

Goring Gap News

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

A cascade of poppies in the Rectory Garden



See Page 5

Photo: Ron Bridle

'As you make your bed, so you must lie on it'



At the Goring Parish Council Leaf Clearing Day on 8 November, Anne Nisbet was one of over 30 volunteers and councillors who made Goring pavements safer and cleaner.

Photo Colin Ratcliff

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Exciting & New



Sue Warmingham

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for Voluntary Service 2004

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Website www.goringgapnews.co.uk

Editor Gill Haigh

07979 686288 goringgapnews@gmail.com

Arts Editor: Rosie Mortimer

ggnarts@gmail.com

Business Editor Jo Pereira

ggnbus@gmail.com

Diary Editor David Slarks

ggn diary@gmail.com

Sports Editor Jonny Russell

07825 552009 ggn sports@gmail.com

Advertising John Williams

ggn adverts@gmail.com

Invoices Colin Ratcliff

ggn invoicing@gmail.com

Production Pauline Garrett,

Mavis Law, Hazel Preston-Barnes

Proof Reader Janet Hurst

Postal Subscriptions Tim Cox

01491 872980 timothycox939@btinternet.com

Distribution Victoria Brandon

07876 562338 ggn distribution@gmail.com

Chairman Jeremy Spring

ggn chair@gmail.com

Company Secretary John Boorman

ggn secretary@gmail.com

Treasurer Anne Parkinson

07500 890373 ggn treasurer@gmail.com

Media contributions

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Deadline for next issue: 3 December

Distribution

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

December 2025 weekend of 19/20

January 2026 weekend of 23/24

February 2026 weekend of 20/21

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

Extra copies can be purchased from Inspiration and Westholme Stores.

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GRAPEVINE

Key volunteer needed to get GGN to our deliverers

GGN has a need for a key volunteer to become one of our four GGN distributors. The role involves spending approximately two short half days on Wednesday/Thursday once a month collating and delivering boxes of GGN to some 18 houses in Goring. These are located on various roads including Whitehills, Elevelandon, Wallingford, Gatehampton, Fairfield, Milldown Avenue and Lockstile Way.

The volunteer needs to have a car and to be strong enough to comfortably load boxes containing up to 50 copies of the magazine – the whole round currently has 885 copies to be delivered. Reasonable mileage can be reimbursed and currently distributors help each other out when holidays etc clash with delivery dates.

This role is a vital link in the chain that gets GGN to every house in the Gap. Please contact the Distribution Manager, Victoria Brandon at ggn distribution@gmail.com if you would like to volunteer or find out more about the role.

Thanks to our retirees

Breeda and Alun Hickman have done this important job efficiently and cheerfully for many years and are now retiring from the role. Their hard work has ensured that thousands of copies have been delivered. We are very grateful to them for all the hours they have put in to keep the delivery system running smoothly and for all the extra help they have given GGN. Thank you, Breeda and Alan.

Sue Ryder Christmas 'Treecycling'

National healthcare charity Sue Ryder is inviting residents to participate in their Christmas Treecycling scheme to help raise much-needed money for families in need of palliative and bereavement care. With an optional donation to Sue Ryder, a team of friendly, reliable volunteers will collect your real Christmas tree directly from your front door, garden, or driveway between 7-16 January. Christmas trees will be recycled into compost or wood chippings which will be used in local parks and woodlands or to generate green energy.

To learn more about this eco-friendly fundraising initiative in Thames Valley (supported by Rabbits Vehicle Hire) and to reserve a collection, visit www.sueryder.org/treethames

Contact the fundraising team with any queries on 0118 9550 433 or email thamesvalley.fundraising@sueryder.org

Oxfordshire's Fire and Rescue Service (OFRS) consultation

Plans for the future of OFRS are currently open for public consultation. Online meetings are taking place where the proposals will be explained in detail. There is an opportunity to put forward questions and ask for clarification. The meeting targeting the Henley area (covering Goring presumably) is on Wednesday 3 December 12.30-2pm.

Oxfordshire County Council suggest that people read the consultation document, attend a meeting and then take the opinion survey. It appears that quite substantial changes are being considered and that Henley's Fire Station may be at risk of closure.

For more information: <https://letstalk.oxfordshire.gov.uk/ofrs-consultation>

Caregivers Group

When the Hub was open in the arcade a Caregivers Group was formed, which was found to be helpful in sharing knowledge.

After the Hub closed one of the members, Hilary, was kind enough to keep the group going by setting up a meeting the first Tuesday of every month. These meetings have proved helpful, particularly for those caring for someone with memory issues, as well as for family members with other disabilities and illnesses. If you would like to attend, please contact Hilary on 01491 872063.



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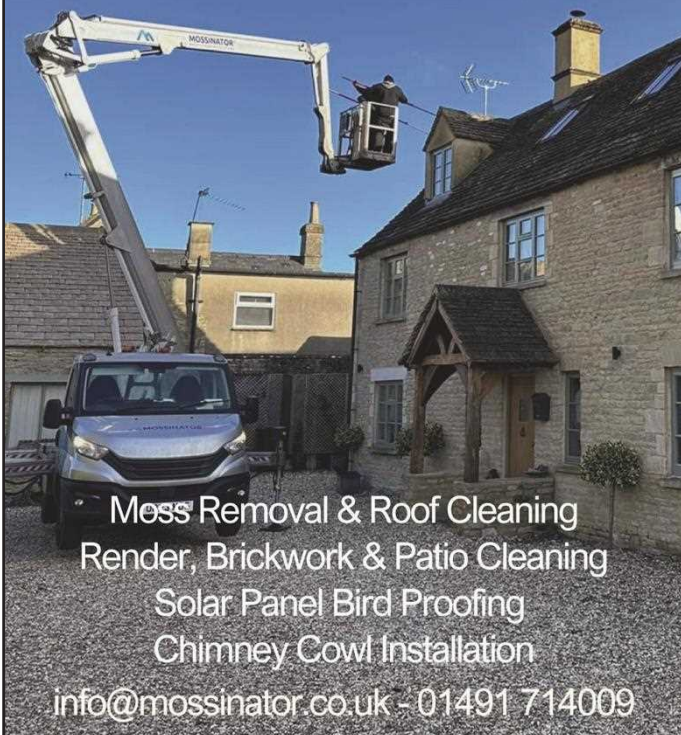
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Remembrance shared in a cascade of poppies

Many readers will have seen the striking poppy display hanging in Rectory Gardens, a beautiful and evocative tribute for this year's Remembrance Day, honouring the sacrifice of those who served in two world wars and marking 80 years since the end of the Second World War.

