### Leaving the Navy

Like many his generation Bill was profoundly shaped by serving his country. Also, like many, he was less than truthful about his age to enlist. Entering the Navy, Bill became a steward; looking after pilots on aircraft carriers in the Pacific Fleet. He experienced near misses when Japanese missiles landed on deck and were swiftly swept off deck again! Luckily, during these instances he was only ever on British steel-decked vessels, but he was on many wood-decked US vessels at other times (often on lease-lend to the British). That could have ended not so well...

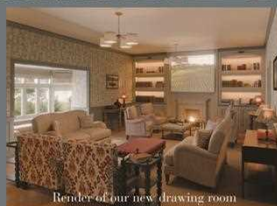
He was on an aircraft carrier when the devastating



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## MEDICAL INFORMATION

- In an emergency dial **999**
- **For medical advice** at all times, including surgery out-of-hours, dial **111** or use <https://111.nhs.uk/> You will be told how to obtain any further help if needed
- **Local pharmacies** can offer advice and treatment for some conditions. Goring Pharmacy: **01491 872124**
- **Nearest First Aid Units:** Townland Hospital, Henley **01865 903755**, or West Berkshire Community Hospital, Thatcham **01635 273508**, or Abingdon Community Hospital **01865 903476**
- **Goring & Woodcote Medical Practice:** Monday-Friday 8am-6.30pm **01491 680686** Requests for appointments are triaged to direct patients to the correct help and should be made using the form available at [www.goringwoodcotemedicalpractice.nhs.uk](http://www.goringwoodcotemedicalpractice.nhs.uk) If you are unable to use the form, the practice can be contacted on the above number to support you.
- **Nearest Casualty Department:** Royal Berkshire Hospital, Reading **0118 322 7020**
- **Emergency Dentist** – call **111** for advice
- **Goring medical equipment** – including, wheelchairs, toilet aids, mobility aids and more: **01491 872736** or **01491 874333**
- **Goring transport office** – 10am-12noon Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, to arrange volunteer transport to local surgeries, dentists and hospitals **01491 873565**.



Bill Dadds in Navy uniform

atomic bombs were dropped on Japan's Hiroshima and Nagasaki and he was present in Tokyo Bay, amidst 300 other ships, when Japan historically surrendered to the US in 1945.

He briefly jokes: 'I won the war!' then admits it was very hard going home, jobless, with no parents. Amazingly his brothers also survived the war, but he says:

'My sister was the only one in our lives. We relied on her for our future – she put us up.' 'Up' was in a house, still there, by Didcot railway bridge. And from there they found jobs: Bill with brothers Reg and Ted at the recently-opened, 'bit disorganised' Harwell Atomic Energy Research Establishment. He says: 'You had to watch where you went.' There were lots of 'Don't touch that!' areas you couldn't access without 'the badge' and plenty of visiting politicians. Bill worked in the supply branch, overseeing three different stores as a supervisor. In this job he met first wife Edna, soon having children Lorna and Chris. When Edna died, he then met Wendy, who worked in the clerical department and lived in Aldworth. They have been married 53 years.

### Social mobility and computers

As well as still being very physically mobile, having only a dodgy knee (I witnessed a good bit of lawn-mowing, see photo evidence!), it was striking to hear how Bill moved socially from little material wealth to 'a better living'. He credits this to family, more than social or technological progress: 'Life improved for us – it was all down to them.'



Bill with Navy Lieutenant Chris Stock

Photo: Emma Froud

He describes how, years ago, his sister lost her husband after a bullet went through his arm into his lungs at Dunkirk. She was left caring for three sons. He and his brothers ('fellow Colchestrians') moved in and stuck by her: 'That's part of the reason we're in this part of the country.'

Speaking of technological progress, Bill is rare nowadays: 'I'm not very computerised.' It was pen and paper at school. In his working life he didn't use computers: 'They just started to come in when I retired.' In his personal life banking and shopping were almost entirely done in-person. What does he think of today? He implies he's not qualified to answer.

### Half a life washing dishes



Over the years Bill played the role of Little Happy Jack in *The Mummings* (think: more pagan Morris Dancers), performing at Christmas in local pubs such as *The Bell* at Aldworth  
Photo: Chris Dadds

Throughout our interview were many interruptions. Welcome ones, I should add. Neighbours popping to the shops or returning home, and even the children of a former occupant in Bill and Wendy's own flat! It was in this conversation I heard Wendy let slip the truth: in all 53 years of marriage, she has never washed a single dish at the kitchen sink. It dawned on me then that Bill's gratitude to his wife and family – the thing he credits for getting him to this age – is also an active commitment. He may get flapjacks but Wendy gets her feet up after baking. In other words: 'give and take'.

