

Goring Gap News

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

Quiz winners' celebration



The winning team at the quiz night fundraiser for Streatley's school and pre-school. L to R: Steve Orford, Laura Herrod, Dave Kerr, Catherine Dunleavy, Susi Bojdy and Andrew Goodwin. They all received a voucher for a meal at The Catherine Wheel.

A scattering of snow over Goring and Streatley Golf Course



Photo: Charles Monsell

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Goring Gap News

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for Voluntary Service 2004

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

Deadline for next issue: 2 April

Distribution

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

April 2025 weekend of 19/20

May 2025 weekend of 24/25

June 2025 weekend of 28/29

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

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GRAPEVINE

Streatley Parish Assembly

A date for your diary – the Parish Assembly will take place in the Morrell Room 6.30-8pm on Thursday 22 May 2025.

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. Tentatively we have the event in the diary of our new MP, Olivia Bailey and this may be an opportunity to share our views on matters of interest.

Last year the event was well attended with 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

Streatley Parish Litterpick

This is just a gentle reminder that Streatley Parish Council is looking for volunteers to help with the village litter pick on Saturday 29 March. Volunteers can collect their equipment from The Morrell Room from 9.30am-12.30pm. Refreshments for all volunteers have been arranged with The Swan afterwards, along with small tokens of appreciation for the children.

Committee member wanted and needed: could it be you?

The Friends of Goring Library are on the hunt for a new committee member, specifically, somebody who would be able to take minutes at meetings, as well as helping out at events from time to time. We meet approximately six times a year in addition to our Annual General Meeting and the minuting duties would be shared, so you wouldn't be expected to do it every time. Unless you wanted to, perhaps. It's a low stakes way of getting involved in the work of the library, finding out what goes on behind the scenes and helping us to keep things ticking over smoothly. If you are interested in finding out more about the role, then please do drop me an email at grayspring4@btinternet.com

Jacqui Gray

Chair, Friends of Goring Library

Brown bins for garden waste

SODC have changed the way in which brown bin collection is paid for. From 1 April all brown bins should have a sticker (costing  75) as proof of payment.

To pay online go to www.southoxon.gov.uk See article on Page 23.

Bloom - Bring and Buy Plant Sale

Hold the date! Saturday 3 May 10-1pm

Goring on Thames in Bloom will be holding its major fundraising event of the year when the very popular Bring and Buy Plant Sale will take place in the Rectory Garden.

There will be a wide variety of plants available including tomatoes and summer salads, fruit and vegetables, annual and perennial flowers and even shrubs and trees. We also hope to have a selection of second-hand garden tools available to buy and we will be taking orders for Bloom's award-winning hanging baskets, which will be delivered to your home.

If you would like to contribute any plants on the day, please bring them along, potted and labelled. We look forward to seeing you there and please don't forget, the early bird catches the worm, as we sell out fast. *Goring on Thames in Bloom*

Oxfordshire County Council election Thursday 1 May 2025

Gap residents in Oxfordshire will vote to elect a County Councillor to represent Goring division on Oxfordshire County Council to help make decisions locally on important issues such as adult and children's social care, education and learning, fire and rescue and public health and prevention.

Deadlines: Midnight Friday 11 April for registering to vote, 5pm 14 April for changes to postal and proxy applications (and new postal), 5pm 23 April for new Voter Authority (voter ID) certificates and new proxy vote applications.



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The Hub closes

It's with great sadness that the trustees of Q1Foundation have temporarily had to close the doors of the Hub. This is due to a, hopefully, short-term cash flow issue. The charity is still active but on a skeleton staff currently. The Hub is a community charity that supports residents of the Goring Gap by 'providing friendship, guidance and information'. It runs a number of regular activities throughout the week, including Parkinsons and dementia support groups, and it provides assistance for people to discuss aspects of benefits and care for older people. The trustees are Melanie Meads and Claire Harden-Sweetnam, who are tirelessly working to keep the Charity running.

If readers have any questions please contact the trustees: melanie.meads@q1foundation.org.uk Despite the closure of The Hub, there are other regular events and clubs in the villages that are enjoyed by older residents in our community. In particular:

The Lunch Club

Goring and District Lunch Club takes place every Tuesday and Wednesday from 10am-1pm at Goring and District Community Centre. For a reasonable £10 per person, tea, coffee and a two-course lunch is provided, along with various activities run by volunteers in a relaxed atmosphere. Transport to and from the facility can be arranged if you are local, but please do call in advance so arrangements can be made. To attend, contact Denise Sayers [01491 683768](tel:01491683768) or email sayers.denise1@gmail.com

The Drop-In

The Drop-In takes place every Thursday morning between 10.30am-12.30pm at Goring Free Church. Everyone is welcome to 'drop in' for a cup of tea or coffee, a slice of homemade cake, conversation and friendship.

Pick-a-Flick

Pick-a-Flick takes place on the third Thursday of every month from 10.30am-2pm in the Canterbury room at St Thomas' Church. For £5 per person, have a coffee and watch a film together, followed by a light lunch of soup and cheese, and a pudding! Transport can be provided if required. To book (and arrange transport) contact Jenny Boyd or Sarah Fraser on officeofgsandss@yahoo.com

Home Library Service

Goring Library offers a home delivery service for those in the community who are unable to get out. To find out more and register for the service, call [01865 810259](tel:01865810259) or email homelibraryservice@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Oppo's lambing visits

Last month *GGN* had an article about the support Oppo's farm provides to HM Forces Veterans and others. Staffed by volunteers, Oppo's needs to raise money to feed and care for the animals. Lambing visits by the public are an important fundraiser for Oppo's and an opportunity for everyone to experience getting close to the sheep and lambs.

Lambing weekends start on 5 April through to the 31 May and Oppo's are open every Saturday and Sunday 11am-4pm.

Over the Easter holidays Oppo's is also open Monday Wednesday and Friday. They will be open on both Bank Holiday Mondays in May.

There is free parking. The address is Gatehampton Rd, Goring, RG8 9LU.

The cost is £9 adult, £6 child, £25 family of four, £30 family of six. Please get in touch via FB for group prices. You can book and pay via Eventbrite:

www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/oppos-lambing-tickets-1248588314259 For queries call [07851 939681](tel:07851939681)

Jon Seward runs Oppo's and said, 'By coming to Oppo's farm you will be doing something special and we will in turn make your time here special'.



Liz Nicoll holds a newborn lamb

New physio in Goring surgery

I'm Hannah and I'm excited to be starting at Goring GP practice as a private 'Musculoskeletal and Pelvic Health Physiotherapist'.

I've got almost 20 years' experience as a physiotherapist in different specialities, locations and countries, including working to rehabilitate police officers, as well as having many years of experience in treating a wide range of conditions including sports injuries, joint pain and post-operative rehabilitation. I also work with patients through pregnancy and post-natally, and offer 'Pregnancy MOT' and 'Mummy MOT' services. I also treat many different pelvic health issues including incontinence, pelvic pain and prolapse symptoms.

I love working with people to regain strength and function and am really looking forward to getting started. In my spare time, I love being outdoors, endurance running, cold water swimming and being active with my two young boys!

Contact Hannah on [07731 519772](tel:07731519772) or book through physioinfofocus.co.uk

Hannah Wilkins





10

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Mark Thomas – Gap Comedy

Cup of coffee in hand, Mark Thomas welcomed another sold-out Goring Hall with a cheerful ‘Hello Darlings,’ on 21 February, as the first act of 2025 for the ever-popular Gap Comedy. Any initial assumptions that the evening would be one of light-hearted observations and softball audience interaction were dispelled as Thomas near instantly shifted gear and left no room for doubt on his views around golfers ‘institutionalised misogyny’, St Andrews ‘a dreadful place’ and Lord Rothermere.

As someone who’s spent a life campaigning, from chalk street protests in Oxford to ‘swearer Jacques’ from the Commoners Choir via tea with David Ervine, it was natural for the set to be part lobbying as much as observation. Thomas talked us through the theme of his previous tour, ‘The Manifesto’, where he’d invited the audience to propose policy ideas on which he’d then campaign. The ideas were predictably scattered, but we enjoyed hearing about alphabetised supermarkets (produce arranged in alphabetical order) and fashion models selected randomly from the electoral register as much as more on-brand ‘refundable strike action’ or disguising leopards as foxes in a bid to ‘thin out the gentry’.

Much has been written on the difficulty of writing comedy in a time of such an absurd and turbulent geopolitical environment – but this appears only to have fuelled Thomas’ fire. While the first half was boisterous to the extent we wondered if half the potentially targeted audience would return post the interval, the second was more measured and impassioned. ‘Every one of us’, he implored, ‘is a unit of democratic energy.’ Our attention was drawn to the last time we voted out a democratically elected leader (1997!), the proposal for a definition of Farage (Farr-idge) as the liquid at the bottom of bins (he had bin stickers made) and ‘Stop the Jets’ as a far more rational three-word slogan to get behind than ‘Stop the Boats’. Thomas finished with an extraordinarily poetic, sprawling 5-minute Blakean joke where St Peter has to relay the news to Boris Johnson that the rules have been changed to deny him entry to Heaven.

Of all the talent Gap Comedy has compiled over the past eight years, no one has covered as broad a spectrum of moral principles – or in such impressive style. Thomas displayed an extraordinary range of talent and emotion– coarse, absolutely, but also riotous, visceral, passionate and lyrical. The language and subject matter will have left some punters grumbling, but the world of the ‘Mango Mussolini’ and ‘fly tipping filth’, it’s never been more urgent to make space for comics with the integrity and drive to speak truth to power. Those used to a more genteel evening of Gap Comedy may have had their feathers ruffled, but this was a performance nobody will forget in a hurry.

Max Kibble
Gapcomedy.co.uk

Goring Community Jazz – Jan Steele

A good crowd filled the Village Hall on St Valentine’s Day to hear the affable and bearded sage of the saxophone, Jan Steele – a newcomer to GCJ.

Jan played alto sax on the first two numbers and one later on, but seemed at his best on tenor. *Poor Butterfly*, a tune from the 1920s, was famously revived by altoist ‘Cannonball’ Adderley. Jan brought a gentle swing to the legato melody and discovered complexities in what seemed like a straightforward tune. He then switched to tenor sax for Kurt Weil’s haunting *Speak Low*, played over Mike Goff’s Latin beat; with Nick Hill’s piano solo featuring fruity block chords. *I Remember You* was played at a fairly frantic tempo, after Jan had – in honour of St Valentine – read the lyrics aloud in a studiously deadpan style that Ronnie Scott would have appreciated. In Tadd Dameron’s *Hothouse*, Jan played the first chorus completely unaccompanied, effectively displaying his artistry; and in the bossa nova, *Desafinado*, he conjured up Stan Getz’s light, airy tone on the original recording with guitarist João Gilberto.

In the second set, the romantic theme was maintained with – what else – *My Funny Valentine*, an elegant version with imaginative counterpoint from Howard King’s bass, and ending with the tenor sax’s touching cadenza. More romance followed with *The Man I love*, *My Ideal*, and *All the Things You Are*, and a memorable evening was rounded off with two up-tempo ‘farewells’ – *After You’ve Gone* and *Bye-Bye, Blackbird*.

Gus McGill

Young performers wanted

Goring Unplugged needs talented young musicians!

Goring Unplugged is the village’s much-loved acoustic music night. Shows are every couple of months in the village hall, and there’s always a friendly atmosphere and an eclectic mix of music – folk, jazz, pop, rock and sometimes more experimental acts too. And we need your help. We want more young musicians to perform!

Over the years, many young musicians and bands have done their first performances on our stage – including the now internationally successful Lightyears. Some have gone on to be picked up by BBC Introducing. Most recently, local star George Parker has performed for us several times – his band Cheap Suits can be regularly heard on BBC radio. Lots of young performers also just play for the experience of being on a stage in front of their friends and family. There’s always a friendly audience! We love supporting young performers and new music. But young people have a habit of growing up, going to college or moving away (or going on international tours!) So, if you’re a young musician aged 14 or above, get in touch! We’d love you to come and perform with us.