The sea of handcrafted poppies cascading from the village sign was made locally following an initial idea by the clerk and chair of Goring Parish Council. Inspired by the poppies at the tower and elsewhere, the Arts Society Goring, Goring Gap Local History Society and Cleeve by Goring WI members rose to the challenge and brought their own special vision to life. They were led respectively by Sally Wicks and Janet Hurst, who together ran the workshops, and Krys Knox, who taught, inspired and managed the crafters.

Starting in July, 85 local residents knitted and crocheted an incredible 1,752 poppies, using more than 110 balls of red wool, funded by Goring Parish Council. As well as working at home, more than 50 people attended community workshops in the Canterbury Room and the Bellême Room to give locals the chance to learn crochet and knit poppies together under the careful guidance of WI members and expert crafters Krys Knox and Margaret Robson.



A poppy in progress

Photo: Barbara Newman



Attaching the poppies to the netting Photo: Barbara Newman



Preparing for the installation

Photo: Barbara Newman

At a final workshop in the Community Centre, the handmade flowers were carefully attached to 25 square metres of camouflage netting, no mean task, involving a team of 40 crafters and four Parish Councillors.

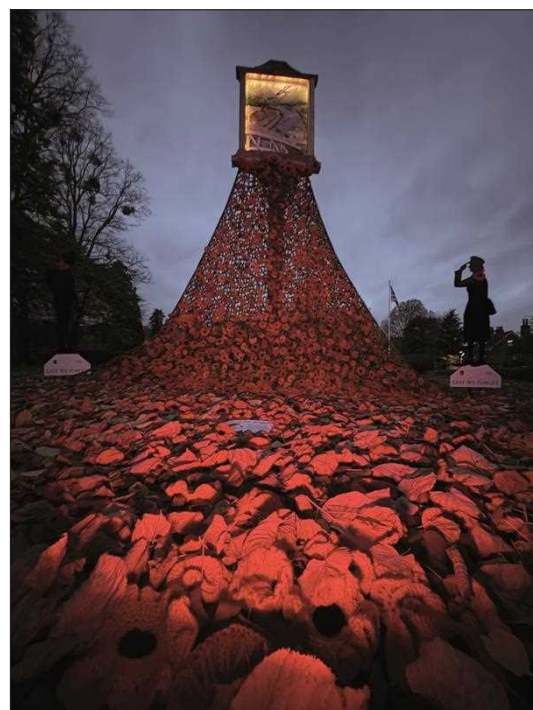
On Monday 3 November a team of ladies from the community groups assembled in Rectory Gardens, ready to put the poppy installation in place. Parish Clerk Sarah Edmunds and Chair of Council, Sonia Lofthouse, braved the wind and climbed ladders to ensure the sea of poppies was firmly attached to the village sign while everyone attached extra poppies, trimmed fixings and helped peg the netting into place, creating a breathtaking cascade of red. Two 'Tommy' silhouettes were then placed at the sides of the net to complete the display and create a sense of watchfulness and respect.

Remembrance plaques were hung throughout the village and a spectacular poppy topper, made by Krys Knox and Sue Farmer, was placed on the post box in the High Street,

Chair of Goring Parish Council, Sonia Lofthouse said: 'The Parish Council is proud to have helped facilitate this poignant tribute. It has been wonderful to see the project take shape and the work and dedication of all involved that has gone into creating so many beautiful poppies.'

Sally Wicks of the Arts Society, Goring added: 'This has been a wonderful community project enjoyed by all involved. Grateful thanks are due to all the volunteers for their commitment and hard work.'

Janet Hurst, of Goring Gap Local History Society reflected that: 'Remembrance Day is always a significant day in the calendar. Goring had many brave men and women who served in both World Wars and with the 80th anniversary of the end of WWII it is fitting to create something that is a true community tribute, perhaps reminiscent of the way people came together to support the war effort all those years ago.'



The poppy display at night

Photo: Sarah Loveland.

The poppy team



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The GAP Children's Film Festival 'Evolves'

Having started life as part of the GAP Festival, Evolve Film Festival has recently launched as a stand-alone event, in partnership with Reading Biscuit Factory. It is run by volunteers who live in Goring and Streatley, most of whom work in the TV and film industries.

Evolve Film Festival will be rolling out the red carpet at Reading Biscuit Factory cinema on Sunday 21 June 2026, celebrating the next generation of filmmakers.

Founder Gary McDonagh says: 'In 2024 we had three times as many entries as our first film festival in 2022. Partnering with Reading Biscuit Factory allows us to give these young filmmakers a true cinema big screen experience which is going to be amazing to showcase their films. Our goal is to grow this into an annual local event with meaningful prizes that help launch creative careers.'

James Ireland, Assistant Manager at Reading Biscuit Factory, added: 'We're thrilled to partner with Evolve Film Festival and welcome young filmmakers to our cinema. Supporting youth creativity and giving them a professional platform to share their work is at the heart of what we do.'

Entries now open

This youth short film festival is open to young people everywhere and entry is free for students from Berkshire and Oxfordshire. Entries can now be submitted!

Film-makers can submit short films made between 2024 and 2026, with three age categories (U11, 12–15 and 16–19). Shortlisted creators will see their work on the big screen before the winners are revealed in a glamorous awards ceremony at Reading Biscuit Factory cinema.

Past winners have received filming kit, BFI vouchers, cash prizes and industry recognition – including a personalised letter from co-founder of Aardman Animations for a stop-motion project.

Why only short films? Gary said that he started his career making the short promotional films that go in between programmes to help promote shows or channels. This was a great way to learn how to be concise with storytelling, to write scripts, plan shoots and use a camera, as well as editing and post production. For young creatives, short films offer the perfect training opportunity to learn all these skills in a short period of time.

And the name, Evolve? This will always be a youth only festival. Like our students who are learning their craft and experimenting with different styles and approaches, their work should always be evolving and we wanted to reflect that in the name of our film festival.