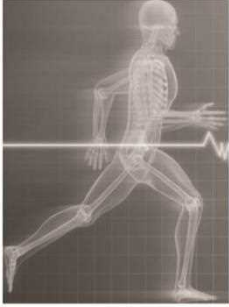
### And then...the celebration

Bill's family, friends and neighbours gathered to celebrate his 100<sup>th</sup> birthday on 26 April at Goring Social Club. Navy Lieutenant Chris Stock presented him with his missing medal for war service, the France and Germany Star, beneath Royal Navy White Ensigns.

Also hand-delivered were two letters from the First Sea Lord, after Bill's daughter Lorna had been in touch about her father's milestone birthday. With a letter from their Majesties King Charles and Queen Camilla, a locally-made birthday cake and plenty of nibbles and drinks, Bill Dadds, one of just over 3,000 men in the UK reaching this impressive age, was delighted. Afterwards he called family and friends 'lovely people', saying: 'I've enjoyed it very much!'

Dan Gordon-Potts

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# LIVES REMEMBERED

## Helen Vincent 28.05.1916 – 09.11.2025

We remember our dear mum, grandmother and great grandmother, Helen Vincent, who passed away peacefully in November at Rush Court, where she lived for the last three years of her life. At 109 she was possibly the oldest resident of Goring.

Helen was born at Streatley Farm in 1916, and lived in one of the farm cottages until her father died. By then she had met and married our father, Bob. Although Helen was her real name she was always known as Rosemary, until the last few years of her life when she decided to revert back to Helen, as she preferred it.

As a couple Mum and Dad lived in Fairfield Road in Goring, where they built their own bungalow, digging the footings by hand and doing as much of the build they could by themselves. They lived there, raising their three children Tim, Ray and Ann, creating a happy family home. In later years, the family grew further as their children married Lynn, Laurie and Henryk, later becoming proud grandparents to six grandchildren Ben, Marcus, Tom, Lucy, Zoe and Katie. Bob died in 1991 and Helen downsized to a more manageable house in Grange Close a couple of years later. She was very happy being so central to the shops, station and river walks which she enjoyed very much. By now she had nine great grandchildren. During her life she worked as a seamstress, firstly in Streatley, then in Reading at Wellsteeds department store, followed by doing alterations at a boutique in Goring. Later she enjoyed lunchtime playground duty at Goring Primary School.

She lived on her own with the help of all her family until, when she was over 100, she had a fall and broke her hip. With the help of a live-in-carer, Dee Dee and relief carer, Mina, she was able to stay on in her home until she was 106, when her home became too difficult to suit her needs.

Rush Court in Wallingford then became her home. She always had visitors of family and friends popping in every day. She would enjoy hearing their news and sharing her stories of the past, of which she had many. She celebrated three birthdays whilst in there and amassed three cards from the late Queen and three from King Charles. Three years ago, an article appeared in *GGN* (September 2023, Pages 22-23) documenting a little of her life, which she was thrilled to see and read.

It was very poignant that she passed away on Remembrance Sunday wearing her poppy, with the service playing on the TV. We will never forget our very own old soldier. She is sorely missed by us all.



## A touch of kindness from the UK warms newborn lives in Kharkiv

A heartfelt gesture from the United Kingdom has once again reached Ukraine, bringing warmth, comfort and hope to the smallest and most vulnerable.

For the third time, beautifully handcrafted baby blankets, made with care by Judy Holden from Goring, have arrived at the perinatal centre in Kharkiv. Today, these delicate creations are gently wrapping newborn babies, offering not only warmth but a sense of love and connection from afar.

This special gift travelled through a touching chain of kindness. Inna, now living in the UK, sent the blankets to her mother, Anna Kardash, who ensured they reached the hospital and the babies who needed them most.

Each stitch carries compassion, support, and quiet strength. These blankets are more than gifts – they are a reminder that kindness transcends borders and that even small acts can make a profound difference.

*Inna Velychenko*



*Newborns with blanket (above and left)*

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# Goring-on-Thames Parish Council

The principal points of the most recent Goring Parish Council meetings are summarised below. The draft minutes will be available at: [www.goringparishcouncil.gov.uk](http://www.goringparishcouncil.gov.uk) in due course.

- Anna Povey was voted to be co-opted onto the Council
- It was approved to amalgamate the Playground and Sheepcot committees into a new Open Spaces committee
- The Terms of Reference for the Goring Neighbourhood Plan Update Steering Group were approved
- An Earmarked Reserve was agreed to ringfence the monies received for the filming at White Hill for Burial Ground improvements
- The village weeding day was confirmed for Saturday 16 May
- It was noted SODC are conducting a deep clean on pavements that week as well
- A request from Goring Cricket Club was approved to position roll-on cricket covers on the wicket at Gardiner Recreation Ground
- It was approved to allow Goring Cricket Club to paint the exterior woodwork of the Gardiner pavilion white
- It was unanimously approved to follow the No Mow May extension; meet with our contractors to discuss the verges
- A budget of £850 was approved for new bins and commencing the third weekly bin collection, as soon as it is available
- The Goring Village Hall Trustees were granted permission to upgrade the three phase supply to the hall enabling conversion from gas to air heat pumps
- A quote for replacing the fence between the playground and croquet lawn on Gardiner was approved – work to be completed in June
- A budget of £540 was approved to purchase hand/power tools for Facilities & Grounds staff
- A quote was approved for equipment storage (to be sited initially in the Community Centre Car Park)
- A new facilities assistant role was approved to replace the current litter picker role
- It was approved to source a contract cleaner for the pavilions at Sheepcot and Gardiner
- It was approved to combine the roles of Deputy Clerk and White Hill Burial Ground clerk in one Deputy Clerk role
- It was approved to appoint Bluestone as the consultant to update the Neighbourhood Plan
- The proposed two-stage procurement process for the refurbishment of the pavilion at Sheepcot was approved
- It was approved to request South Oxfordshire District Council to undertake a Community Governance Review to consider increasing the number of parish councillors for Goring-on-Thames from ten to 13