George Parker



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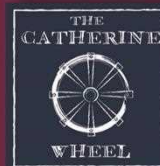
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MUSIC and ARTS continued

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Acts usually perform three songs – though you can do just one or two. You can play anything you like, as long as it's acoustic (not plugged in). Most acts play and sing, but we've had plenty of classical performers over the years, too. There's a piano you can use. (We're always on the lookout for people to play the piano before the show and during the interval, too.) If you're interested, or have any questions at all, just drop us an email at goringunplugged@gmail.com

The next Goring Unplugged is on Saturday 26 April. Doors at 7.30pm, music from 8pm. It's £5 on the door. Come on down and see what it's all about! Go to www.goringunplugged.co.uk to sign up to our newsletter.

Nick Parker

February Unplugged

It's 5.30pm on a Friday evening and a group of enthusiastic volunteers is building a portable stage, arranging tables and turning the Victorian Goring Village Hall into an intimate night club for another evening of music and fun at Goring Unplugged. This unique concert series has been running for 23 years. Admission price is still only £5, the audience members bring their own food and drinks, grab a table, and sit back and enjoy music of all kinds, from traditional folk music to classical and modern, and the performance on the last day of last month was no exception.

The show opened with popular trio, Harlequin, noted for their humour as well as their music, and their love of playing home-made instruments. Tonight, we witnessed kazoos, an Elizabethan nose flute and a Marmite jar for percussion, plus a moving version of Carol King's song *Going Back*.

Bert Raven sang three unaccompanied traditional folk songs, Nick and Simon, known as Clatter, gave us some excellent accompaniment to their songs on guitar and acoustic bass and two other bands, Tumbleweed and Dreamseller, both combined a variety of acoustic instruments with excellent vocal harmonies.

The band called 'One Lump or Two' was particularly impressive. Despite two of their members having serious disabilities, they still managed to sing and play their instruments in perfect unison and had the audience enthusiastically joining in with some well-known songs. They received a tremendous round of applause at the end of their act.

The popular duo Scampy completed the evening's entertainment. What a talented and highly entertaining act! No wonder they are booked up at major venues over the next few months. Incidentally, their name Scampy is derived from combining their surnames, Jenny Scully and David Stamp, and as they say, is not to be confused with the shellfish offering! Scampy gave us a delightful collection of popular songs, in perfect harmony with subtle and clever guitar and ukelele backing, which ended with the entire audience joining in *Those were the Days*.

Afterwards, audience members helped stack the chairs and clean up, showing this to be a true community effort.

The next Goring Unplugged will be on Saturday 26 April. Come and join in this jolly evening!

Richard Courte



Ukulele player - Goring Unplugged

Oxfordshire Artweeks 2025 - Artists of Aldworth

Venue - Field View

Field View, Bell Lane RG8 9SB. Open 10, 11, 15, 16, 17, 18 May, 11am-5pm.

As part of the 'Artists of Aldworth' Oxfordshire Artweeks exhibitions, Isobel Piggott, Anthony Lloyd and Mandy Monkcom welcome you along to their exhibition at Isobel's home in Aldworth.

Isobel's paintings are colourful and aim to lift the spirits. She uses different media to express colour, pattern and the rhythm of line and responds instinctively to her subject whatever it is.

Mandy will be offering figurative, and portrait works with an abstract flavour, using colour and texture to convey lively likenesses and smaller abstract works.

Anthony is a sculptor and printmaker. He is currently exploring memory and memories, creating memorials to portray, remember and celebrate the forgotten lives of craftsmen. You'll find his work in Isobel's beautiful gardens and her studio.

Your sat nav will take you to St Mary's church, but you'll find Field View opposite the village hall in Bell Lane.

Venue - St Mary's Church

St Mary's Church, Aldworth RG8 9SB Open 10-17 May 10am-5pm

St Mary's Church Art Group is made up of amateur artists who live in Aldworth or the surrounding area and attend art classes or the art and craft group in the village. As part of the 'Artists of Aldworth' Oxfordshire Artweeks, they invite you to see their work which has been created in variety of mediums, on various of themes.

Aldworth is a picturesque village with the award-winning Bell pub which would make an excellent stop for refreshments.



Rovinj Street by Isobel Piggott



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Learning about Tropical Rainforests



Toucan picture by Niduki Y4



Printed Rainforest leaf by Imogen Y4

Before half term we enjoyed learning all about tropical rainforests. In geography lessons, we discovered that tropical rainforests are found near the equator and have a warm and wet climate. We learnt about the four main layers of the rainforest and about which animals and plants can be found in each layer. We also learnt lots about the Amazon Rainforest, which is the largest rainforest in the world, including why deforestation is occurring and what we can do to stop the rainforest from shrinking further than it has already. For example, we can try to buy more of our food from local sources or even grow our own. In art, we drew colourful toucans using our sketching skills and then added colour with oil pastels and watercolour. We also printed some rainforest leaves using stencils we cut out carefully.

In English, we wrote poems inspired by what we learnt about rainforests and have chosen one to share with you. It was written by Euan:

Rain falls like bullets in the air,
Animals squawk and call like a massive funfair,
In the distance I hear a call,
Now fish are swimming in the river, like children rushing out of school,
Far off towards the horizon, the sun begins to rise,
Over the trees there is a dawn of warning cries,
Ready to pounce, the jaguar begins to stalk,
Emerging from some trees, the birds begin to talk,
Snakes are slithering along the ground,
The rainforest is truly magnificent to look around.

Ibis Class



Quiz Night raises funds for Streatley schools

On Friday, 28 February, the Morrell Room in Streatley was buzzing with energy as the Friends of Streatley School (FOSS) and Streatley Hill Preschool (SHPS) teamed up to host a lively quiz night in support of both local schools. The event was a true community effort, with quizmaster Kris keeping the competition fun and fast-paced, while organisers Hannah (FOSS) and Katie (SHPS) ensured everything ran seamlessly.

With nine teams of six battling it out over three hours, the evening was filled with laughter, friendly rivalry and plenty of head-scratching moments – all for a great cause. Thanks to the generosity of attendees and the hard work of a dedicated volunteer crew running the bar and refreshments, an incredible £1,100 was raised on the night, with even more funds expected through matched funding schemes.

A special thank you goes to our wonderful local business sponsors, whose generosity helped make the event such a success. The Catherine Wheel provided fantastic prizes for the winning team, The Miller of Mansfield contributed a brilliant silent auction prize and Warmingham added a special bonus prize - making the competition even more exciting.

Both FOSS and SHPS play a crucial role in supporting early years and primary education in our community. FOSS, established as a charity in 2003, raises funds to provide essential resources and strengthen the school community. Meanwhile, SHPS, a parent-led, OFSTED-regulated preschool, offers early years education for children aged 2–4 and relies on grants, fees and fundraising to continue its invaluable work.

A huge thank you to everyone who took part—whether by joining a team, volunteering, donating or even babysitting for the parent quizzers. Your support makes a real difference to our local schools.

The photos include a view of the packed room in midst of quiz, and the winning team (See Page 1) – who walked away with a voucher for a meal each at the Catherine Wheel.



Streatley schools' quiz participants

Katherine Barrett

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Albert Fields fashion fundraiser

Are you looking to refresh your wardrobe while supporting a great cause? Join us at Albert Fields on Sunday, 6 April, 11am-2pm, for a special Charity Women's Clothes Sale, where fashion meets generosity in support of Berkshire Women's Aid (BWA).

We're turning our stylish hair salon into a boutique for the day, offering a fabulous selection of pre-loved and brand-new women's clothing at great prices. From chic dresses and trendy tops to cosy knitwear and must-have accessories, there's something for everyone.

We want to offer a special thank you to the following local businesses who are kindly supporting the day:

- Mary Galer of Goring and Streatley Golf Club for supplying delicious glasses of bubbly or mimosas.
- The Collective in Caversham for donating a range of tasty pastries.
- Inspirations of Goring for supplying beautiful, colour-themed decorations to match BWA branding.
- Hope Clothing for providing clothes rails and a sample of new women's clothing.

The staff of Albert Fields will also offer complimentary hot teas and coffees and showcase their in-salon brand, Davines hair care products and treatments, which will be available for purchase.

All proceeds will go to Berkshire Women's Aid, a domestic abuse charity dedicated to providing safety, support, and empowerment for survivors of domestic abuse. BWA's community fundraiser will attend on the day to represent the charity. She will be on hand to chat with you about BWA's work and mission.

Let's make the day go off with a bang by donating your pre-owned or new women's clothing and accessories. Please drop off your items directly at the salon a couple of weeks before the event on 6 April.

We have a dedicated Eventbrite page on our website with a QR code to easily purchase tickets. Tickets cost £6.13 (£1.13 Eventbrite admin fee), with the full remainder of £5 and all proceeds on the day going directly to BWA.

This is more than just a shopping event—it's an opportunity to come together as a community, make a positive impact, enjoy complimentary refreshments, and learn more about the vital work that the BWA does to support people suffering from and surviving domestic abuse. See you there for a stylish day of giving and a relaxed shopping experience in a unique setting. Albert Fields, 8 High Street, Goring, GR8 9AT. www.albertfields.co.uk



New managers at The Bull plan to carefully build back business

Business ideas are brewing at The Bull in Streatley as new managers have taken on the reins last month. Karen Polson, who now manages the Marston's pub alongside her husband Pete, is full of admiration, telling GGN: 'it's a lovely pub.'

She adds: 'We thought it's about time to take on a new challenge'. Originally from Bournemouth and now living in Reading, Karen has run the Farriers Arms in Spencers Wood for 13 years and has been in the trade for 25. She says: 'We're excited to meet everyone and see what they want and what we can do to make the pub a success!'

While she will be continuing to run the Farriers Arms, she has entrusted a good friend to be manager here at The Bull. Paul Hughes, who has worked part time for the couple for 12 years, will be overseeing the day-to-day affairs as on-site line manager. He has a background in catering services, previously doing stock control at the large hotel De Vere Wokefield Estate near Reading. Like them, he is eager to get things up and running as soon as possible and has only just moved in upstairs: 'I still haven't unpacked!' He was also full of praise about the village saying how pretty it is.

One thing in particular that excites them is the potential for their beer garden: 'It's a lovely beer garden, it just needs a bit of work,' Karen said. 'I came here, probably about ten years ago just for some lunch and you could see the garden was really busy – it's a nice sun trap! We haven't got any plans for it yet but hopefully we can do some charity events.'

In terms of events, again, they're carefully building up their calendar with their first, an Open Mic Night on 30 March (Mother's Day). 'We'll look at things after that. We don't want to do it all at once, we're just trying to do it gradually.'

Despite the careful approach, there seems to be plenty on offer: 'We do curry nights, steak nights, burger nights, pie



Paul and Karen outside The Bull

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BUSINESS continued

nights.' Paul enthusiastically notes that they also do 'Fizz Fridays' on Fridays, for anyone who likes a glass of bubbly! Karen also says that they're wasting no time, bringing back Sunday roasts that very weekend.

When it comes to the reputation of the pub itself, she says: 'I think people here have been let down in the past'. Although they're not wanting to make false promises, she said that they're eager to make it the place to be by carefully, gradually building the business back up again. See photo on page 43.

Dan Gordon-Potts

Café receives five stars for food hygiene

Goring Chocolate Café received a 5-star food hygiene rating from the Food Standards Agency on 29 January. The food safety officer found that the standards of the cafe were 'good' in all three areas: hygienic food handling, clean storage facilities and safe food management. The Chocolate Café, otherwise known as the Village Café, is located in The Arcade and owned by Vivienne Lee. Vivienne also runs two other cafes, one in Henley and another in Wokingham. Betsy Brown, who works in Goring, spoke to GGN and said: 'Thanks to all the team, it's a team effort – everybody pitches in!' She added that this was also not the first time they had received a 'very good' rating.

Profile: Nicole Mae's Bridal

Hello readers! Now that the days are longer and the weather is warming up, we're firmly in 'wedding season', so what better time to speak to our very own bridal expert right here in the village? It was a pleasure to chat with Nicole and inspiring to learn about another business journey.

Business owner: Nicole Osborne

Trading name: Nicole Mae's Bridal

Address: Station Road, Goring

By appointment only: [07745 907105](tel:07745907105)

How did you get to where you are today?