A legacy of the GAP Festival

Ginny Avery, Artistic Director for The GAP Festival said: 'The Children's Film Festival was a project initiated in my first year as Artistic Director of The GAP Festival. We are incredibly proud to see this event now stepping into its own, as a legacy of the festival. We are sure that it will continue to provide young people in our community with the opportunity to explore their creativity and gain recognition of this through the awards. We wish Gary and the team every success and look forward to seeing this expand even further.'



Gary says: 'There are now so many opportunities for local young filmmakers to get jobs and careers in the TV/Film and wider creative industries, right here in Berkshire and Oxfordshire. We want our film festival to be a showcase for that local talent, as well as encouraging young creatives to try and have a go for the first time with making a film. It is really such a fun and rewarding process.'

Evolve Film Festival will be running free film-making workshops from January to March 2026 in Goring and Streatley (as well as in Reading), covering script development, filming and sound/editing.

To join their newsletter, or for information on free workshops or sponsorship opportunities please email:

support@evolvefilmfestival.org or follow on their socials:
Instagram: [instagram.com/evolvefilmfestival/](https://www.instagram.com/evolvefilmfestival/) LinkedIn:

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YouTube: www.youtube.com/@EvolveFilmFestival

To submit films to Evolve Film Festival go to: filmfreeway.com/EvolveFilmFestival

Closing date for submissions is Sunday 29 March 2026.

Gary McDonagh



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MUSIC and ARTS continued

GSCB Clarinet Ensemble recital in St Mary's Church, Streatley

Sunday 19 October saw a splendid and very enjoyable finish to our concerts for 2025. The musicians were all very experienced, accomplished and well-rehearsed and the performance was faultlessly brilliant. The church acoustics also operated in harmony with these woodwind instruments to produce a very mellow and full sound. Thank you to the Clarinet Ensemble members, Cathy Brabben, Louise Brownlee, Linda Cole, Gill Hall, Anne Millsop, David Slarks and Jane Wrottesley and also to the announcer, David Cole, who introduced each piece.

The programme had been carefully chosen to cover a wide range of pieces from different eras and in different styles so there were well loved pieces for all musical tastes and new ones for many of us too. The concert began with the third movement of Schubert's fifth symphony, a well-known piece but one which was written originally without parts for clarinets, this omission being corrected by Arne Dich who arranged it for only clarinets. Further pieces included Juan A Perez's *Andante*, Valentin Hude's bouncy *Rag is Back*, Pergolesi's 1736 sublime *Stabat Mater*, Mahler's light-hearted *In Praise of Lofty Intellect*, John Bratton's *Teddy Bears Picnic*, Daniel Dorff's *It Takes Four to Tango* and then my favourite piece of the afternoon, Robert Bochs's *Andante* and Schmidt's *Minuetto*, not composed together but combined together by Voxmann. The concert ended with Clare Grundman's *Caprice for Clarinets*.

Thank you as always to all our wonderful helpers, especially John Rogers, Elaine Cox and Linda Ogle. The Friends of St Mary's kindly provide tea and cakes and fundraise from any profits (a special extra thank you to the clarinetists who donated cakes as well as music). Finally, many thanks also to all our appreciative and cheerful audience. We could not run without you!

This was the last concert in our 2025 series; the first concert in 2026 is Rachel Neiger, piano virtuoso, giving a recital on Sunday 22 February 2026 at 4pm, followed by FoSM tea and cakes in the Morrell Rooms. In the meantime, lots of Christmas events are happening in the team churches. Plus, if you would like another opportunity to hear the brilliant clarinetists, see Page 43 GS Concert Band and Starter Band Christmas concerts in Goring Village Hall in December.



Clarinet Ensemble Photo: David Slarks

Stella Robinson

Streatley choir now recruiting

We are the resident church choir at Streatley and we lead the singing at Sunday services. We meet on Sundays from 10am at St Mary's Church Streatley, no audition is required. The choir enjoys regular opportunities to join forces with the Goring church choir for joint events and monthly sung Evensongs.

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A great introduction would be to join us to sing Christmas carols at our carol service on 21 December! If interested please contact Elaine on [07766 780549](tel:07766780549).

The music of Thelonious Monk

Pianist and composer Thelonious Monk (1917-1982) was a founding father of bebop. Though his piano style was spikey and percussive, his compositions are easier on the ear, and numbers like *Blue Monk*, *Straight no Chaser* and *'Round Midnight* have become staples of the modern jazz repertoire.

On 10 October, the Goring Community Jazz house trio were joined by regular guests Ewen Baird (tenor sax) and Ross Law (trombone), to pay a musical tribute to the Monk, interspersed with some of his *aperçus* on jazz. The opener was the up-tempo 12-bar *Straight no chaser*, famously recorded by Miles Davis in his 1958 *Milestones* album, with John Coltrane on tenor – to whom Ewen Baird was a worthy successor. *Pannonica* was a sweet melody with some unexpected chord-changes. It is dedicated to Monk's patroness, the redoubtable Baroness Pannonica (Nica) de Koenigswarter, whose New York apartment was a second home to many jazzmen. (Born a Rothschild, she was a 'local' girl, brought up in Waddesdon Manor). Ross Law provided a mellifluous solo and the final chorus was a duet for the two horns. The perky, mid-tempo *Eronel* ('Lenore' backwards) featured a very enjoyable chorus where trombone and tenor sax duetted with just Mike Goff backing them on drums.

In the second set, *Blue Monk* had Baird exploring the endless possibilities of the simple theme and Howard King's bass solo was as accomplished as ever. In *I Mean You*, an angular, staccato theme, Nick Hill snuck a quote from *Take the 'A' Train* into his piano solo. The fruity chords of the ballad *Ruby My Dear* inspired a suitably mellow solo from Law and Baird ended his contribution with a moving unaccompanied cadenza.

I had been waiting all evening for *'Round Midnight*, a haunting ballad in the unusual and tricky key of E \flat minor (six \flat 's!). The melody is so compelling that just playing it more or less straight, as Baird did, is all it needs, though pianist Nick Hill developed some intriguing variations. Ross Law and his trombone sat this one out. Too many flats? Gus McGill

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From humble beginnings to a flourishing boutique – Nicole Mae’s Bridal turns three

When I first turned the key on opening day, the boutique housed a carefully curated collection of just 37 dresses from four talented designers. Fast forward to today and our rails are brimming with over 150 stunning gowns from six incredible designers, each piece chosen with love and an eye for what makes brides feel extraordinary.