Next Meetings: Reiss Room, Community Centre, Station Road - 18 May and 8 June 6.30pm

See: [www.goringparishcouncil.gov.uk](http://www.goringparishcouncil.gov.uk) from 14 May/4 June for the agenda

## No Mow May and beyond – helping nature thrive in Goring

Sharp-eyed residents may have noticed that Goring Parish Council is supporting *No Mow May* again in 2026.

### What is *No Mow May*?

*No Mow May* is a national campaign led by Plantlife, encouraging people to pause mowing during the month of May. This allows early wildflowers such as daisies, dandelions and clover to bloom, providing an important food source for bees and other pollinators emerging after winter.

As part of this, we will leave the verges outside the Rectory Garden uncut throughout May.

### Beyond May: creating longer-term wildlife areas

In addition to *No Mow May*, the Council is also managing five areas of our open spaces differently this year. These areas will be left uncut from 1 May until 15 September to create longer grass and wildflower habitats.

While *No Mow May* supports early-season pollinators, these extended areas provide ongoing shelter and breeding habitat for insects, small mammals and birds over the summer months. Managed longer grass and wildflowers can significantly increase local biodiversity when maintained over a longer period.

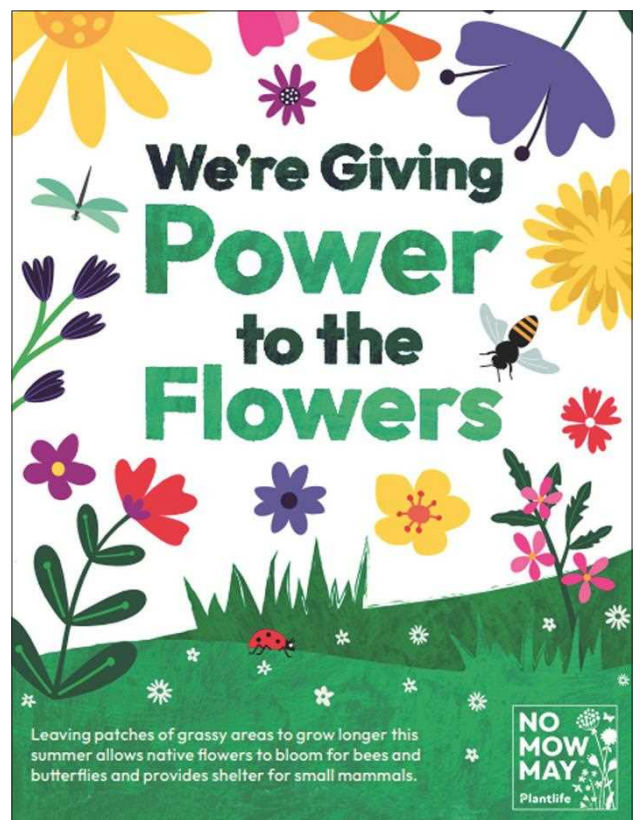
### How you can get involved

Residents can support nature in different ways:

- Take part in *No Mow May* by leaving some or all of your lawn uncut during May.
- Consider leaving a small patch of your garden to grow longer over the summer to create an additional habitat.

Even small changes can make a meaningful difference when combined across the village.

To learn more about *No Mow May*, visit Plantlife: [www.plantlife.org.uk/campaigns/nomowmay](http://www.plantlife.org.uk/campaigns/nomowmay)





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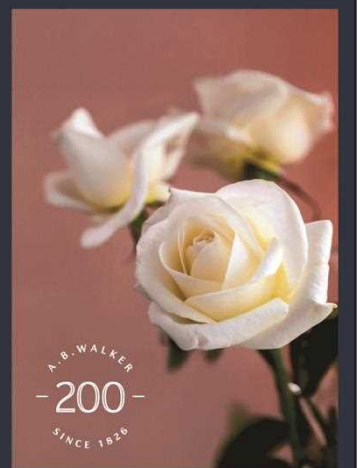
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## Cricket Club launch 150<sup>th</sup> celebration programme

Goring Cricket Club (GCC) has finalised its 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary plans. The celebrations will include a programme of events designed to honour the club's history, showcase cricket at all levels, and bring the community together for a memorable summer. We are holding a ten day celebration of GCC, of our past and future, with daily events taking place from 22 August to 31 August. Full schedule details will follow next month, but an unmissable date for your diaries is Friday 28 August – our fixture against MCC, the world's most famous cricket club.