I went to Phillip Green's fashion school in London and did Fashion Buying and Merchandising. Then I went to Southampton Solent and did Fashion Management with Marketing and volunteered at the White Gallery – dressing models and working with designers. Whilst I was at uni I did some travelling with my boyfriend at the time and caught the travelling bug. But when I graduated in 2015 we broke up – he broke my heart! So then I booked a one-way ticket to Canada on my own and lived there for two years. I worked in ski resorts, living my best life! When I came back I was like: 'ok I need to get a real job now'. I got an entry level job in fashion buying in London and worked my way up to assistant buyer for a brands department which focussed on race day dresses and mother of the bride dresses. But then my boyfriend found me crying in the kitchen over a pair of leggings from China – it was a really intense job! I left because they were wanting blood but paying me peanuts really. A friend of mine has a bridal boutique in Little London, where I live (near Newbury). She said 'could you just help me out' and I was like 'yeah ok!' Then I found myself running her appointments for her, loving it. Now it's lovely because I've always wanted to do buying, which I still get to do, but I'm also people-facing, which is something I missed.

What do you love about your business?

I like to give them this experience as a bride, where you come with your mum, your best girlfriends, and you sit and you get all excited and you do remember that. It's really big for them and I have a lot of husbands-to-be here, lots of brothers with their sisters. They all leave here all happy and they're crying, I'm crying, like it's the nicest bit about it. It's very rewarding, I'm a big part of people's day. It makes me happy.

What advice would you give to local entrepreneurs?

Look into the business rates. I wish I had looked at and challenged that. Also, I was very narrow-minded when it came to my website nicolemaesbridal.co.uk SEO (Search Engine Optimisation) is a thing that has just taken over my life. Build that up as much as you can before you invest in bricks and mortar. The most obvious thing is passion. I mean people aren't taking things like this on by themselves if they're not passionate. It's the most scary thing I think I've ever done. The investment, oh my goodness I can't tell you the amount of money – the inheritance and some has been thrown at this, it's almost like a marriage!

What fabric/style of wedding dress do you like most?

I love these fitted gowns, I love them. But personally? I recently got engaged so people keep saying to me 'what are you going to wear?' and I'm like 'I literally don't know!' But as a personal favourite, I still love classic, plain mikado fabrics which are the real British white wedding classic fabrics. Don't get me wrong, I love these embellishments, but personally I do still love that classic look.

Do you run a small business in Goring or Streatley? Whether it's 20 years old or two years old, I'm interested! Get in touch with Dan on [07877 425814](tel:07877425814) or email: dpgpotts@gmail.com

Dan Gordon-Potts



Nicole Osborne of Nicole Mae's Bridal among the gowns in the shop



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Update on speed limit for the B4009 at Streatley Hill

Firstly, a huge thank you to everyone who took the time to complete the online questionnaire which we posted last month, soliciting views regarding the imposition of a speed limit on Streatley Hill, in order to mitigate the identified hazards at the top of the hill where the footpaths, crossings and car parks all meet the road. To date there have been a total 114 completed questionnaires – which is considered a very high response in a small community such as ours. 80% were in favour of the imposition of a speed limit, with 20% suggesting it should remain as it is.

As many may be aware, we have twice previously had applications to reduce the speed limit at this location tuned down. However, armed with this information and a more deeply researched case, we presented in person to the West Berkshire Council Speed Limit Review Panel on 27 March. We are delighted to advise that it was agreed that the speed limit on Streatley Hill – from the foot of the hill to close to the junction with the road to Stichen's Green – will be reduced from 60mph to 40mph. This will be supported by new signage and road markings to draw drivers' attention to the various hazards.

Many of the survey respondents indicated a preference for an even lower limit of 30mph, however it became clear during the process that this would be at odds with National Highways guidance, and Thames Valley Police (who were also at the meeting) made it clear they would not support this proposal. Therefore, a 40mph is a pragmatic solution when supported by improved road markings etc, and should greatly contribute to improved road and pedestrian safety at this location.

Moving forwards, any change in limit has to go through a formal public consultation and regulatory process, which typically will take around 12 months before the change in limit can be implemented. We will be following the case closely and will provide updates as matters progress, and again thank everyone who has so strongly supported us over the past 12 months of this campaign.

Meanwhile in other matters, due to the water leak at the top of Streatley High Street and the ensuing emergency road repairs, the planned closure of Streatley Hill over half term from 17–23 of February to allow SGN to repair the road surface did not go ahead. At present there are no re-scheduled dates for these works.

Adrian Lockwood
Streatley Parish Council

The 'poo' bag tree phenomenon comes to Streatley

An estimated 1,000 tonnes of dog poo is produced by Britain's eight million dogs every day, according to the Keep Britain Tidy group.

A foray through online articles will reveal that recently in Kent, 210 bags were collected within the space of a week from one location and from one New Forest beauty spot, 63 poo bags were picked up within 400 metres of a local car park – which has a bin!

In a new trial by Surrey County Council, wooden frames have been placed at park entrance locations such that dog walkers can temporarily store their poo bags to collect again on their way out. Opinions are divided, notably because of the unsightly vista and the fact that only a percentage of the bags are actually removed.

Why is this practice considered acceptable? It is bad enough having to avoid dog poo on the path in the first place but surely, to bag it up and then discard it in the vegetation can only be more environmentally harmful if the bag is non-biodegradable.

Some dog walkers no doubt believe a biodegradable bag may be just the thing for the pick-up and then it will happily disappear as nature takes its course in the bushes. However, if you really believe the bags are fully biodegradable, try throwing them in your own hedge. Also, there are no faecal fairies who fly around and collect the bags through the night to leave a silver coin in return!

Other people have told us that dog waste bins are not emptied enough so there is no alternative. Our surveys and regular bin emptying contractor responses confirm that this rarely happens in the village and bins do not feature along the adjacent countryside tracks.

Councils take dog fouling seriously, to the same extent as fly-tipping and other practices to simply litter our countryside and road verges, even though it can be difficult to stop. There are penalties which can be applied for all such practices if caught.

For those of us above a certain age, memories of roaming unleashed dogs and poo strewn footpaths should serve to remind us that the cure is the adoption of best practice by using the bins or better still, take it home.

Many thanks to all the thoughtful dog walkers who do adopt the practice.

Colin Smith
Streatley Parish Council

MEDICAL INFORMATION

- **Doctor**—to contact a doctor between 8am and 6.30pm ring [01491 680686](tel:01491680686), which is the telephone number for both Goring and Woodcote surgeries. When the surgery is not open, at night and at weekends (i.e. 6.30pm-8am Monday to Friday and throughout the weekend and Bank Holidays) 111. This number is also available on the surgery answerphone. You may be asked to attend Abingdon Hospital, or Townlands Hospital in Henley. For the most up-to-date information see www.goringwoodcotemedicalpractice.nhs.uk
- **Nearest Casualty Department:** Royal Berkshire Hospital, Reading [0118 322 7020](tel:01183227020)
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- **NHS Direct** is available for medical advice 24 hours a day, on **111**. Your local pharmacy can also offer you a range of services, including advice and medicines to relieve symptoms of minor ailments.
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- **Goring medical equipment** – Equipment including, wheelchairs, toilet aids, mobility aids and more. [01491 872736](tel:01491872736) or [874333](tel:01491874333) anytime.
- **Transport Office** – Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday (10am - 12noon) to arrange transport to local surgeries, dentists and hospitals. [01491 873565](tel:01491873565).

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

who accepts no responsibility for views expressed

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

Correction of omission

Dear Editor—It was good of you to publish a report in the January *GGN* that referred to new gates to make Streatley Meadow fully accessible to wheelchairs, mobility scooters and, indeed, parents with pushchairs.

I hope you will now enable me to rectify my error in omitting to mention our main source of funding. The project to improve accessibility was planned by MIGGS, the local mobility issues group, with the approval of the trustees of Streatley Meadow and the support of Streatley Parish Council. However, it was financed principally by a grant from the Defra Access for All fund, administered by the Chilterns National Landscape.

The photograph (see page 44) shows Bill Howard (green cap), his brother, Jake (black) cap and their team from Arrow Fencing removing the original kissing gate on Streatley High Street, in preparation for installing a larger, fully accessible gate. Watching from a safe distance is Simon Carter, chairman of the Heart of Streatley Charitable Trust. *John Boler*
Chairman, MIGGS

Teenage Cancer Trust

Dear Editor—Ali Boyd and Nicky Phillips both of Wallingford Road would like to thank everyone who supported their plant stall during 2024.

£1,169.56 was raised to support Teenage Cancer Trust. Thank you.

Peter Phillips

Another deer killed in The Holies

Dear Editor—In late February a Roe deer was chased by a dog on The Holies, was mortally injured and had to be put out of its agony by a contractor working for the National Trust.

A letter from Kim and Michael Robertson published in the January 2024 edition of *GGN*, tells of a Muntjac, again, chased by a dog. Kim and her husband, with two other passersby, cared for the Muntjac which sadly died before Oxfordshire Wildlife Rescue arrived to assist.

I also witnessed a young female Roe deer being chased by a dog. The deer was killed by the dog as it ran into a fence. The cries from the deer stayed in my head for a number of weeks.

There has been at least one other incident of a dead deer being found in this area.

The dogs involved in the three incidents above are not of a banned or controlled breed, but are someone's pet and, unfortunately, once this has occurred the chances of them attacking again are increased.

As dog owners we are all responsible for being in control of our dogs, especially around wildlife. You can be prosecuted by law if your dog is out of control and kills any animal – wild, domesticated or farmed.

Please ensure that you keep your dog on a lead if it cannot be trusted to come back to you when called.

Hazel Preston-Barnes

Expect the Spanish Inquisition

Dear Editor—We had a trip to Spain before Christmas and had a big surprise when we arrived at our accommodation: The Spanish Inquisition. I'd like to warn others about the new inquisition in force there. The 'weapons' of this new Spanish Inquisition are fear, surprise and an almost fanatical disregard for the personal data of visitors to Spain.

Fear? You arrive at any hotel, apartment or camp site anywhere in Spain, including the Balearics and Canary Islands. Before you can stay, you must surrender a very large amount of personal information, more than that held by any UK government department. It doesn't feel right, but it's the law.

Surprise? No one warns you of this. Not the travel agents, nor the UK Foreign Office and certainly not the Spanish government.

Disregard for Personal Data? Spain's new guest registration law (RD 933/2021) became mandatory on 2 December 2024. It demands that every guest (adults and children of any age) provides all of the following personal information at every place you stay:

- All passport details, normally captured as a photo/scan of your passport page.
- Full home address, landline number, mobile number and email address.
- Signature (if over 14 years)

This law also mandates that your 'host' (hotel or property owner) must store this pack of personal information for at least three years. There are stiff penalties for any host who provides incomplete, inaccurate or late filing of this data. But there are no requirements for the host to apply data protection measures (even if they know how to).

By the end of 2025, hosts across Spain will have collected 80 million such personal information packs (17 million being for UK citizens). Most I suspect, will be stored with little or no data protection. My worry is that organised crime and cyber agencies around the world have noticed this golden opportunity to Hoover up vast amounts of personal information, and use it for malevolent purposes. How could they access it? Easy. For example, an unhappy employee at a large hotel could walk out the door carrying a memory stick containing 30,000 packs, worth \$2M.

So, if you intend to visit Spain this year and want to reduce your risk of identity fraud, please plan what personal information you will surrender to The Spanish Inquisition.

Geof Haigh
geof@fimos.co.uk

Pirate adventure brings swashbuckling fun to the Library

Ahoy, book-loving buccaneers! This past half term, young adventurers set sail on a thrilling pirate-themed quest at Goring Library where books, creativity, and a little imagination transformed the space into a treasure trove of excitement.

All week we had drop in crafts featuring hands-on activities that let children step into the world of pirates. First, they mapped their own treasure islands, complete with hidden Xs. Next, the young pirates crafted their own telescopes using cardboard tubes and decorative materials, helping them spot hidden pirate signs around the library. The adventure continued as they designed their own Jolly Roger flags, proudly waving their custom skull-and-crossbones designs as they searched for clues hidden around the library.