We’ve also added something extra special to our collection: an adorable range of ‘mini me’ flower girl dresses.

The dream team

While the boutique remains my passion project, I’m thrilled to have Sarah, our gifted full-time seamstress and dressmaker, as part of the team. With her expert touch, Sarah brings alterations and bespoke designs to life, ensuring every bride walks down the aisle in a gown that fits like a dream and feels uniquely hers.

Recognition we’re proud of

This February brought an exciting surprise: we were selected as finalists for the *Wedding and Honeymoons* magazine’s Bridal Fashion Award 2025. We were also featured in *The Berks, Bucks and Oxon Wedding Magazine* January edition 2025. For our intimate boutique to be recognized among the best in the industry was truly a pinch-me moment and a testament to the dedication we pour into every appointment.

Brides without borders

One of the most heart-warming aspects of our journey has been watching Nicole Mae’s Bridal become a destination in its own right. Brides now travel from



Vita in her dress from Nicole



Nicole Mae

every corner of the country to visit us in Goring. Recently, we had the absolute honour of welcoming a bride who made the journey all the way from Scotland to meet with me and explore our exciting new collection from a talented Ukrainian designer.

Here’s to the future

As we blow out three candles and look ahead, we’re filled with excitement for the countless brides we’ve yet to meet and the special moments still to come. Thank you to every bride who has

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BUSINESS continued

trusted us, every family member who has shed happy tears in our boutique and every person in our community who has supported this dream.

Here's to many more years of champagne toasts, happy tears and helping brides say that magical word, 'Yes' to the dress.

Find us on Station Road in the heart of Goring. Book your appointment today and let's make your bridal dreams a reality: [07745 907105](tel:07745907105) or [0745907105](tel:0745907105) info@nicolemaesbridal.com

Nicole, Sarah and the entire Nicole Mae's Bridal family

Goring's 'Original Pilates' studio turns six

I started Original Pilates to get back to what the essence of what Pilates is really about – simple, effective movement done the right way. And it's been a real pleasure to be such a part of the community in Goring and to see so many people locally benefit from the amazing power of Pilates.

But rather than me telling you about it – I asked Nick Parker, who was the very first person through the doors of the studio when we opened and is still coming six years later!

What first led you to try Pilates at our studio?

I had felt for a long time that my body 'wasn't working right' – I was in my 40s, I had constant slight back pain and was really stiff and inflexible. (Never mind 'touching my toes', I could barely touch my shins). I had wanted to do yoga for years, but whenever I tried a yoga class, I was so far from being able to do any of the positions that I just used to give up frustrated. I was literally thinking about what to do about this when I walked through the arcade and your studio had just opened. I didn't know much about Pilates but I took it as a sign – just do this.

How did you feel about Pilates during your first few weeks or months?

Honestly? – I was quite intimidated by it. I found it both physically very hard, a bit scary (I often felt like I was about to fall off the box) and also mentally quite difficult (where was my 'core'? How do I even connect my brain to that bit of my body? Why do I feel so hopeless at this?). But also – I could tell that something really different and quite profound was happening to my body.

After six years, how has Pilates changed you physically and mentally?

I've made quite a lot of changes to my life over the last six years – I've lost weight, changed my diet significantly, got fitter, more flexible and stronger. I finally started yoga a few months ago. Most importantly, I feel like my mind and my body are 'integrated' in a way that I never imagined was possible for me. Pilates has been foundational and interconnected with all of that.

Can you share a specific moment or tangible result that made you realise the long term impact of your practice?

About 18 months into Pilates, I broke my leg and ankle quite badly (not at Pilates) – Pilates had definitely given me some core strength and movement understanding that meant I was able to do the rehab and physio effectively. If I hadn't been doing Pilates it's unlikely I'd have been able to do the physio properly (a lot of it was similar to Pilates movements). I could easily have been left with a limp for the rest of my life.

What has kept you coming back to our studio?

It's no exaggeration to say that Pilates has changed my life. And part of that is to do with the studio. Because it's small and personal, (max of three in a class) you get personal attention, which definitely made the difference for me. But also – I keep coming back because it's a total no-brainer. To have a world-class facility like this right here on my doorstep? I just want to make the absolute most of it.

What's the one thing you would tell someone who is just starting their own Pilates journey?

If I can do it, anyone can! Just keep doing it regularly, enjoy the process and the results will take care of themselves.

Original Pilates is in Unit 4, The Arcade, Goring: www.originalpilates.co.uk

For more information, call Sophia on [07888 222223](tel:07888222223) or email sophia@originalpilates.co.uk



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Local men admitted as livery company Freeman

In October, Peter West and Julian Kennard achieved one of the highest honours available to those whose lives have been shaped by the River Thames: admission as Craft Owning Freeman of the Company of Watermen and Lightermen. Their achievement represents not only personal milestones but also a continuation of the river's centuries-old tradition of service, craftsmanship, and community. Though their paths differ, both men share a lifelong passion for the Thames and a commitment to preserving its heritage.

Founded in 1514, the Company of Watermen and Lightermen is one of London's oldest guilds. Created under an Act of Parliament by King Henry VIII, it originally regulated the watermen who carried passengers on the Thames and the lightermen who transported goods. More than 500 years later, the Company continues to uphold the spirit of those

who have lived and worked along the river. While its functions have evolved, it remains dedicated to supporting those connected to the Thames, celebrating their skills, and maintaining fellowship within the river community.

For Peter West, becoming a Craft Owning Freeman marks the culmination of a lifetime spent working on and around the water. His admittance reflects decades of dedication to maritime work – from hands-on engineering to passenger transport. Peter began his training at the Berkshire College of Agriculture in Maidenhead, earning a City & Guilds qualification in Marine Craft Fitting Competences (Part 2). This technical foundation led him to Salter's Steamers, one of the oldest passenger boat companies on the Thames, where he worked as both a Passenger Boat Skipper and Engineer. His career later took him to the Environment Agency, where he served as a Marine Engineer and Tug Boat Skipper, helping to maintain safe and efficient navigation along the river.

Today, Peter continues his work with Hobbs of Henley Ltd as a Passenger Skipper and Crew Member, remaining an active figure on the Thames. Beyond his professional commitments, he is an accomplished rower who once represented the Goring Gap Boat Club and Wallingford Boat Club – further strengthening his connection to the river and its sporting traditions.