The culmination of this historic year will be our 150<sup>th</sup> Gala Event on Saturday 21 November. A very special dinner to round off the celebrations – hosted in the most historic room in world cricket – The Long Room at Lord's Cricket Ground.

We are offering a variety of community and corporate sponsorship options for the celebrations.

For full details please contact Jonny Russell (email below)



The team photo above shows how the club looked at the time of the centenary – an impressive squad to say the least! You may recognise some of the players – here is the full list

4<sup>th</sup> Row (l-r): Dave Coley, Dave Lockwood, Andy Taylor, Gerry Jackson, Reg Jeffries, Terry Richards, Pete Smithson, Dave Russell, Ted Haines.

3<sup>rd</sup> Row (l-r): Nigel Diplock, Richard Shepherd, Richard Watson, Frank Crook, John Slade Sr, Ron Meredew, Jim Edwards, Dave Averies, Les Redhead, Brendan Parkinson.

2<sup>nd</sup> Row (l-r): Jack Lockwood, Peter Stroud, Colin Jeffries, Pauline Jeffries, Frank Simmons, Dave Woodage, Les Shepherd.

1<sup>st</sup> Row (l-r): Chris Vickery, David McAra, Martin Floyd, Pete Irving, Tony Spear, Malcolm Diplock.

If you would like to get involved at GCC as a player in this historic year, please visit: [www.goringcricketclub.com](http://www.goringcricketclub.com) or contact: [jonnyrussell100@outlook.com](mailto:jonnyrussell100@outlook.com) for more information.

Jonny Russell

## Croquet and Bowls – welcome to the new season

Sunny weather in April and May has encouraged many to the Green at Goring Gap Croquet and Bowls Club. This summer promises to be our most active yet, with new members arriving and extra playing sessions scheduled. There are plenty of opportunities for you to give both of these enjoyable and friendly sports a try, whether you are a beginner or an experienced player. All are welcome, so do come along for a taster session.

The Lawn is at the top of the Gardiner Recreation Ground, between the cricket pavilion and the new playground and is looking green and welcoming thanks to work by our volunteer grounds people. We now have our own room in the Pavilion for storage and changing, thanks to the support of Goring-on-Thames Parish Council and Goring Cricket Club. We also have access to all Pavilion facilities.

### Croquet expands

Croquet now has six social sessions a week for all to turn up and play, both members and taster sessions:

10am – Tuesday and Thursday, 2pm – Friday and Saturday, 6.30pm – Wednesday and Friday

The club has full sets of equipment. The only thing you need to bring is flat-soled shoes. Members can book outside these times or organise their own sessions. For more information contact Jim Bartlett: [jimbartlett1@aol.com](mailto:jimbartlett1@aol.com)

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## SPORT continued

Community croquet sessions with local establishments, will recommence now warmer weather is here. Friendly matches with other croquet clubs are another new feature for this year and the Club's own tournaments will be held again for those who enjoy competition.

### Bowls is back

Bowls is due to recommence each Tuesday at 2pm. Equipment is provided so come along and have a taster session whether you are new to the sport or an existing bowler. Contact Jackie French – [jackiefrench1950@gmail.com](mailto:jackiefrench1950@gmail.com)

*Tessa Costin*

Chair, Goring Gap Croquet and Bowls Club

## Season of progress and success for Goring United

For the first time ever, due to FA ground requirements, all of Goring United's teams played at Sheepcot. This has been a wrench for many players and supporters who have missed the historic home ground at the Gardiner. The Parish Council have been very proactive in facilitating the plans for an upgraded Sheepcot pavilion, which is a requirement for Step 7 football, and it is hoped that this can be completed in 2027.

### First team scale new heights

The first team, continuing under the management of Mark Sachse and Alex Fletcher, and having been promoted for the first time to the Thames Valley Premier League, entered the season not knowing how they would cope with playing at Step 7 of the Football Pyramid. Any worries were swiftly dispersed and by Christmas the team were sitting comfortably in 5<sup>th</sup> position. Injuries and missing players led to a less consistent second half of the season, however a strong finish meant that they finished 11<sup>th</sup>, a position that would have been welcomed at the start of the season.

Goalkeeper Will May was outstanding in his first season with the club, making 31 appearances. Josh Monk was close behind with 30 starts. Goals were shared throughout the team with the top scorers being Monk and Chris Pocock with seven each, one ahead of Sully Akers.

### Reserves up and down

Ryan Webb's reserves had a mixed season in Division 3. They had some excellent results against some of the stronger teams but dropped points against teams at the bottom. In the end they finished in a mid-table 6<sup>th</sup> position.