We had two special pirate themed storytimes where the new look library came into its own as we were able to push back the shelves to make lots of room. We had a Lego workshop where the children were challenged to build/create their own treasure island complete with hidden treasure. These are on display in the library.

We ended the week with a games café where anyone could drop by and play a board game with friends and rediscovered *Buccaneer*, a wonderful old board game from the 70s, sailing to treasure island with your crew to collect treasure.

Parents and volunteers alike were thrilled with the events success. 'It was wonderful to see kids so engaged, not just in the hands-on activities but also in the books they discovered along the way,' said Kate Cheng, Library Manager.

With laughter, learning, and a touch of pirate mischief, the library's pirate adventure was a hit. If you missed out this time, be sure to keep an eye out for more exciting, themed events in the future because the best treasures are always found in books! Check out the events for Easter holidays coming soon to the library.



Jacqui Gray
Chair, Friends of Goring Library

An evening with Cara Hunter

The fruitful collaboration between Friends of Goring Library (FOGL) and The Wallingford Bookshop provided us with another stimulating author interview evening. February had given us insights into psychological thriller writing courtesy of local author, Chris Russell in the comfortable environment of The Chocolate Café, Goring. See Page 21.

The March evening event took place at The Five Little Pigs, Wallingford where we were welcomed with a rhubarb spritz (alcoholic and non-alcoholic so all tastes provided for) before we settled down to enjoy another scintillating interview by Gaye Walsh with the hugely successful Oxford crime writer, Cara Hunter.

Cara told us about growing up in a book-free household in South Ruislip and how her local library ably fed her appetite for reading, hence her willingness to support FOGL. Being the first in her family to go to university she studied English Literature at Oxford before going to work in the City. She did not begin writing until her forties and offered encouragement to any in the audience to get going, whatever their age.

Close to Home was the first in her crime series starring DI Adam Fawley. All of the Fawley novels are set in Oxford so that gives us additional interest in being able to visualise where the scenes are taking place.

It's a brilliantly plotted crime novel about a missing child, Daisy Mason, and the impact that social media has on public perceptions of who is to blame. Suspicion convincingly falls on both parents as perpetrators, as well as a number of other suspects. As the plot twists and turns throughout the novel I shouldn't have been surprised by the final twist, but it made me gasp out loud! Interestingly, Cara disclosed that the twist was actually the inspiration for the novel so she then had to make up a convincing narrative that led up to it.

Her latest novel, *Making a Killing*, picks up the Daisy Mason story eight years later and begins with potted biographies of the investigating police officers showing what has happened in their lives since the initial crime. As Cara pointed out, police investigations rely on team work not simply pairs of detectives, which is more the American model. She is interested in exploring how working relationships impact on the work in hand.

Cara also tells the story through a variety of genres: newspaper articles, tweets, Wikipedia entries, text messages, interview transcripts, emails and so on making the narrative unfold in a very interesting way giving the reader plenty of clues to unravel.

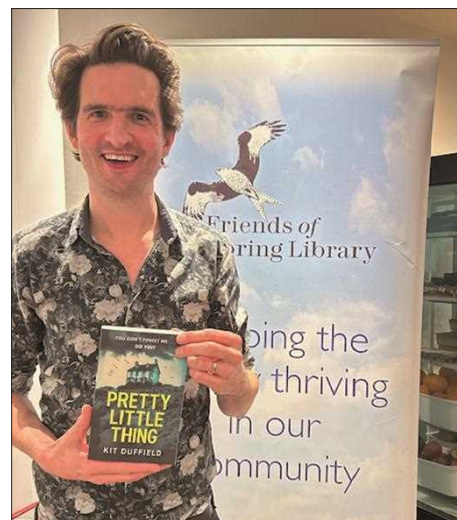
Cara was interviewed skilfully by Gaye, gave detailed answers to her questions and those from the audience and genuinely seemed pleased to be with us. From my perspective it was a highly entertaining evening and when I got home, I immediately started reading the next Fawley novel.

More author talks are planned for this year, so do keep an eye out for them or, if you are a member of FOGL, you get advance notice of all library events: www.fogl-oxon.co.uk

Sally Wicks

An Evening with Kit Duffield

Local musician Chris Russell of Lightyears fame returned to Goring on 5 February to talk about his latest novel, a psychological thriller, written under the pseudonym of Kit Duffield. The evening was one of the author talks organised by Friends of Goring Library to raise funds for the library and was this time held in the upstairs room of The Village Café which proved a great space for a talk with good visibility and acoustics. Chris as ever was charming and had lots of stories to tell charting his route from Young Adult author to an author of psychological thrillers and his need to identify this genre with a different name. He shared insights into the ideas behind the book and the characters and its setting somewhere in Torbay! The audience had several questions to ask him though inevitably some of these were about The Lightyears who we were pleased to hear are still going as a band. We had a fun evening with a gifted and charming writer. The book was well received and Wallingford Bookshop, as ever supporting the event, sold a lot more to people inspired by hearing his ideas behind the book. A warning though, don't read it last thing at night if you want a good sleep and maybe keep it in the freezer, as Chris's wife would like to do!



Chris Russell at The Chocolate Café

Gaye Walsh

Supporting Macmillan Cancer: Thank you to our community

It was with great joy and appreciation that we held a community fundraising event in Goring Village Hall for Macmillan Cancer Support on Saturday 8 February 2025, in the same week as World Cancer Day. In just two hours, we raised over £500 – more than double our target. This fantastic achievement was made possible by the generosity of our local friends, neighbours, and wider community. Whether you baked, volunteered, donated, or simply stopped by for a chat and a slice of cake – thank you. A special mention to The Chocolate Café, Pierreponts Café and The Goring Grocer for their generous contributions. Thanks also to the baker of the 'rainbow cupcakes' which quickly became a favourite among the children. We even managed to tempt in a few visitors fresh from the dental surgery—surely a sign that sometimes, even after a filling, cake is a necessity!

The awful reality is that cancer touches us all. One in two people will face a cancer diagnosis in their lifetime, and right now, more than three million people in the UK are living with cancer. As our local and global communities age, many of us will witness its impact firsthand. Like so many others, I have lost loved ones to cancer. In the bleakest moments, charities like Macmillan are a true lifeline – offering not just medical guidance, but emotional and financial support when it is needed most. Yet, despite an ever-growing demand for its services, Macmillan is under financial strain, with 98% of its funding coming from voluntary donations. With funding pressures forcing major cuts to its workforce and services, local support and fundraising efforts are more vital than ever.

If you would like to contribute, please visit our JustGiving page at <https://cm24.macmillan.org.uk/fundraising/CM24076959> or scan the QR code.

Your generosity will help ensure that Macmillan can continue to be there for the people in our community who need them most. Thank you again for making this event such a success—we couldn't have done it without you!



The helpers - l to r Elliott, Kate, Katie, Wynne, Janet, Archie, Trisha and Lyn

Katherine Barrett



Goring fish restock 'going well' but much more work needed, says fishing club chair

The chair of Goring Fishing Club, Neal Debono, has told GGN that the two year fish restocking programme is going well. The Environment Agency (EA) partnership with the local club has resulted in 500 barbel fish going into the River Thames by Goring Lock, and Neal says there are more on the way. Another 250 barbel are due to go into the river this December in a bid to increase stock for anglers.

Barbel are distinguishable by the two pairs of whisker-like 'barbels' on either side of their mouths, with one pair slightly longer and down positioned. All the new fish added to the river have a blue tattoo on the underside of their bellies: 'The first lot, their tattoo is mid-center; the second lot, top center, and the third lot should – when they go in – have one bottom center'. (See images for reference.)

Neal says there was an initial delay with the first batch because of river conditions: 'Because of how the river was behaving at the time, the first lot went in during January 2024'. However, the second batch went in when he wanted them to, in December of last year. Neal says that Goring is quite unique in having four weirs, and that this has added its own challenges. The water is highly oxygenated, he says, and this means the fish going in needed to be more mature (on his recommendation, three summers old) in order to survive. 'We could have had 10,000 little fingerlings (two inches long) but they wouldn't have survived.'

Predation from crayfish is likely when the new fish reproduce, but the club has permission to lay down crayfish traps around the spawning ground, and, once they are laid, will be checking to make sure there is no concretation either (build-up of

a concrete-like sediment over the top of fish spawn). Overall, it seems that every precaution has been taken to ensure the new fish survive. Neal is fairly sure the barbel will have 'hunkered down' on the river bed and, because of their natural shape, will be pushing the water safely over their heads.

While he is happy with the progress of the restocking, he admits they haven't caught many of the new fish: 'three have come out,' he tells me. However, after a recent conversation with the EA, it looks like they'll soon have a clearer picture of how successful the restock has been. 'They're going to come up and electrofish it probably around June time.' This will help identify how many of the freshwater barbel are still at Goring and how many have moved up or down stream. He anticipates around a 10% survival rate, so only about 75 barbel across the two year programme: 'that's 75 fish more than are here now,' he tells me, optimistically.

Neal is very pleased with the EA's decision to invest in the river here at Goring, but he says there's still lots more to do, particularly given the under-investment from the government and the failing water infrastructure: 'At the minute we're only scratching the surface.'

He says it's important that the outcome of this restock is positive for the fish population: 'We want to try and be able to make sure that they're going to spawn'. Once we know that, then they will hopefully be self-sufficient and it's a case of 'happy days'. He emphasises that community engagement is key: 'If we don't look after the river, or try to look after the river, it's going to end up sterile'. He explains further: 'The problem is that only anglers know what's below that surface'. However, he seems to be hopeful that more incremental positive changes are possible, and that we can increase public awareness about the state of our rivers: 'If we know the fish populations, we know we've got a healthy river'.

Dan Gordon-Potts



About Goring Fishing Club

Goring Fishing Club is over 60 years old and was established by the firefighters of Goring Fire Station after their social club closed. However, photographs confirm that there has been a fishing club in the villages for more than 160 years. Today, 'the club' continues to manage and control angling along the east bank of the River Thames. Its venue starts from the green at Ferry Lane immediately downstream and has done so for over 60 years. It stretches 1½ miles and consists of four distinct sections and more than 80 designated pegs. According to their website, their venue contains good stocks of Poach, Chub, Dace, Bream, Perch and Pike, as well as some Carp, Barbel, and occasionally Tench. All fish caught in club water are returned and (excluding pegs 78 to 86) night fishing is also permitted. Details about membership for the 2025-26 season will be available on their website fishgoring.co.uk



A barbel showing the whisker-like 'barbels' on the side of the mouth (left), and the blue tattoo on the underside (right)



Paying for my brown bin

You are probably aware that the way SODC allow us to pay for our brown bins has changed. After 1 April we must have a sticker on our brown bins to prove that we have paid to have it collected. The system for paying for brown bins online went live at the end of February. I have used it to pay for mine and I thought it might be helpful to record my experience. I spent about 20 minutes on it, but did achieve my goal of paying – I now am living in hope of receiving my sticker.

Start at www.southoxon.gov.uk

You see a banner:

You can now pay for your garden waste permit. The quickest way to do this is online. Our phone lines are busier than normal. If you encounter any issues, this may be due to the high volume of users in the system – please try again later. – Pay here:

www.southoxon.gov.uk/gardenwaste

Click on the link – there is a page of info about garden waste but click on 'Apply for your garden waste permit' then again on the next page 'New Garden waste permit' (confusingly this is not highlighted or underlined). The next page is headed 'New Garden Waste permit' (encouraging – it could have been worse).

Reading through, there is a recommendation to register for a 'MyAccount' – I clicked on this and successfully managed to receive the necessary PIN by email. The next bit was more challenging. If, like me, you are not in the full flush of e-youth, bear in mind that in order to create a password for your account you must be ready for this:

Passwords must contain at least 12 characters, at least 1 special character, at least 1 numeric character, at least 1 upper case letter, at least 1 lower case letter and no more than two of the same characters in a row.

Assuming you can understand that you must also be able to accurately type the password twice, without being able to see what you have typed (no helpful eye symbol on this one). I got it on the second go but I was having a good day. Some days it might be better to skip opening an account – you don't actually have to have one to pay for the bin and I got sent back to the beginning page anyway in order to start on the actual purchase.