For his fellow inductee, Julian Kennard, the path to this recognition began when as an 11-year-old he spotted a Salter's steamer gliding past with a jazz band on board – a moment that sparked a lifelong fascination with the river. Years later, while a student, he applied for a seasonal crewing job with Salter's and was quickly recognised for his natural aptitude. Trained as a skipper, he earned his Boatmaster's Licence at just nineteen and spent the next three seasons commanding vessels on the Reading-to-Henley service. Loving river life, he joined the National Rivers Authority (NRA) after graduating, beginning a career dedicated to the Thames.

Julian started as a Boatman maintaining and helming patrol launches before becoming a Patrol Officer on the Lower Thames. At twenty-seven, he became the youngest District Navigation Inspector for No. 1 District, based in Oxford, later serving as Operations Team Leader for the Middle Thames Area in Reading. His leadership expanded into policy and strategic management, including roles as Southeast Waterways Strategy Manager and, later, Vice Chair and Chair of the Association of Inland Navigation Authorities.

Now in a senior national policy position at the Environment Agency, Julian remains closely tied to his roots. He keeps his Boatmaster's Licence active, continuing to skipper passenger vessels. Among his proudest moments was leading a squadron during HM The Queen's Thames Diamond Jubilee Pageant in 2012. In 2024, he captained Hobbs of Henley's vessel *The Waterman* for a royal charter attended by HM The King's Bargemaster and all the Royal Watermen.

Peter and Julian's stories, though distinct, are united by their shared devotion to the Thames. Both men exemplify the qualities that the livery company has upheld for more than five centuries: mastery of the river, respect for its traditions and a commitment to its future. Their careers – one grounded in marine engineering and boat operations, the other in navigation management and leadership – illustrate the diverse expertise that keeps the Thames alive as both a working river and a living heritage.

Becoming a Craft Owning Freeman is not a mere formality. It requires Freedom of the City of London, sponsorship by two existing Freeman and a proven personal or professional connection to the river. For both men, it stands as a professional distinction and a reflection of the values that define the Company – skill, service and tradition.

Richard West



Peter West and Julian Kennard holding their certificates

Photo: Richard West

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Tea party in memory of Linda Rosi

My neighbour, Linda Rosi, passed away on 5 September this year. She was cared for by Sue Ryder so well during the last weeks of her life, that I decided to raise funds for the charity.

Linda loved cake, so on Friday 24 October, I arranged a tea and cake party in her memory. Other friends brought cakes and also prizes for the tombola. Donations, together with the tombola, amounted to £360.

I would like to thank everyone who helped and came during the afternoon. It was lovely to meet so many of Linda's friends and talk together.

Sally Bickerdyke

Towse Court ten-year celebration

Towse Court has celebrated ten years since the new building was opened. Towse Court is a South Oxfordshire Housing Association extra care facility located in Goring in Icknield Place opposite the Fire Station. There are 40 flats with some for rent and others for shared ownership.

On 16 October a buffet lunch was held for about 60 residents, families, friends and many of those that help to maintain Towse Court. Ray Prior opened the event which started with an array of mocktails. Rose Duncan and assistants provided an excellent and varied buffet.

John Adams staged a display of the background of Sir Ernest Towse VC and our most famous resident, Squadron Leader Tom Lecky-Thompson RAF.

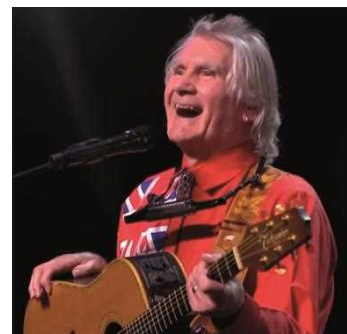
Tom won the race in 1969 from London to New York flying a Harrier with air-to-air refuelling. John himself is a nuclear veteran who witnessed British nuclear tests on Christmas Island. He illustrated something of that experience and how he used his explosives expertise later including blowing up a record number of tall chimneys simultaneously.

Another resident Steve Andrews displayed his car 'Betsie', a lovingly restored 1933 Austin 7 Special. The chassis was rescued from a garden 20 years ago and the bodywork was hand made.



Betsie

Throughout the event we were pleased to welcome the well-known country singer Dave Sheriff. Since his early education in Sonning Common, Dave has travelled the world as a prize winning 'one man band'. His performance at the Grand Old Opry in Nashville USA can be found on YouTube. He has had many TV appearances including this year's *Britain's Got Talent*. Dave kept us royally entertained with dancing to his superb singing and expertise on guitar, harmonica and violin.



Dave Sheriff

Gem Batchellier, the SOHA team manager closed the enjoyable celebration with a toast to Towse Court.

Bob Ridley

Scalextric family fun over the Xmas period?

Once again Goring's Scalextric layout will be open over the festive season (and beyond) for racing sessions.

Over the past four years, many families, birthday parties, team building events, Beavers, Scouts and Probus members have raced on Goring's huge scenic Scalextric layout. This has resulted in a total of close to £5,000 of donations for Parkinson's UK.

Sessions usually take from 60 to 90 minutes depending on numbers and ages and parties of between four and 12 people are ideal. The layout is housed in an insulated double garage in Goring and consists of a 27m long circuit built over a two-year period. The end result is a very impressive computer-controlled scenic layout which

- races up to six cars on the circuit at the same time
- has lane changing to overtake and to enter the pit lane
- uses virtual 'fuel' as cars go around (cars have to 'refuel' in the pit lane)
- has 'Le Mans' style night races with cars and circuit lights
- displays race positions, lap times and fuel levels on a monitor mounted above the layout
- plays sound effects when enter pit lane, get fastest lap, run out of fuel etc
- depicts an Alpine location with mountains, gorges and over 400 fir trees

Racing on the circuit is realistic, competitive and hugely enjoyable! Everyone has a great time and many return visits have been accommodated.

So, when you have people staying, why not arrange a session, have some great fun and perhaps break the all-time lap record (if you can...) and all for a donation to Parkinson's UK.

Call Ron on 07747 764274, or email ronmurray@hotmail.com to arrange a session.