Captain Dan Carter made 17 appearances closely followed by Rob Eaglesham and Michael Langridge with 16 each. The evergreen Eaglesham was again top scorer with seven goals.

### Sunday team reinvigorated

Archie Helas and Tommy Edwards formed a new men's Sunday team management partnership. Their enthusiasm ensured that there was plenty of enthusiastic availability every week, the team particularly seemed to enjoy their post-match celebrations on a Sunday afternoon. Results were inconsistent but a comfortable 6<sup>th</sup> position was achieved in a competitive first division.

James Plumridge made the most appearances followed by Tommy Edwards and Will Graham. Sully Akers was the top scorer with 10 goals from six appearances.

### Women's promotion push falls just short

The club had one women's team who competed in Division 3 West of the Thames Valley Counties Women's Football League. New manager Matt White rejuvenated the team who all seemed to really enjoy their football every week. Matt was ably assisted by Mel Winkworth, and the team were pushing for promotion until late in the season before settling for 5<sup>th</sup> place. A dreadful injury to the previous season's top scorer, Rosa Maitland, was the low point of the season and we all hope that she will be ready for the 2026/2027 season.

Eleni Reeves had 17 appearances, followed by Hannah Stewart and Sarah Mattimore with 16. Megan Kinloch, who only started playing women's football late in the season, top-scored with nine goals in nine appearances.

The team is hoping for big things next season. With talent flowing in from our U18 Girls squad, the energy in the team is at an all-time high, they are always looking for new faces (16+) to join the ranks. It doesn't matter if you've played for years or are looking for a new hobby—everyone is welcome.

### Looking forward to 2026/27

Next season the club will be running a Sunday development men's team which we hope will lead to many more local young players joining us.

We are always on the lookout for new players for all of our teams. If you are interested in joining a progressive and friendly football club please email: [tim.monk@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:tim.monk@yahoo.co.uk) for further details.

*Tim Monk*



*Ed Ardil*

*Photo: John Douglass*



*Megan Kinloch Photo: John Douglass*

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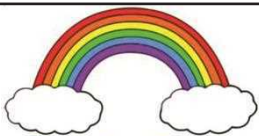
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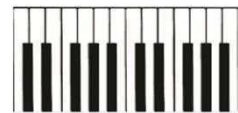
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## WITHYMEAD NATURE RESERVE, ACTIVITY DAY

On Sunday 31 May, 10am-5pm, celebrate the wonder of the Thames and the wildlife that calls Withymead nature reserve home with a fun, hands-on event for families and young nature lovers. We are delighted to welcome children's author and illustrator Emma Shoard for a return visit. Get creative with art activities inspired by her beautiful book *Life on the Thames*, taking young readers on a journey down the river from its source to the sea, and featuring a stop at Goring. Discover the hidden world of chalk hill butterflies, dragonflies and the busy aquatic insects living along this magical stretch. Try drawing and collage techniques alongside Emma to make your own butterfly or dragonfly, make a cosy home for a caddisfly or enjoy some relaxing colouring. All materials and guidance will be provided. Suitable for ages 5+ (Children must be accompanied by an adult.) It's a Cream Tea Sunday too! More info [www.withymead.org](http://www.withymead.org).

## LIVE MUSIC AT THE SOCIAL CLUB: BONE IDLE

Join us on Saturday 6 June at 8pm for a night of live music with Bone Idle. It's set to be a fantastic evening with a great atmosphere and plenty of tunes to get you in the weekend spirit. Whether you're catching up with friends or hitting the dance floor, come and enjoy some top-tier entertainment right here at the Social Club. Entry is free for members and their guests. See you at the bar!

## AFTERNOON CHURCH ON SUNDAY 28 JUNE?

(From Rev. Ben Phillips) For Christians the time for worship has traditionally been on Sundays, in the morning. Current lifestyles can mean that sport, family responsibilities, lie-in or work all happen on a Sunday morning; it can be a busy time. As a church in a local village community, we want to continue to adapt and respond to change. We want to offer appropriate engaging worship, encouragement and prayer for all who want to look at Jesus and be open to his leading.

As a starter, on 28 June at 4pm there will be a family service at St Thomas', Goring, followed by scones and tea. We hope

## 20 years of community, friendship and activity – discover Goring Gap u3a

This year marks the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Goring Gap u3a – two decades of bringing people together locally to enjoy shared interests, make new friends and get more out of their free time.

To celebrate, we're holding an Open Day on Saturday 11 July 2026, 10am-2pm at Goring Village Hall and everyone is warmly invited to come along.

### What is u3a?

Despite the name, u3a isn't a university in the traditional sense. There are no exams, no qualifications and no pressure. Instead, it's a community of people – mainly retired or semi-retired – who come together to enjoy activities, share interests and take part.

It's about participation rather than formal learning. Members run a wide range of groups for each other, based on what they enjoy. We also have regular talks and social events.