So back to the 'New Garden waste permit page' and of course the first thing required is to tick the box to say you have read the T&Cs. I know you won't read them so I'll help you out – it's basically a list of 20 draconian reasons why you won't see your money again.

After that it is fairly plain sailing – I had to enter all my details again despite opening an account and I even had to put in my address a third time and provide a one-time passcode in order to pay (my bank really doesn't like withdrawals). I'm fairly confident I've done what was required so I'll sit back and wait for it to all go wrong as usual.

Gill Haigh

Unlocking access in the Gap

One of the major benefits of living in the Gap is the amazing access we have to nearby beautiful and varied countryside, provided by the many public rights of way and permissive paths. We are privileged (possibly uniquely) to find ourselves at the intersection of three major routes: The Thames Path, The Ridgeway and The Chiltern Way extension. Our public paths are integral to the character of the Gap and a major attraction to visitors.

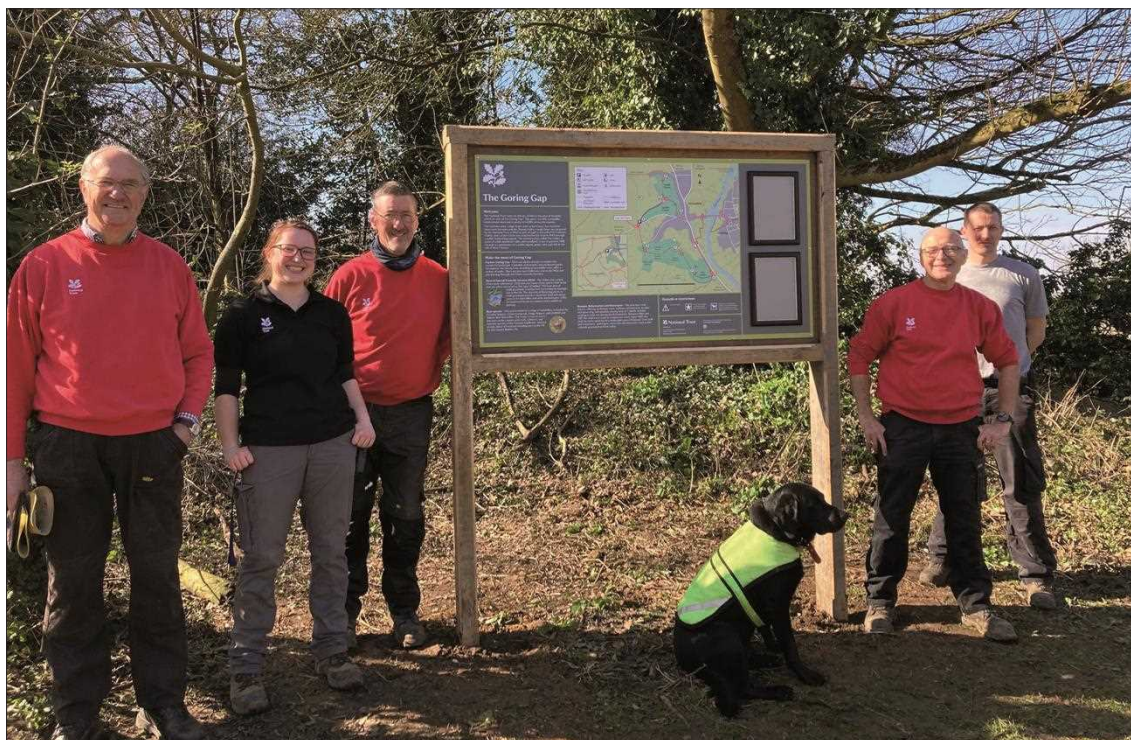
These routes around the area are sometimes not accessible to all – gates and stiles can create a barrier for those using a wheelchair, pushchair, mobility scooter or with other mobility issues. Happily, there is a quiet revolution happening in the Gap right now. Old gates and stiles are heading for the wood pile or recycling and newer, more accessible gates are taking their place.

Interestingly, this is the result of several different groups independently organising and funding these changes. New gates keep appearing and I thought it would be interesting to find out which organisations are involved in maintaining access.

National Trust providing new access gates above Streatley

The National Trust (NT) is endeavouring to end unequal access to all their land and to ensure that in the future NT infrastructure will never prevent access by any one section of the population. Where gates on land are necessary, they are progressively replacing stiles and old-style kissing gates with more modern gates enabling pushchair and wheelchair access and even off-road mobility scooter access (sometimes requiring a RADAR key to enable a gate to be opened extra wide).

This policy is having widespread impact on the NT land above Streatley, already resulting in pushchairs being pushed where no pushchair has gone before. There are new gates, often with harder ground surfaces below, installed, planned or in progress at the top and bottom of each of Lough Down, Lardon Chase and The Holies, as well as the gate between Lough Down and Lardon Chase and at various points within The Holies.



The team by the information board

Photo Gill Haigh

Of course, being able to access land is great but not everyone can walk far, so consideration is given to where seats are placed, both to help the user and to ensure the seat compliments the landscape. Local natural hardwood from NT land is normally used.

To help to enable users to plan their use of the new gates, explanatory boards are being installed in the car park, at the top of the footpath from The Coombe and at the bottom of The Holies and Lough Down. Funding was available for the board displays, but not for the board structures, so the NT

rangers and volunteers have used oak from Basildon Park and Greys Court to make them by hand. The photo shows the workers beside a finished board on 5 March: Graham Harding (Volunteer Ranger), Bertie McDonough (Assistant Ranger), Peter Dawes (Volunteer Ranger), Buddy the labrador, David Putley (Volunteer Ranger) and Leo Jennings (Area Ranger).

The changes are being funded by the NT, as and when funding streams permit. Gates were bought when possible and are being installed as time and money allow. Every effort is used to source materials from the Basildon Park estate and to use volunteer labour to support the work of the NT ranger team. Contact Basildon Park if you are interested in becoming a volunteer.

Streatley Meadow

Streatley Meadow is owned and administered by the Heart of Streatley Charitable Trust and crossed by permissive paths. Three new gates to improve access to Streatley Meadow have recently been installed and were completed on 13 February. This was reported on P29 of January *GGN*, in an article looking at a variety of local access improvements campaigned for and organised by MIGGS (Mobility Issues Group for Goring and Streatley). The new gates will facilitate a wheelchair accessible circular route in Streatley, visiting Streatley Rec and the river when conditions allow. MIGGS organised permissions and contractors to undertake the work and funding for the new gates was provided by the Defra Access for All fund, administered by the Chilterns National Landscape (formerly AONB).

Gates on Sheepcot Rec in Goring

Sheepcot is the responsibility of Goring-on-Thames Parish Council. The Council improved the access gate from Whitehills Green in 2021. The top of Sheepcot used to have gaps providing rough access, but two gates were installed to enclose the field as part of the tree planting improvement carried out by Mend the Gap. (For more about Mend the Gap see *GGN* 24 December Page 5.)

Both gates were supplied and fitted by Mend the Gap in spring 2024, including aggregate to improve the surfaces. The size and design, including latches, were approved by MIGGS as suitable and these were normal/swing gates to allow access by all, the same type as the one between Sheepcot and Whitehills Green.

Chiltern Society – maintaining footpaths and gates around Goring

The Chiltern Society have a special group dedicated to footpath maintenance, called the South Chilterns Path Maintenance Volunteers (SCPMV). They work with OCC (Oxfordshire County Council) and landowners to improve Public Rights of Way in Oxfordshire and have an excellent relationship with OCC. Apart from installing gates, they also clear Public Rights of Way and this year have been trained to install steps; hence they have recently been asked to improve the steps in Gatehampton.

Eight gates near Goring have been installed by SCPMV volunteers since 2012. In the last 15 years over 400 gates have been put in by the volunteers, across the Chilterns. The type of gate installed depends on location and the wishes of the landowner – kissing gates can be required where animals are in fields. All were installed completely free and all by volunteers. *GGN* had an article about the installation of the gate on Cow Hill at the Reading Road exit (see *GGN* May 2023 P19). This gate was funded as a memorial – contact SCPMV if this is something you'd like to do.

Supporting the SCPMV there are about 40 Path Representatives for all the parishes they look after. Path Reps keep an eye on parish paths using hand tools where needed and report any issues which SCPMV try to deal with. Our local Goring Parish Path Rep is Kevin Bovington. He started last August and is currently also covering South Stoke. His 'patch' is recorded on three maps showing all the paths he undertakes to walk at least twice every year – some 35km in total. Kevin walks with a few hand tools in his bag so he can do minor maintenance jobs as he goes, commonly cutting back brambles and other vegetation. He reports any more major problems to the Chiltern Society – fallen trees, broken gates/signposts, flooding and subsidence, especially near the river. The Society liaises with OCC and landowners and often the SCPMV will do the repair work. If you are walking paths on the Goring side of the river and find a problem with the path, Kevin is happy to hear about it: kev.bovington@gmail.com

There are always volunteering vacancies available. At the moment there are vacancies for Path Reps for Checkendon and South Stoke parishes, there is a vacancy for a secretary and volunteers are always needed for the SCPMV. Please contact Stevefeigen@gmail.com for the SCPMV and susanmgr131@gmail.com for the secretary and Path Rep vacancies.

The Gap revolution continues

The organisations mentioned in the above paragraphs deserve our thanks for creating/maintaining our access to the countryside. Their good practice is leading others to follow their example and landowners of all types are now aware of the need to use wheel-friendly gates where suitable. Happily, the Gap accessibility revolution looks set to continue and local people, along with the many visitors to our area, will be able to enjoy further stunning walks on our doorstep.

Gill Haigh



Frank Tomlinson independently able to access Streatley Meadow
Photo: John Boler



Kevin Bovington cutting back the brambles at the top of Sheepcot

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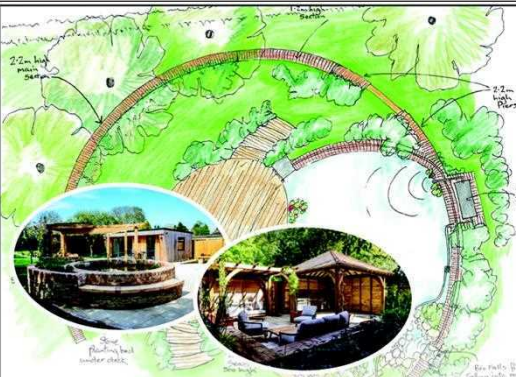
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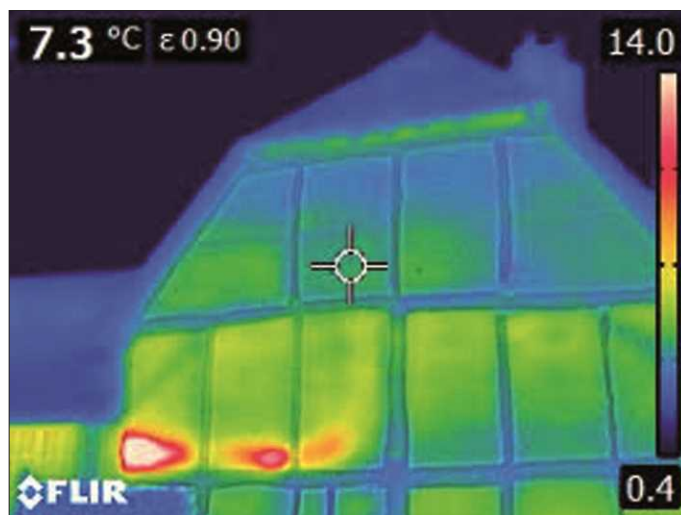
Thermal imaging a great success

The offer of a free thermal image survey of houses in Goring, Woodcote and Streatley villages proved to be very popular. Each thermal image survey was supported by a summary report with information to help property owners further understand the images and highlight any heat loss evidenced. The team enjoyed the interaction and information shared with residents during their home visits. However, due to high demand, we were unable to undertake all requests received for a survey during the allocated period for the loan of equipment. Thanks go to SODC and Oxfordshire County Council for the training and equipment provided.

The team would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who supported this project. Donations to-date have raised in excess of £840 towards the Toilet and Family Friendly Layout Fund at St Leonard's Church, Woodcote.