Further information and pictures are available at <https://ronmurray9.wixsite.com/mysite>

Ron Murray




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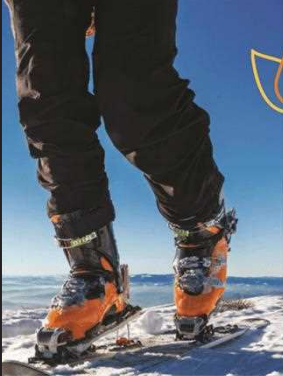
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Sunday 30 November at 11.15am in St Mary's, Streatley and Sunday 7 December at 4pm in St Thomas', Goring. Christingle services. See everyone in the light of a candle, in the love of God and in aid of the work of our CMS partners, Steve and Lindsey Poulson, working with street children in Honduras. All ages welcome.

Sunday 21 December at 11.15am at St Mary's, Streatley and 4pm at St Thomas', Goring. Carol services.

Goring Free Church

Sunday 14 December: 10.30am Family Nativity Service

Sunday 21 December 10.30am Morning service 6.30pm Carols by Candlelight

For more information, please visit: www.goringfreechurch.org.uk

The Catholic Church of Our Lady & St John

Saturday 20 December: Rorate Mass at 7am celebrated by candlelight



Christmas at Goring Library – a real star is coming!

Friends of Goring Library are hanging up their stockings early this year as there are some guaranteed good things arriving in the month of December.

Kate Humble

On Thursday 4 December we're delighted to welcome Kate Humble, well known TV presenter and writer who will be coming to join us at the Morrell Room for an evening to talk about her fascinating life.

Kate has travelled extensively around the world, especially in Africa and has presented a huge variety of programmes – specialising in the areas of wildlife and science, from *Springwatch* to *Top Gear*. She has been a president of the RSPB and is currently president of the Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust. Kate's book *Thinking on My Feet: The small joy of putting one foot in front of the other* was shortlisted for the Wainwright Prize.

We look forward to finding out more about the life and interests of this extremely busy celebrity who is very kindly travelling from her farm in Monmouthshire to support our library, not something she does regularly!

Please book early for this event on Thursday 4th, doors open 7pm for 7.30 start. The cost is £12, to include a glass of wine or a soft drink. Tickets available in the library or online at Eventbrite (search for Kate Humble).



December decorations, craft and the shopping evening

As well as this real star, the library will be decorated with its lovely frieze – now in its glorious fifth year. This time, baubles will be added to the glittering cast of Christmas trees, gifts, snowmen and of course, stars. If you'd like to make a bauble to add, knitted/crocheted/sewn, or even a pompom, do bring it to the Library in December.

Why not come and admire the frieze on the Goring Christmas Shopping Evening on Friday 5 December, when the library will host its famous annual gingerbread man trail – decorate a gingerbread man and find the hidden biscuits around the library.

Sara Boorman

News from 2nd Goring & Streatley Scout Group

AGM and Chocolate Bingo

The Scout Group's AGM was attended by over fifty parents and held on the 14 October. The AGM started with the appointment of a new Chairperson, Jo Baker, new Treasurer, Iain Lattimer and new Secretary, Mary Galer; all were thanked for taking on these important roles. The Group Scout Master then gave a report of the Scout Group's previous year's activities and achievements, followed by a request for leaders, particularly for the Beaver section, as TicTac (Kathleen Cooksley) will be resigning her role at Christmas after giving over 50 years of service to scouting in Goring and Streatley. The AGM expressed their great appreciation for her dedicated service to the youngsters of the two villages.

Following the AGM the parents were joined by the Scout Group members (Beavers, Wolf Cubs and Scouts) for a fun evening of 'Chocolate Bingo'.

Scouts' Mechanics Badge

Over the last few weeks, the 2nd Goring & Streatley Scouts have been learning about car mechanics, how a car engine works, simple maintenance, repairs and essential servicing and weekly checks. They learned practically how to change a wheel, using correct torque spanner measurements etc Scouts were very keen to learn what was required in order to gain their badge, instructed by Scout Master (Stitchy) who is a 'petrol head', knowing almost everything needed in regards to car mechanics.

David Cooksley

Group Scout Master, 2nd Goring & Streatley Scout Group [0118 943 2937](tel:01189432937)

'New' footpath opens in Streatley

A new footpath was unveiled on 24 October by the chair of West Berkshire District Council (WBDC). Tony Vickers unsleaved two new green signs at either end of the footpath, to a round of applause from attendees.

Footpath 21 (FP21) runs from the top corner of Streatley Recreation Ground (next to the playground), cutting through the east meadow to the River Thames.

Designated a footpath in 2004, as part of a planning agreement when The Swan Hotel expanded, it soon became overgrown and impassable. Now it has been cleared and fenced at either side. Two purpose-built bridges elevate users over the wetland. Overall, it is noticeably wide, straight and flat. Connecting to the existing footpath with the boardwalk running from the corner of The Swan Car Park, it also creates a new, mobility-aid accessible route of just over 1km.



East meadow - 2 February 2022



East meadow with new bridge - 5 October 2025



New footpath

Photo: Nick Barnes

At the unveiling the chair of WBDC thanked attendees (and some absentees) for making it happen. Margaret Pawson was thanked for being the member of the Mid and West Berkshire Local Access Forum to bring FP21 back on the agenda in 2020, as was John Ashton and John Boler (of MIGGS) for their continued input. The landowner, The Swan at Streatley, the bridge engineering teams and the council's rangers were also thanked for their cooperation and contributions. The Berkshire Ornithological Society advised on ensuring nesting birds remained protected. Stock proof fencing was supplied thanks to a grant from Mend the Gap.

District Councillor Laura Coyle also gave a short speech. She said that ten years ago, when she was on the Parish Council, she remembers FP21 being on the agenda most weeks and that it gained some notoriety. She thanked residents for their patience. She said the new footpath was important for those who can't manage to use some of the other public footpaths to access the same natural spaces. She was enthusiastic about the circular route, which she said would be popular with families and children.

Margaret Pawson also gave a speech, thanking John Ashton who ran the walking group and helped keep FP21 on the agenda, before then proceeding to be the first member of the public to use the recently unveiled path.

Martin Bosley, WBDC's Rights of Way Ranger, told the *GGN* he started clearing all the brambles last summer. He was responsible for helping contractors to carry out their work. His wife Amy, who also works for the council and uses a mobility aid, expressed her satisfaction at the width of the path. Both of them appreciated the different views it provided of Streatley Hill and the expanse of water meadows.