Although we're called 'Goring Gap', you don't need to live in Goring or Streatley to join us. Our members come from across South Oxfordshire and West Berkshire, reflecting the wide local community we serve.

### Why join?

For many people, retirement brings welcome freedom

to include active participation, varieties of ways to pray and learn and grow closer to God and each other. Please feel free to share your hopes in advance as plans are made. All are welcome. [vicarofgsandss@yahoo.com](mailto:vicarofgsandss@yahoo.com)

### Further afield

## LANGTREE SINFONIA CONCERT

Celebrate the arrival of summer with an evening of orchestral music as the Langtree Sinfonia performs at Dorchester Abbey. On Sunday 7 June at 7pm, the orchestra will present a programme of well-known British works in this historic setting. The repertoire includes Arthur Sullivan's lively *Pirates of Penzance Overture*, Edward Elgar's *Cello Concerto* featuring soloist Ellen Baumring-Gledhill, finalist in the Young Musicians Competition 2020, and Hubert Parry's *Symphony No.3, The English*. Tickets £15 for adults and £7.50 for students, while children under 16 attend for free. You can book your tickets at [www.langtreesinfonia.co.uk](http://www.langtreesinfonia.co.uk), by calling 07951 712611, by emailing [langtreesinfonia@gmail.com](mailto:langtreesinfonia@gmail.com) or on the door.

## TOURS OF THE FLOOD RESILIENT GARDEN FROM CHELSEA

Howbery Business Park at Wallingford is inviting the general public to join free guided tours on 4 June to find out more about the Flood Resilient Garden. Two years after its debut at the RHS Chelsea Flower Show, three fabulous design and horticultural experts will talk about the garden's journey from Chelsea to Oxfordshire, and how it helps protect against flooding. Booking onto one of the one-hour slots is essential to join the tours on 4 June, which will run from 10am-3.30pm. To round off the tours, visitors will have the option to enjoy a pre-paid afternoon tea in the Manor Café, which needs to be ordered in advance. The garden is also open for the public to look around themselves on working weekdays, free of charge, and is situated next to the Manor Café. There is plenty of parking nearby in the park's grounds, which can also be reached via bus, or by foot from Wallingford, via the Crowmarsh Pavillion. Book at: [www.howberypark.com/events](http://www.howberypark.com/events)

– but it can also leave a gap where work once provided structure, social contact and a sense of purpose. u3a offers a gentle and flexible way to fill that gap: enjoying meeting new people, keeping active in the community and structuring your time.

You can join in as much or as little as you like—there's no obligation, just opportunity.

### Get involved – not just attend

One of the things that makes u3a special is that it is run by its members. Many people find that getting a little more involved adds an extra layer of enjoyment and they may choose to assist committees or perhaps lead – or jointly lead – a group. This doesn't mean doing everything yourself; roles can be shared and support is always available.

### Join us at the Open Day

Our Open Day is the perfect opportunity to see what we're about.

Come along, enjoy coffee and cake, meet our members and group leaders and explore the many activities available. Whether you're curious, newly retired, or simply looking to widen your social circle, you'll receive a warm welcome.

Find out more: [www.goringgapu3a.org.uk/openday](http://www.goringgapu3a.org.uk/openday)

Celia Barnshaw

Chair Goring Gap u3a

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## Tuesday 26 May

• **Genie News Copy Deadline.** Genie is published twice a month. Email us: [news@genienews.org](mailto:news@genienews.org)

• **Chess Club.** Children, 4.45-5.45pm. Adults/full games, 6-7pm. GL.

## Wednesday 27 May

• **The Arts Society, Goring.** 11am and 2pm. GVH. *The Architecture of Mughal India*. Speaker: John Stevens. Refreshments at 10.30am and 1.30pm. Guests £5 through prior booking. [info@theartsocietygoring.org.uk](http://info@theartsocietygoring.org.uk)

• **Morrell Room Annual General Meeting.** 8pm. MR. You are cordially invited to the AGM, followed by a complimentary glass of wine and the opportunity to meet informally with the committee. [www.morrellroom.org.uk](http://www.morrellroom.org.uk)

## Thursday 28 May

• **Goring Gap U3a.** 10.30-12noon. GVH. Speaker: David Jones: *From Primordial soups to Primates in suits*.

• **Elmer Story Time.** 10.30-11am. GL. Drop-in.

## Saturday 30 May

**Live Sport on the Big Screen** -

Champions League Final. 5pm. GSC.

## Sunday 31 May

• **Withymead Nature Reserve.** Cream Tea Sunday, and Activity Day. See P:39 Reserve open 10am-5pm. Cream teas served 2-5pm. No need to pre-book, just turn up and enjoy. [www.withymead.org](http://www.withymead.org)

• **Quiz Night.** 7pm. GSC.

## Monday 1 June

**Goring and Streatley Bridge Club.**

6.45pm. GVH. Held every Monday.