If you would like to donate to this fund, details are as follows:

St Leonards Church Toilet and Family Friendly Layout Fund
Woodcote Parochial Church Council, sort code 40-52-40, account 00036585



Thermal image of iconic Goring building Photo:Mark Taylor

Chris Rickards

Goring on Thames Parish Council

The principal points of the Goring Parish Council meeting held on 10 February are summarised below. The draft minutes are available at www.goringparishcouncil.gov.uk

- The council agreed to embark on a policy of replacing all sodium streetlights with LED streetlights within 18 months.
- It was agreed to support the Goring Spring Clean Litter Pick on Saturday 22 March.
- It was agreed to supply three new green Glasdon bins at Gardiner to replace the old black ones.
- The Free Church holiday Kings Club from 28 July to 1 August was approved with no charge for using Rectory Gardens or the Gardiner field.
- It was agreed in principle to approve the plan of alterations suggested by the Cricket Club for the Gardiner Pavilion; five key alterations- a female changing room, an external scoreboard, an internal honours board, a bar and a changing space for croquet.
- Plans for the Natural Burial Ground at Whitehills continue to take shape. The new tariffs policy has been enacted.
- Street clearing and gutters continue to cause concern and further discussions are taking place to confirm a strategy.
- Feedback was given on the speed survey conducted in the village (see below).
- It was agreed to authorise audio and visual recordings of GPC meetings.
- SODC M Filipova-Rivers talked through the various suggested restructuring options for Local Government in the Thames Valley and their potential implications for Goring.
- A budget and a contractor were approved for the scheme to upgrade all remaining streetlights in batches, with the first batch to start soon. The first replacement scheme would focus on the Lockstile Way and Milldown Avenue area.
- A budget and a contractor were approved for replacing the gutters at the Gardiner Pavilion.
- A budget and a contractor were approved for remedial work on tree roots encroaching onto the tennis courts at Sheepcote.
- A budget and a contractor were approved for replacing the gate posts at the Rectory Gardens.

Date of next meeting: Bellême Room, Goring Village Hall 10 March 19.30.

Goring Speed Survey

Goring Parish Council has concluded a week-long speed survey on four residential roads in Goring.

The four sensors counted nearly 20,000 vehicles in total, of these 76% were cars, 19% vans or 4x4s, 3% lorries, and 2% cycles or motorcycles.

The results of the speed analysis are encouraging with 58% of drivers respecting the new 20mph limit, and only 3% of drivers exceeding 30mph.

There were a very small number of measurements of speeds over 50mph mainly late at night.

The Parish Council would like to remind everyone that the 20mph limit applies to all roads in the village and applies 24 hours a day.

The Council may consider traffic calming measures in some places to encourage safer driving if deemed appropriate.

Editor's note: the speed survey report can be found in Appendix V of the minutes for the full council meeting on 10 February, see www.goringparishcouncil.gov.uk

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News from Langtree School – Spring term update

We are now halfway through the academic year and it has been a busy time at Langtree school.

Langtree School was proud to receive the prestigious 'Equal Access to Football' award. This recognition is given to schools that provide equal opportunities for both male and female students to participate in football lessons and extracurricular clubs. We are committed to offering all our students the chance to learn and enjoy the game, ensuring everyone has access to the same opportunities, both on and off the field.



Langtree continues to offer a fantastic range of trips and activities to our students. Year 10 had the opportunity to join the ski trip to Gstaad, Switzerland over the new year period. It was a huge success with lots of snow and blue skies.



On Saturday 25 January students from Langtree attended the Wychwood School Peace Conference. Schools from across Oxfordshire attended and participated in some powerful discussions on global food challenges.

Langtree's debate team competed in the Oxford Union Schools competition. Debate has grown significantly at Langtree over the last few years from four students in 2022 to 22 students being involved in 2024/25. We are so proud of our debate team, for their commitment, zeal and willingness to step outside of their comfort zone. The next event is the Cambridge schools in March.

The break up for February half term commenced with 'Creativity Day' with a range of activities and trips across our year groups. Year 7 enjoyed a visit to Wembley Stadium with the PE department. Year 8 visited SS Great Britain, took a boat trip on the river and saw artwork by Banksy in a very varied day trip to Bristol with the Humanities department. Our Year 9 became CSIs for the

day in science. Year 10 all looked extremely smart if a little nervous as they participated in mock interviews, part of Langtree's excellent careers programme. Year 11 spent the day tackling revision and study skills ahead of their looming GCSE exams.

At the time of writing rehearsals are underway at school for Langtree's whole school production of *High School Musical*. There will be over 150 students involved whether on stage, performing in the band or as crew.

Kathryn Foster
Langtree School Trustees

Next Goring Repair & Exchange Café on Saturday 12 April

As ever, all residents are welcome to bring in up to two items for repair to Goring Village Hall 10am-12.30pm.

Bikes, buggies, lamps, fans, toasters, toys, computers, phones, textiles, vacuum cleaners, food mixers, other small electrical and non-electrical products, small leather and wooden items and small pieces of furniture are all the types of products we are used to tackling – and it's a free service by willing and skilled volunteers.

We generally have about 16 repairers on duty at each event who, between them, have a wide range of technical and practical skills. Each repairer is set up with their own work station and tools, and will try to fix more of less anything you bring in. In addition to the repairers, there are ten support staff, who will register your products and allocate them to the most appropriate repairer, as well as undertaking other tasks, including providing refreshments for you in Café Bellême.

Book exchange – bring, swap, browse and enjoy!

Alongside the Repair Café in the main hall, we will be running a Book Exchange, giving you the chance to refresh your bookshelf and discover something new to read. If you'd like to take part, bring up to five books in good condition that you no longer want. Please arrive at 9.30am so we can organize them before the event opens at 10am. Once we're open, you can swap your books for different ones, giving them a new home while picking up something new to read yourself.

If haven't been to the Repair Café before, there is a video, photographs and more information about what happens there, along with how the Exchange event works on our website: goringrepaircafe.info (When you open it, click on the logo to start the short video – and check you have your sound on and click to see it full screen).

The Goring Repair Café is an environmental project run by local charity Goring Gap Environmental Organisation (GGEO) to help reduce waste and avoid the carbon emissions produced when people have to purchase a new replacement product.

Ron Bridle
Coordinator





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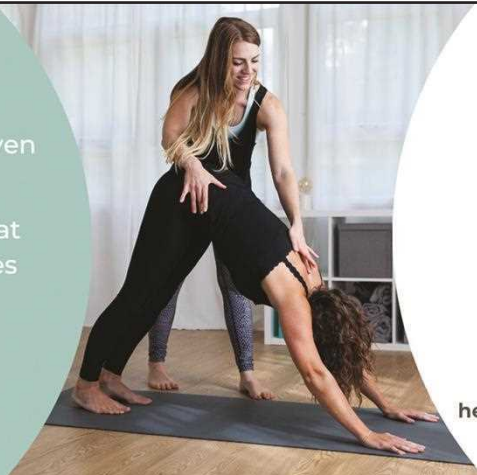
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Easter Services



HE IS RISEN



St Thomas of Canterbury, Goring

Thursday 17 April Maundy Thursday

8pm Holy Communion

Friday 18 April Good Friday

10.30am Family service with hot cross bun hunt

Sunday 20 April Easter Day

8am BCP Holy Communion

9.30am Family Communion service

St Mary's, Stratley

Friday 18 April Good Friday

3pm Meditation service with hymns

Sunday 20 April Easter Day

10.30am Family Communion service (Please note earlier time)

St Andrew's, South Stoke

Friday 18 April Good Friday

6pm Night prayer

Sunday 20 April Easter Day

11am Family Communion service (Please note earlier time)

Goring Free Church

Friday 18 April Good Friday

10.30am Communion Service

Saturday 19 April

9.30am - 11.30am Easter Saturday Breakfast

Sunday 20 April Easter Day

10.30am Family Celebration

6.30pm Evening Communion

Our Lady and St John Roman Catholic Church

Thursday 17 April Maundy Thursday

8pm Mass of the Last Supper and Watch until Midnight

Friday 18 April Good Friday

3pm Solemn Liturgy of the Lord's Passion

6pm Maria Desolata

Saturday 19 April Holy Saturday

8pm Solemn Vigil and First Mass of Easter

Sunday 20 April Easter Sunday

8am Mass (Latin)

10am Mass (Sung)

Good Friday 10am-10.15am Ecumenical Walk of Witness starting in the Rectory Garden with a procession to the Lock

Life in all its fullness

When this edition of the *Goring Gap News* is delivered to your house, we will be 2½ weeks into the season of Lent. This 40-day-long tradition has its origins in at least the 4th century AD. The word 'Lent' comes from an old English word for the season of Spring, and it's a season in which many Christians will take some time to pause and consider the implications for their lives of the events we remember at Easter.

It is also a season in which some will enter a period of self-deprivation, often referred to as 'fasting.' In that sense, Lent is very counter-cultural. After all, we live in an age when self-gratification and self-indulgence would seem to characterise the lives of many. I was reading an article in one of the papers recently that echoed this sentiment, arguing that 'we are encouraged to have whatever we want, whenever we want it.'

It seems to me that too often we get caught up in this mindset and become all-consumed with reaching our next goal and obtaining the next thing on our bucket list. Whilst there is nothing wrong with having goals, I suspect we could all do with taking some time out for self-reflection – to consider whether those goals are the right ones. And to remind ourselves that we are holistic beings, made up of body, mind and soul.

When it comes to our physical health, we are no doubt all aware of the importance of taking care of ourselves by having a sensible diet, exercising, sleeping, etc. And increasingly over recent years we have become more attuned to the need to take care of our mental health, through things like social interaction, mental stimulation, quietude and serving other people.

But what time and thought do we give to our spiritual health? How are we looking after our souls? Well, Lent is an ideal season to carve out some time to do exactly this. And especially because the season of Lent leads up to the Easter weekend. Whilst for many this might simply be a long weekend off work, it's significance is all to do with humanity's spiritual health.

To experience wellness of body, mind and soul, it is essential to be at peace with the God who created us, which is what the events of the first Easter weekend achieved. In his death, Jesus took upon himself the separation from God the Father that you and I deserve, and through his resurrection he offers us a life in which we are able to thrive.

If you would like to find out how this life can be yours, why not visit one of the local churches this Easter.

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LIVES REMEMBERED

Conty Brown 3.7.1934 – 29.2.2024

Conty Giraldi was born on the 3 July 1934 in Gibraltar. Five years later WW2 broke out and she was evacuated to Casablanca with her mother and other female relatives whilst her father, a doctor, remained in Gibraltar. They stayed in Casablanca for a few weeks before moving on to Rabat. Soon after arriving in Rabat, they were then hastily put on a troopship which was heading back to Gibraltar. This was only temporary; Conty and her mother were then sent on to Madeira with many relatives and friends. She remembered Madeira as being very beautiful and had very fond memories of her time there. They then returned to Morocco, this time to Tangier where they stayed until the end of the war.

On returning to Gibraltar after the war, Conty remembered life at this time as being idyllic. Conty had a fantastic ear for languages and soon became fluent in French, as well as her native English and Spanish, a smattering of Italian and also having picked up a bit of Portuguese in Madeira.

When Conty was 12, she, along with all her friends went to Brimpton School on the Rock, where she stayed until she sat her School Certificate. She then came to England to board at St Mary's Ascot for the 6th Form.

She returned to Gibraltar when she was 18 and threw herself into a very full social life. She was a member of the Royal Gibraltar Yacht Club, where she spent most of her time, sailing, swimming and socialising! Although Conty was an only child, she was surrounded by cousins whom she adored and were like siblings to her. Home was constantly filled with friends and family. Gibraltar had a big forces presence, the Navy and Army especially. Conty was invited to many parties.

In 1953, Conty was invited to the Royal Artillery Ball and it was here that she met Stuart Brown, who was stationed in Gibraltar. In June of that year, Stuart proposed – three days before Conty's 20th birthday. They married on 11 September 1956, in Gibraltar. Their honeymoon was spent driving back to England through Spain and France, as Stuart had left the army and had a job in London.