After attendees used the path for the first time, they were then welcomed to The Coppa Club for complimentary refreshments. Tony Vickers explained to the *GGN* why it was important that footpaths received investment: 'They are healthy for people to enjoy outdoor recreation and they bring people into the countryside and help them to appreciate

nature.' Janet Tuppen, representing Mend the Gap, also commented on the benefits of the footpath, saying it enriches the area and is easily accessible for walkers and anyone who wants to come to the Swan. She said: 'It's important for everyone to have access to wildlife.'



East meadow - fallen trees 2022



West meadow - 3 February 2022



West meadow - 4 October 2025

Elaine Cox, Senior Rights of Way Officer for WBDC agreed with the sentiment. She reflected: 'It lay as a jungle for years ... we had a number of enquiries; nobody knew where it was!' She said there were a number of challenges with the project, including ecological surveys, particularly before tree clearance, because of bats. Another challenge was the uneven ground level. At one point they planned on making a boardwalk across the whole area. She says it was ultimately unnecessary, as the main issue was the drainage ditches running parallel to the river, which the construction of two bridges over them could easily solve.

Elaine did admit that flooding was likely at times, as the groundwater coming from the surrounding chalk hills could take up to a year to appear. However, she said that for most of the year she hopes locals and visitors to the area will be able to enjoy the flat circular path.

The path cost a total of £37,392 (excluding staff costs), including a grant from Mend the Gap of £8,491.

The Footpath 21 project is part of a wider council initiative: the Rights of Way Improvement Plan. This has the main objective of increasing the accessibility of routes in villages.

Elaine said: 'Footpaths are really important to thousands of people and are quietly appreciated. We can tell they appreciate it, because they use them!'

Dan Gordon Potts

Speedgun slightly unnerving?

If you've been driving down Wallingford Road or Goring High Street of late, you may have seen Goring's new Community Speedwatch team raising awareness about the 20mph speed limit in the village. But who are they, why do they do it and are they going to fine you for accidentally driving at 21 mph last week?

Community Speedwatch is a national initiative that has been supported by police forces across the country since 2012. Thames Valley Police launched their local scheme in 2021 and many towns and villages are now taking part. The Goring Speedwatch group was started this year by High Street resident, Michael Rowlands. Michael told GGN that once the 20mph speed limit was set in the village centre, he noticed some drivers were not following it and was concerned.

In September 2024 he took his concerns to Goring Parish Council (apparently 'wandering' in at just the perfect moment!). Councillor Toby Thurston has since helped him get the initiative up and running. Toby says it has taken a year to gather a volunteer team of now eight people and train them up with a course provided by Thames Valley Police.

The main motivation for Michael and Toby seems to be safety. Michael cited widely known research indicating collisions at 30mph are far more likely to be fatal than those at 20mph. Toby said that the village is a safer place for everyone if drivers keep to the speed limit, particularly near the primary school and in the village centre where there are young children and older folk walking on the narrow pavements or crossing the road to the shops.

The people in the team are just volunteers from the village. Anyone can join and new volunteers are always welcome. Toby and Michael confirmed that although the team are all trained by the police, they have no powers except to act as observers and be a visible reminder to drivers. In fact they have to follow strict rules: they can only record in daylight; they can only stand in locations that have been approved by the police; they must wear hi-vis jackets and remain visible to drivers at all times; and they must set up a warning sign 50m in front of the observation site.

Three volunteers are needed to run each session: one to hold the speed gun and the others to record the details of anyone driving too fast. All the details recorded (time, speed, number plate, make, and colour) are transferred to the police Community Speedwatch system. The police check that the details match the DVLA records, and will usually follow up with a letter to the keeper of the vehicle. Repeat 'offenders' may eventually get a visit from a traffic police officer.

But the team were keen to emphasise that they are just trying to raise awareness about speeding; the ideal session is one where they do not have to record anything. They say that feedback has been overwhelmingly positive, particularly from those with young children and those who live in houses along the main roads.

This initiative fits into Goring Parish Council's (and Oxfordshire County Council's) broader plan to encourage 'active' forms of travel, such as walking and cycling, to increase road safety and decrease environmental emissions.

Dan Gordon-Potts





Are you worried about cars and lorries speeding in the village?

Would you like to encourage drivers to respect the speed limit?

Join the Goring-on-Thames Community Speed Watch group

Police-approved training – All equipment provided

For more details contact: Michael Rowlands on 07884 188777 or merowlands@aol.com

supported by GORING-ON-THAMES PARISH COUNCIL

A trip to the Loire: The Arts Society, Goring

In early October, 28 intrepid travellers set forth to discover the delights of the Loire. They sailed from Portsmouth into a magnificent sunset, gliding past the historic dockyards for a mill pond channel crossing to France. The mood was decidedly jolly, fuelled by a decent supper aboard the Brittany Ferry.

The first night was spent at a hotel curiously styled on a Canadian hunting lodge. In the morning an excellent breakfast was followed by a drive through the French countryside to visit Monet's Garden at Giverny. A layer of algae adorned the famous lily pond (to the mild indignation of those wanting a decent photograph), but the house where Monet lived and painted for forty-three years was a delight, with a beautifully coloured rustic interior bathed in sunlight. Monet had an extensive collection of artwork, both French and Japanese. The Japanese tourists seemed particularly intrigued, having travelled round the world, to be confronted by familiar images.

Next day, it was on to Amboise, where Leonardo da Vinci lived and worked for the last three years of his life. He arrived in 1515, aged 64, following an invitation from King Francois I, bringing some of his artwork with him, including the Mona Lisa. He lived at Chateau du Clos Luce, which houses re-creations of his workshops, his library and cabinet of curiosities, as well as a model room containing forty fabulous machines, based Leonardo's drawings, including military engineering and even a flying machine. He is buried at the Chateau Royal in Amboise, the seat of royal power during the Renaissance period.

Another splendid breakfast was followed by a trip to Tours, and a tour of the historic town centre with its lively central square that made an excellent location for a lazy lunch of deliciousness. The afternoon was spent at the Chateau of Villandry, with its stunning world-renowned gardens, including the decorative kitchen garden. There is an abundance of vegetables set amongst boxwood, rosebushes, arbours and fountains, softening spectacular geometric patterns. Then, as every evening, it was home to the hotel for supper, in a private room, with sociable round tables. Generous servings were washed down with Loire wine, to the sound of chatter and laughter.