## Tuesday 2 June

• **Goring Mobile Post Office.** 1.30-4pm. Westholme stores. Every Tuesday.

• **Goring Caregivers Group.** 10.30-12noon. GSC. Drop-in or call Hilary Dobson [01491 872063](tel:01491872063).

## Wednesday 3 June

• **Goring Village Green Fingers.** 7.30-9.30pm. SL. *Planting a Small Garden* by Timothy Walker. Visitors are welcome at £5. [www.villagegreengreenfingers.uk](http://www.villagegreengreenfingers.uk)

• **Knit and Natter.** 3-5pm Drop-in. Weekly every Wednesday. GSC

• **Cribbage.** 7.30pm. GSC.

## Thursday 4 June

**Goring Mobile Post Office.** 8-11.30am, Westholme stores. Every Thursday.

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

• **Streatley Parish Assembly.** See P:3

## Friday 5 June

• **Withymead Nature Reserve.** Open on Fridays up to and including Aug 28<sup>th</sup>. 10am-5pm. No need to pre-book, just turn up and enjoy. [www.withymead.org](http://www.withymead.org)

• **Goring & Streatley Wine Society.** 8pm. GVH. *Wines of Bohemia, Czech Republic, Hungary, Romania*. Presenter: Betty Sutera. [gswinesoc@gmail.com](mailto:gswinesoc@gmail.com)

• **Bingo, Meat draw.** GSC. Weekly every Friday.

## Saturday 6 June

• **Goring Repair Café and Exchange event.** 10am-12.30pm. GVH. Bike repair/exchange event on the Rectory Garden. See P11. [www.goringrepaircafe.info](http://www.goringrepaircafe.info)

• **Live Music from Bone Idle.** 8pm. GSC.

## Sunday 7 June

**Withymead Nature Reserve,** Citizen Science Sunday. Reserve open 10am-5pm. Citizen Science sessions 10am-12noon. Reserve also open all other Sundays until 30 August.

## Tuesday 9 June

• **Parkinsons Group.** 10.30am-12noon. GSC. Drop-in or call Hilary Dobson [01491 872063](tel:01491872063).

• **Lego Club.** 4.45-5.45pm. GL. Please book.

## Wednesday 10 June

• **Cleeve by Goring WI.** 7.30pm. SL. *Indian Dance*. Talk and demonstration by Kiran Selvaratnam. Contact Katrina Cooper: [01491 875334](tel:01491875334), [kcooper@r.co.uk](mailto:kcooper@r.co.uk).

• **The Soundbar Open Mic,** The Miller of Mansfield. Sign up to play from 7.30pm. Music 8-10pm. Fancy playing? Come along or get in touch, [HelloSoundbar@gmail.com](mailto:HelloSoundbar@gmail.com)

• **Goring Gap News.** Noon. Deadline for July edition. News and articles of local interest to [goringgapnews@gmail.com](mailto:goringgapnews@gmail.com)

• **Stay and Play.** 10-11.15am. GL.

Toddler Group and Rhyme-Time for pre-school children. Drop-in.

• **Talk: Downland.** Paintings by Anna Dillon, Poetry by Jonathan Davidson. GL. Tickets £10, in library or Eventbrite. Please book.

## Thursday 11 June

**Live Sport on big screen.** 8pm. GSC. World Cup opening match.

## Friday 12 June

• **Genie News Copy Deadline.** Genie is published twice a month. Email us: [news@genienews.org](mailto:news@genienews.org)

• **Greadies Book Club. 10am. GL. Full.**

• **The Gap Festival** starts from today until Sunday 21 June.

## Monday 15 June

**Rhyme time.** 9.15-9.45am. GL. Also on 16<sup>th</sup> and 19 June.

## Tuesday 16 June

**Social Scrabble Club.** 4.45-7pm. GL. All welcome. Refreshments.

## Wednesday 17 June

• **Live Sport on big screen.** 9pm. GSC. World Cup (England v Croatia).

• **Coffee Morning.** 10.30am-12noon. St Andrew's Church South Stoke. The 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of every month.

• **The Thames Valley.** Talk by Jim Donahue 1-2pm. GL.

## Thursday 18 June

**Pick a Flick.** 10.30am-2pm. CR. *The Choral*. As WWI rages on, Dr Henry Guthrie (Ralph Fiennes) takes over a British choral society that's lost most of its men to the army. Please contact Sarah Fraser [01491 871838](tel:01491871838) or Jenny Boyd [01491 872109](tel:01491872109) to book and to ask for transport if required. The cost is £5 per event, including a light lunch.

## Friday 19 June

**Festival Wellbeing,** chair-based movement. 1-1.30pm. GL.

## Saturday 20 June

**Open Gardens,** including Goring Library Garden. 1-5pm.

## Tuesday 23 June

• **Live Sport on big screen.** 9pm. GSC. World Cup (England v Ghana).

• **Chess Club.** Children 4.45- 5.45pm. Adults/full Games 6-7pm, Library. Drop-in.