Conty found it hard to settle in England, she missed her family, friends, the weather and the food! In September 1957 Nicholas was born in Kingsbury Hospital. Not long after, they decided to move back to Gibraltar. Stuart found a job and they soon settled into their Mediterranean life and they were both much happier. Stuart Peter was born in September 1959, followed by Noelle four years later. The family was complete, and life was wonderful.

Eventually they decided to move once again back to England, as Stuart changed jobs. Also, Nick and Stuart Peter were now in boarding school in England, and they wanted to be nearer to them. They settled in Goring and made many friends. Conty threw herself into village life. She worked as a Spanish and French teacher at The Oratory Prep School, as well as teaching Spanish to adults at home.

Conty was an excellent seamstress and loved sewing. She and three other friends started a group called Quad Quilts, making American style quilts with Liberty fabric, which they sold back to Liberty's! They met weekly to sew, though this was probably just a good excuse to chat and put the world to rights! It was on the back of this that Conty suggested they make a quilt and raffle it for Cancer Research UK – hence Goring Friends of Imperial Cancer Research (as it was known then) was formed. She and a group of friends put together a committee and went on to raise over £250,000 over a period of 30 years. She also worked at Mary S, owned by their very great friends Gordon and Mary Scatchard. She absolutely loved working there and Stuart, after retiring, also helped Gordon with the fitting of curtains, blinds etc, which he thoroughly enjoyed.

Conty was also an accomplished Bridge player and loved playing regularly. When she was on the Cancer Research committee, one of their annual fund raisers was the Famous Bridge Tea, held at Goring Village Hall – many discussions were had over the sandwich fillings and more importantly their shape – and of course, crusts always off!

Once Stuart retired, they went on some wonderful holidays to the US, South Africa, the Far East and more recently they enjoyed going on cruises round the Med, often stopping off in Gibraltar and using it as an opportunity to catch up with family and friends.

Conty was always immaculately dressed and was rarely seen without her pearls, make-up and painted nails! She was an amazing grandmother and adored her eight grandchildren. She was so proud of them all and their achievements. She always loved seeing them and hearing all about their lives, and their adventures. Conty was happiest when she was surrounded by her family.

We were overwhelmed by the number of cards and letters we received following Conty's death. The overriding sentiments were; what a kind, welcoming, friendly and charming lady she was with a wonderful smile, a great sense of humour and a huge character. She was always interested in people and loved to hear what everyone was up to. The remaining few years of her life she was not very mobile so could not go out much but she was very good about phoning friends to keep in touch.

Eventually she moved to The Coombe House in Streatley where she spent the last three months of her life. She was very well looked after and we would like to thank all the staff for the care they gave her.

She was the most wonderful wife, mother, grandmother and friend and is greatly missed.



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Kinley secures English Taekwondo Junior Championship for second year running

Kinley Price is a local lad who has made real strides in the world of Taekwondo in recent years. He started the year in a new age category which means he competes in the junior category which includes anyone aged 15, 16 or 17. This means that for this year he could be at a disadvantage as he also competes in the open weight division.

However, on 8 February in Haywards Heath he competed at the yearly ITF Nationals and was successful in winning for the second year in a row. This was the first major competition of the year and only open to ITF England.

Before the summer he will have three big international competitions, one of them in London and later in the year at the beginning of June in The Netherlands. After that comes the Welsh Open and then a break for the summer.

Kinley would like to thank again everyone that helped in any way in his success of last year.

This year is a stepping stone for next year's World Cup, but because of his age and category also for the following World Cup two years later. Therefore, throughout this year he will be actively looking for sponsorship. If anyone or a local business is in a position to assist a young athlete, please do get in touch at kinleypricetaekwondo@gmail.com

Thank you to you all and we will keep you posted on future tournaments.

James Price

Goring Thames Sailing Club Open Day – Saturday 26 April 2025

Goring Thames Sailing Club (GTSC) is holding its annual Open Day on Saturday 26 April between 11am and 3.30pm. The Open Day is a fun family day out in the fresh air with the opportunity to check out the club's facilities and to get out onto the water to try a new sport, or to resurrect old skills.

The club has a fleet of craft which are available free of charge for members to use and comprises sailing dinghies (27), kayaks (8) and SUPs (stand up paddle boards)(8). The club boats will be available for use on Open Day by visitors, either accompanied by an experienced sailor from the club membership, or unaccompanied depending upon experience level and weather conditions. Buoyancy aids will be provided for everyone using the river (plus helmets if wanted) and the club's safety boats will be on hand throughout the day. Our fleet of dinghies includes both double-handed



and single-handed boats across a variety of classes, many of which are suitable for children to sail. The club's SUPs and kayaks will also be available to entice you onto the water. There are changing facilities, including hot showers in case of any unexpected capsizes. If you intend to go out on the water please come prepared with suitable footwear, a change of clothes and a towel. Even without a capsize, sailing can result in wet feet and damp clothing!

The club house contains a fully licensed bar, which will be open during the day. Tea, coffee and hot chocolate are also available from the tea bar. Refreshments will be on sale all day, including a BBQ at lunch time and cakes, ice cream and confectionary throughout the event.

The club is situated on the River Thames on the outskirts of Goring and enjoys beautiful views across the river and surrounding hills. The 2025 programme includes Sunday racing series events and class championships from March through to mid-November. As an RYA training centre we also run RYA sailing and powerboat courses during the year. We have an active junior and youth section and there are races, training sessions and events targeted specifically for our younger members, including watersports and sailing weeks during the school holidays at the end of May and throughout the summer. There are plenty of opportunities for new members to become involved in sailing with Saturday sessions throughout the summer months dedicated to helping those new(er) to the sport. Anyone interested in joining as a new member can do so in person at the Open Day. Alternatively, please contact the membership secretary on gtsc.enquiries@goringthamessc.org.uk or log on to www.goringthamessc.com for more details.

Jill Marsden

Goring 10k headline results

GGN went to print hours after the Goring 10k runners crossed the line - but we wanted to provide readers with headline news before a fuller article next month.

The winner of the race was James Ellis in a time of 33.29min. The women's winner was Katherine Jones in a time of 40.34min.

The sun came out and over 800 runners took part on the day. All proceeds from the race will go to Goring Primary School to support initiatives like the Learning Hub and the Library. A large part of the funds raised comes from our 2025 sponsors who were able to see the impact of their support first hand on 14 February.

See P44 for photo and details of sponsors.

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SPORT continued

Golf Club winners of Operation Pollinator Award

Goring & Streatley Golf Club has won the prestigious title of Syngenta Operation Pollinator Award winners, presented to Deputy Course Manager and Ecology Manager, Melissa Winkworth, pictured with G&S Senior Greenkeeper, Steve Chandler, and Sarah Hughes, Syngenta Business Manager for UK and Ireland.

The Syngenta Operation Pollinator Award is made as part of the Golf Environment Awards that took place in Harrogate in January. It is awarded to golf clubs who consistently deliver outstanding ecological habitat creation and management.

Goring & Streatley Club Captain, Steve Bennett, has been so inspired by the team's efforts and successes in developing the club's ecology and pollinator habitat creation, alongside the highly acclaimed playing quality, that he's bought Mel another hive and queen bee to further enhance members' engagement with the initiatives.

Applications for this year's GEAs reached record highs, bringing together golf clubs from across the country, and overseas, to share experiences, celebrate and reward industry professionals who dedicate their time and energy to protecting and enhancing the environment.



Something for everyone at Goring Tennis Club

Goring Tennis Club has lots to offer members and non-members alike. Here is a summary of upcoming events / courses that may well be of interest to you:

Open Day Sunday 27 April 10am-1pm

April marks the start of the new tennis season and everyone is welcome to come on down to our Open Day, where we will be showcasing everything GTC has to offer.

So, grab a racket and join us for a friendly social game, find your level with coach Jon Howey of Oxfordshire Tennis, meet club members, watch and play with our Juniors, have a go at Walking Tennis (Wednesdays 2-3pm, email chairman@goring-tennis.co.uk) or just have a coffee and a chat.

Return to Tennis, from Tuesday 22 April 6-6.50pm

If you haven't picked up a racket in a while or need a confidence boost try our Return to Tennis course. A mixture of drills and skills to get you back on court and match ready in no time.

Cardio Tennis, from Monday 28 April 9am-9.50am

Cardio tennis is not about hitting accurate shots or winning points, so tennis skills are not required! The tennis twist is just what elevates the workout to another level. The class follows a well-structured format to get everyone fully warmed up and working at their personal best, whatever their fitness level.

Footwork drills and ball skills are followed by a more energetic aerobic section, combining tennis shots and short intensive bursts of activity, such as running from one end of the court to another, to get you working up a sweat and building your stamina. Sign up for increased energy and fitness levels, improved reaction times and better coordination.

Drills Session, from Thursday 24 April 8-8.50pm

Enhance your skills with a series of fun and engaging drills. This class will focus on improving technique, consistency and court awareness; perfect for anyone looking to sharpen their game in a relaxed and supportive environment.

The Junior programme is in full swing, here's what we have coming up! In addition, as the weather gets kinder, there will also be more social tennis play sessions for Junior members on Sunday mornings in the pipeline.

Junior Easter Tennis Camp 2025 7-18 April

Join us for an exciting Junior Easter Tennis Camp at Goring Tennis Club from 7-18 April. Whether you're a beginner or an experienced player, our camp offers expert coaching, fun drills, and friendly competition to help improve your skills and confidence on the court. Don't miss out on this fantastic opportunity to enjoy the sport and make new friends this Easter.

Junior Easter Tournaments, 7/14 April

Get ready for some exciting tennis action this Easter! Join our Junior Easter Tennis Tournament – a great opportunity to play lots of matches (singles and doubles) and improve your game. Here are the event details:

- Mon 7 April: 10 & Under / 12 & U, 1.30-3.30pm
- Mon 14 April: 14 & U / 16 & U, 1.30-3.30pm
- Mon 14 April; 18 & U, 3.30-5.30pm

The tournament features round robin timed matches, ensuring you'll get plenty of play time. No need to enter with a partner, as we'll arrange that for you on the day. The deadline to sign up is 4 April.

All of these sessions and tournaments are open to non-members. For more information check out the Goring Tennis Club website <https://clubspark.lta.org.uk/GoringTennisClub>

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FORTHCOMING EVENTS

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MOTHERING SUNDAY 30 MARCH

If you plan to give a treat to someone who cares for you, loves you and puts themselves out – i.e mothers you in any way, then beware. If they ask for a breakfast or tea in bed for say 8am sharp, you will need to remember that the clocks have changed and you will have to be up an hour earlier than otherwise.

You can bring them along to a special church service where they will receive a cheer and a posy of flowers.

Do remember there are so many people who mother us, so thank them. 9.30am St Thomas', Goring, and 11.15am at St Mary's, Stratley.

GORING GAP PLAYERS – MURDER AT MIDNIGHT

Wednesday 9 - Saturday 12 April. 7.30pm GVH. A brand new classic whodunnit to be premiered in Goring. Written by Rita Butler.

A newcomer to a peaceful country village is brutally murdered. But why? And by whom? Will there be more killings? Detective Chief Inspector Postlethwaite, ably assisted by his Sargeant, unravels the many motives and opportunities that come to the surface as villagers are questioned. Tickets: £12.00 per person from Inspiration, The Arcade. Jean Betteridge 01491 873530 or www.goringgapplayers.co.uk

WITHMEAD NATURE RESERVE, OPEN DAYS 2025

Open every Sunday 10am-5pm from 6 Apr-31 Aug. Loddon Lily Sundays are 6 Apr-18 May when our signature flower is in bloom. Serving cream teas 2-5pm on 27 Apr, 25 May, 29 Jun, 27 Jul, 31 Aug. No need to pre-book for any of these dates, just turn up and enjoy – it's free entry, but donations are welcome! Also offering pre-bookable visits on Fridays for up to two hours at a time between 10am-4pm during the same period. Visit www.withmead.org or more info. We look forward to welcoming you to this gem by the Thames.

EASTER SATURDAY BREAKFAST

Are you planning on coming into the village centre on April 19, Easter Saturday morning? If so, why not pop into the Free Church for breakfast? All ages are very welcome! We will be open from 9.30-11.30am, serving bacon butties (vegetarian option available) and hot drinks. There is no charge, but all donations will go to support Tearfund's humanitarian work in the Middle East

www.tearfund.org/campaigns/middle-east-emergency-appeal

THREE MEN IN A BOAT

Friday 16 May, 7pm, The Galilee, Our Lady & St John Church. Jeremy Nicholas, nominated for an Oliver Award for his one man show in the West End and on BBC Radio, returns to Goring with an evening of dramatic readings from Jerome K. Jerome's dearly-loved comic masterpiece. Tickets available from mid-March. Details and tickets www.galileegoring.org.uk

Further afield

PANGBOURNE ART EXHIBITION AND SALE

Thursday 27 – Sunday 30 March, Pangbourne Village hall. Call for Artists to enter and also Sponsors to provide prizes for the highly popular Schools Art competition and to sponsor Artists Boards (£10). Proceeds go to Charity- Brookfields School and Bridge for Young People as well as Pangbourne Rotary Club's

Charity fund, which is used to donate to local, national and international causes.

Details from paul@greenparlour.com if you would like to join us in running this event please contact

membership@pangbournerotary.org.uk To art lovers-save the dates-the preview evening is on Friday 28 March and the exhibition itself is on the Saturday and Sunday- and come along to buy some great local art.

READING BACH CHOIR CONCERT

You are invited to join Reading Bach Choir on Saturday 10 May at St Andrews Church, Caversham, RG4 7PL for *Five Days that Changed the World*. This work by Bob Chilcott explores five key events, such as the discovery of penicillin and the first man in space. Each movement will be complemented by pieces reflecting upon the same milestone with music spanning six centuries, including Josquin, Samuel Barber and Eric Whitacre. Tickets, £18 / Under 18's £5, www.readingbachchoir.org.uk or on the door.

WALLINGFORD AND DISTRICT ART CLUB

Join the friendly Wallingford and District Art club on Tuesday 15 April, 7.30pm, for a live demonstration as professional artist, Rodney Kingston, paints a still life in oils. Rodney's inspiration comes from everyday life – people, places, still life objects – and the challenge of translating three-dimensional subjects into a convincing two-dimensional oil painting. The demo will be held at Centre 70 (off Goldsmiths Lane in Wallingford) from 7.30pm-9.30pm and is free for club members or £5 for visitors. If you would like further information about this event or other club activities, please visit the club website at www.wallingfordartclub.org.uk or email admin@wallingfordartclub.org.uk

WALLINGFORD MUSEUM

The museum is now open 10.30am-5pm on Saturdays, 2-5pm Tuesday-Friday, Bank Holiday Mondays, and also, in June and August only, on Sunday. £6 for adults and accompanied children are free.

There are two new exhibitions for 2025: *Barley to Beer, the Story of Malting, Brewing and Pubs in Wallingford* and *Agatha Christie's Ordeal by Innocence – original artwork by Laura Hope*.

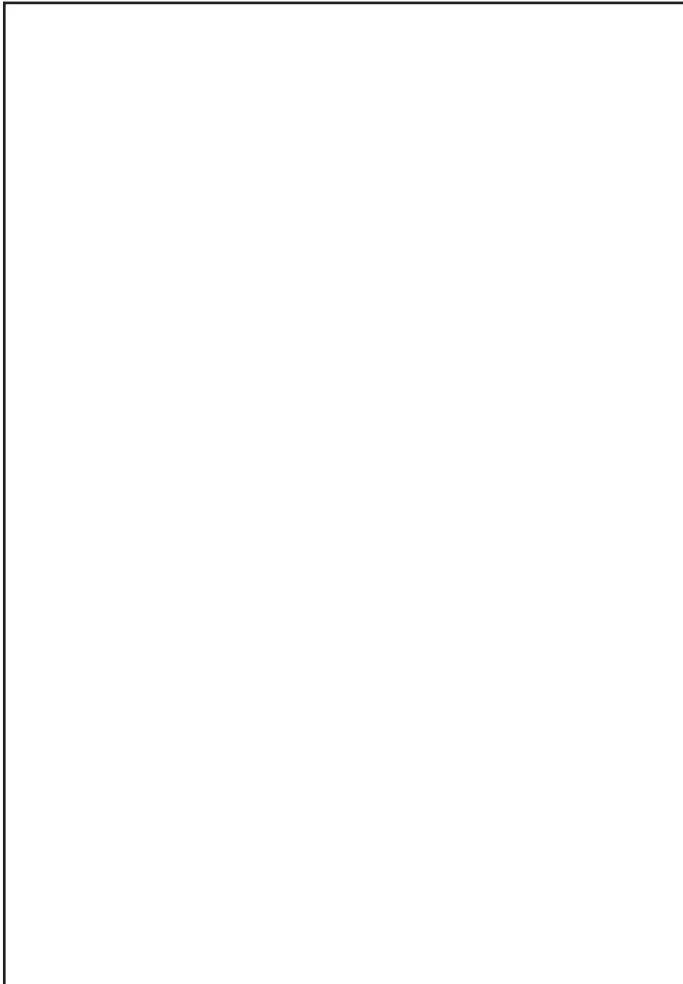
The Wallingford Historical and Archaeological Society (TWHAS) will again be offering history walks every Saturday from 19 April 2025. The tour meeting point is under the Town Hall, with departure at 11am and takes 1.5/2hrs. There is no need to book, the cost is £10pp. Please bring cash.

On 19 April there is also a special 1.5/2hr castle history walk. There is no need to book, please meet at Wallingford Museum for a 2.30pm departure, cost £10pp. Your tour will start with a viewing of the superb castle model, showing the castle at the height of its power in the 14th century, before walking to explore the remains of the castle itself.

EIGHTEENTH ENGLISH MUSIC FESTIVAL

Dorchester-on-Thames, Oxfordshire OX10 7HH, Friday 23 – Monday 26 May 2025 .

www.englishmusicfestival.org.uk Programme: www.englishmusicfestival.org.uk/2025-may-festival/programme.php




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Wednesday 26 March

• **Genie News Copy Deadline.** Genie is published twice a month. Email us: news@genienews.org
 • **The Arts Society.** 11am and 2.30pm, GVH. Ed Glinert: *Architecture: Le Corbusier, Inventor of the Modern World.* Visitors are welcome to attend for a maximum of 3 times before joining. £5 including refreshments. Full details of our activities and membership details can be found at www.artssocietygoring.org.uk

Thursday 27 March

Goring Gap U3a. 10.30-12noon, GVH. Speaker: Andy Smith: *Mysteries and Conundrums.*

Saturday 29 March

Streatley Litter Pick. 09:30 Equipment from the Morrell Room.

Tuesday 1 April

Book club. GL. 5-6pm, See library staff if interested – spaces available.

Wednesday 2 April

• **Goring Village Green Fingers.** 7.30pm, SL. AGM and Bryony Taylor: *International work, biological control.* Competition: Tulip Fever! A vase of tulips from your garden.

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

• **Stay and Play** 10-11.15am, GL Toddler Group and Rhyme-Time for pre-school children.

Thursday 3 April

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

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

Friday 4 April

• **Greedies Library Book Group.** 10am, GL. See library staff if interested – spaces available.

• **Goring and Streatley Wine Society.** 8pm, GVH. We are delighted to announce that Mr Preet Sahota of Edgmond Wines is to visit us. Preet is the UK agent for Villa Esposto Wines and the Skurfberg Vineyard in South Africa. The Van Lill family vineyard in Skurfberg is one of the Cape's Grand Cru sites. Be sure to book your place for this unique opportunity. Contact: gswswine23@gmail.com

Saturday 5 – Saturday 19 April

Easter Activities. GL. Drop-in crafts and trail.

Sunday 6 April

Withymead Nature Reserve opens. Loddon Lily Sundays – every Sunday in April, 10am - 5pm. No need to pre-book, just turn up and enjoy. More info at www.withymead.org.

Monday 7 April

• **Goring Mobile Post Office.** 8 - 11am,

Westholme stores, Wallingford Rd. Open every Monday and Thursday.

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

Tuesday 8 April

Lego club. 4.45 – 5.45pm, GL. Please book in library.

Wednesday 9 April

• **Gap Textile Group.** 7 - 10pm, CR. The Gap Textile Group has an exciting and varied programme of textile related activities at the monthly meetings. If you are interested in joining, please get in touch. Merete Hawkins, [07747 780158](tel:07747780158).

• **Cleeve by Goring WI.** 7.30pm, SL. Chairperson Kamran Irani: *Emergency Rider Volunteers.* Just come along on the night or contact Katrina Cooper, [01491 875334](tel:01491875334).

Wednesday 9 – Saturday 12 April

Goring Gap Players present *Murder at Midnight.* 7.30pm-10.30pm, See P39.

Saturday 12 April

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

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

Monday 14 April

Goring Gap Local History Society. 2.30pm, GVH. Sarah Somerville *Guides (working in historic houses in the 21st century).* Contact Janet Hurst goringgaphistory@gmail.com.

Tuesday 15 April

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

Wednesday 16 April

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

• **Spring Yoga.** 10am, GL. Family event Drop In.

Thursday 17 April

Pick a Flick. 10.30am-2pm, CR. *Going In Style.* Pick a Flick is held every 3rd Thursday. £5 per event including a light lunch. Please contact Sarah Fraser [01491 871838](tel:01491871838) or Jenny Boyd [01491 872109](tel:01491872109) to book in and to ask for transport if you require it. We look forward to hearing from you.

Friday 18 April

Goring Community Jazz Club. 7.30 – 10pm GVH. Sarah Jane Eveleigh with the house rhythm section and featuring Andrew Eveleigh on drums. Book online to reserve a table or cash on the door www.ticketsource.co.uk/goring-community-jazz-club.

Wednesday 23 April

Arts Society. 11am and 2pm GVH. Jo Walton: *The Art and Craft of John Piper.* Visitors are welcome to attend for a maximum of 3 times before joining. £5 including refreshments. Full details of our activities and membership details can be found at www.artssocietygoring.org.uk

Thursday 24 April

Goring Gap U3a. 10.30-12noon, GVH. Speaker: Alan Fitzgerald: *The Hidden Rivers of London.*

Saturday 26 April

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

• **Goring Thames Sailing Club Open Day** 11-3.30pm Goring Thames Sailing Club, The Bridleway, Cleeve RG8 0HS Come along to the sailing club for a fun day out both on and off the water – no experience necessary. The club's fleet of sailing dinghies, kayaks and SUPs will be available for visitors to try out new skills. On land there will be a BBQ over lunchtime, a licensed bar will be open and the tea bar will be serving hot drinks, cake and ice cream throughout the event. See Page 35.

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

Sunday 27 April

• **South Stoke Wildlife and Conservation Group,** Pond dipping for the whole family. 10.30am - 12.30. Please check our website for location and further events www.southstokewildlife.org/.

• **Withymead Nature Reserve, Cream Tea Sunday,** 10am-5pm, Cream teas served 2-5pm. No need to pre-book, just turn up and enjoy. More info at www.withymead.org.

• **Goring Tennis club open day** 10am - 1pm. See Page 37.

Wednesday 30 April

Geocaching Event. 12noon - 12.30pm. GL. With refreshments.

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

The following abbreviations are used:

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

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Gate replacement for Streatley Meadow



Bill Howard (green cap), his brother, Jake (black) cap from Arrow Fencing, removing the original kissing gate on Streatley High Street, Simon Carter, chairman of Heart of Streatley Charitable Trust is watching on. See letter page 19. Photo: John Boler

Goring 10k sponsors visit Goring Primary School



LtoR: Serena Winckle - Field Seymour Parkes, Elkie Mace – Race Director, Carolyn Wahlen – GAP HR Services, Matthew Fogg – The Oratory School, Chris Warren - The Botanical Gardener, Adrian Jimenez - The Swan at Streatley, Paul O’Loughlin – Warmingham, Juliet Coleman – Simplehuman, Harry Denison - Alliance Complete Facilities Management, Angela Wheatcroft – Goring Primary School. Other sponsors who could not attend on the day – The Peek, Content House Media, Plan B Fitness, KA Technology, Stokerpix and Pierreponts Café.

Goring 10k 2025 – runners in South Stoke



Photo: Simon Booker