## Wednesday 24 June

• **Cleeve by Goring WI.** 6.30pm. Nun's Acre A midsummer evening with strawberries and fizz at Nun's Acre

• **The Arts Society, Goring.** 11am and 2pm. GVH. *All the Lonely People – The Work of American Realist Edward Hopper*. Speaker Stella Lyons. Refreshments available at 10.30am and 1.30pm. Guests are welcome to attend for £5 through prior booking.

• **Friends of Goring Library** Coffee Morning. Come and see the garden. 10.30am GL. Drop-in.

## Thursday 25 June

• **Goring Gap U3a.** 10.30-12noon. GVH. Speaker: Jenny Mallin: *Behind the Scenes at the BBC Television Centre in the 1970s*.

## Friday 26 June

**Genie News Copy Deadline.** Genie is published twice a month. Email us: [news@genienews.org](mailto:news@genienews.org)

## Saturday 27 June

**Live Sport on big screen.** 10pm. GSC. World Cup (England v Panama).

## Sunday 28 June

• **Withymead, Cream Tea Sunday.** Reserve open 10am-5pm. Cream teas served 2-5pm.

• **Quiz Night.** 7.30pm. GSC

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 Volunteer Fire Brigade Trust wound up



*Goring fire station early 1940s*

*Photo: courtesy of Goring Gap Local History Society*

Its name, the Goring Volunteer Fire Brigade Trust, does not do justice to the wide range of local good causes that have benefitted from its grants over the past 69 years. These include the Scouts, Goring library, churches in Goring, Sreatley and surrounding villages, various local sports clubs, the Whitchurch Hill recreation ground, local carers' organisations and, of course, the Goring fire service social club.

The trust has now been wound up and its remaining assets distributed in accordance with its founding principles. The final beneficiaries were: Goring on Thames in Bloom, towards its entry in the RHS national competition; the Anne Carpmael Trust, towards completion of the new boardwalk at Withymead; the Goring Free Church, towards its social activities, including the weekly drop-ins on Thursday mornings, and to the Goring Community Centre, towards its refurbishment fund.

At their final meeting, on 12 February, the trustees of the Goring Volunteer Fire Brigade Trust resolved to merge with the Goring and District Community Centre Trust and distribute remaining funds as listed above. The reasons were 'the ongoing difficulty in obtaining volunteers to act as trustees and the low amount of investment income received for distribution each year'. The Charity Commission approved the merger after the trustees of both trusts satisfied themselves that their aims and purposes were similar to and compatible with each other.

The Goring Volunteer Fire Brigade Trust was formalised as a charity by Articles approved by the Charity Commission in 1957. Expressed in the archaic language of the time, these gave sweeping powers to its initial convener, William Wilson, then the main solicitor in Goring, and one of three founding trustees 'entitled to hold office for life'. The Trust was administered till last year by the late Frank Tomlinson (obituary: *GGN* January 2026, page 31). The retiring trustees recorded their heartfelt thanks to Frank for his work as Honorary Secretary for 25 years.

The trust started with an endowment of about £1,170 (equivalent to £25,000 in today's money), held initially in '3 per cent Savings Bonds 1960-70' and as £69 9s 10d in cash at the Pangbourne branch of Lloyds Bank.

The Trust had its origins in the most important event of 1935, however. The old fire station in Red Cross Road was built with money from a fund raised by public subscription, to commemorate the Silver Jubilee of King George V. Subscriptions were received from some neighbouring parishes served by the voluntary fire brigade, but predominantly from Goring itself.

Once built, the fire station was let to the Goring Voluntary Fire Brigade but after local authorities took over responsibility for fire services in the late 1940s, the building and its surrounding land were purchased by Oxfordshire County Council.

When a portion of the fire station site was sold on to the nascent NHS in the early 1950s, a share of the proceeds was invested through the Trust 'for the benefit of the inhabitants of the area...for which provision cannot be made out of rates or other public funds'. For nearly seven decades, the Trust discharged this responsibility to the letter.

The Goring Volunteer Fire Brigade Trust is not to be confused with the King George V Jubilee Fund charity. This was administered by Goring Parish Council, as corporate trustee, and wound up in 2010. It had been set up to invest the money left over from the original public subscription after the fire station was completed in 1937, at miraculous speed and a cost of £600, equivalent to £36,000 today. Both trusts had used the interest and dividends accrued cautiously, on government securities and charity investment funds, for grants to the same range of local good causes.

A more detailed history of the Old Jubilee Fire Station can be seen in the August 2023 edition of *GGN*.

*John Boler*

## Puppy in the Holies



*Photo: Amanda Joslyn*

## Pheasants behind Coombe House



*Photo: Anna Rose James*

## Move it or lose it



*Move it or lost it class in action. See Page 17*

*Photo: Victoria Mills*

## The queue to get in



*Albert Fields preloved clothes fundraiser. See Page 15*

*Photo: Neil Horne*