Chateau d'Azay-le-Rideau was next. It is situated on an island and is a gem of Renaissance architecture, making it the most popular of the Loire chateaux. Then on to the chateau at Saumur, which has a Disney quality. Walt had sketched many of the chateaux in the area to capture his fairy tale castle image. The last stop of the day was a visit to the Abbaye Royale de Fontevraud, established in the Middle Ages as a monastic settlement for both men and women. The English have sometimes been quite careless about where their royalty have been laid to rest, but we do know about Henry II, his wife Eleanor of Aquitaine and their son, Richard the Lionheart: they are buried here (somewhere, not necessarily beneath their imposing tombs). During the French revolution, the Abbey was seized and disestablished before becoming a prison until 1963.

The next day, after some unlucky people failed to secure any chocolate croissant on the 'seagull' test, the coach made its way to the sixteenth century Chateau de Chambord. It is a huge folly, built as a hunting lodge by Francois I, in order to



The Chair of the Arts Society, Diane Varian, on the famous bridge at Giverny
Photo: Rosie Mortimer



Richard the Lionheart's tomb.

Photo: Rosie Mortimer

impress. Leonardo may have acted as an architectural adviser and suggested the idea of the famous double-helix staircase. Then it was on to Chateau Royal de Blois, with its four wings, each from different eras.

The final two chateaux were Chenonceau, a renaissance masterpiece and Cheverny, which has remained in the hands of the same private family for over six centuries. Chateau Chenonceau exemplifies feminine grace. It has stunning white turrets and richly decorated interior. Chateau Cheverny has the feel of a private seat of power for the descendants of the Hurault family. It has an elaborately decorated bedchamber for visiting royalty, magnificent dining and entertaining areas and the largest room in the house is an arms room, displaying a remarkable collection of weapons and armour from the fifteenth, sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. In the garden kennels live a pack of over two hundred hunting hounds - quite a spectacle! It was then back to the hotel for the final 'seagull' test. Suppers were very friendly affairs where conversation flowed about the holiday and what people had been up to for the past few decades. Everyone on the trip seems to have had interesting lives, which often included a good deal of globe-trotting. The mix of people was excellent.

There was one last stop on the way to the ferry at Caen, to visit the ornate Lisieux Basilica of Sainte Thérèse and then back to the ferry for a last supper, slipping over the channel past the shipping lanes, into the darkness. Roll on next October when the Goring Arts Society is off to Spain. Are you going to join us?

Fiona French

theartsocietygoring.org.uk



Some of the group at Cheverny

The Arts Society Goring Volunteering Projects 2024-25

As part of our promotion of the arts, in addition to our lectures, study days, visits and tours we have a small annual budget which we use to support creative, artistic activities in the community. We are passionate about the benefits that creativity and arts education can bring to our community. Here is a brief review of projects we have supported this year and what is still to come.

Film animation workshops for young people

Building on the success of the two children's film festivals held during the GAP Festivals of 2022 and 2024, we have continued to support film animation workshops for young people. We look forward to seeing the results of their creative endeavours in Festival 2026.

Withymead Nature Reserve

A delightful oil pastels workshop for children was held on the reserve by children's author, Emma Shoard. She used her beautifully illustrated book, *Life on the Thames* as a stimulus for children to create their own wildlife drawings and mobiles to take home.

Wallingford School dance workshop

Funding to support the arts in secondary schools has been severely cut over the years so we were pleased to support a contemporary dance workshop for Year 10 GCSE dance pupils and Year 9 pupils considering taking GCSE dance next year. The workshop was led by the James Cousins dance company which had choreographed *Within Her Eyes* (a professional dance performance on the GCSE dance curriculum). The workshop focused on developing contact work, learning dance repertoire and creating a performance piece to be used in the GCSE examination and which was performed to acclaim at the Spotlight dance show in April.

Friends of Goring Library (FOGL)

We funded two different workshops. The first for young children with a parent/carer continued our popular story sack workshop creation led by Lisa Hewlett, to develop storytelling and sequencing skills. Secondly, local artist, Jane Dipple, led another gelli plate printing workshop for primary aged children. The task involved making decorative collage papers using the gelli plates and then cutting out elements of these to create art works and cards.

Remembrance poppies – A community project, with the support of Goring-on-Thames Parish Council

A collaboration with the Local History Society and Cleeve by Goring WI. Please see page 5. This has been a very rewarding community project with over 80 people participating.

If you have a project that you would welcome support for, please contact Sally Wicks, Arts Volunteering Secretary, sally.wicks@btinternet.com

Sally Wicks

Mend the Gap celebrates the completion

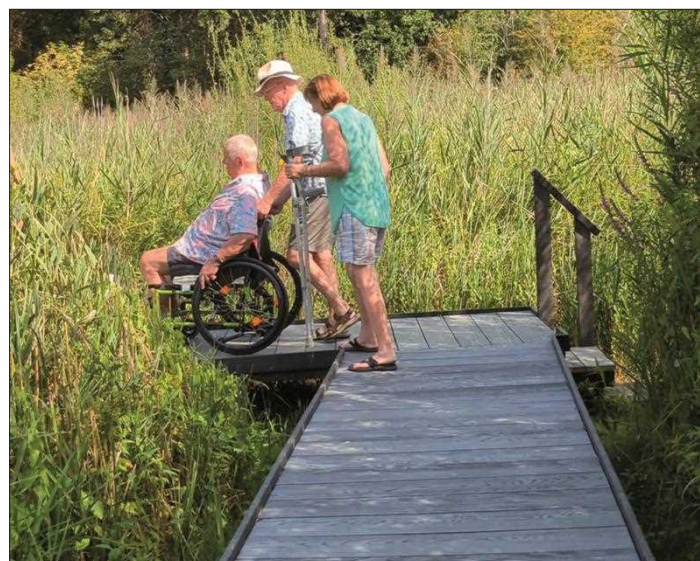
A year ago, I spoke to Ruth Staples-Rolfe, the Programme Manager at Mend the Gap, about the efforts being taken to enrich the Gap's landscape. Checking back in with Janet Tuppen, Project Support Officer at Mend the Gap, it is wonderful to learn that 2025 has seen works in progress become concrete results. The last twelve months have marked many impressive milestones for Mend the Gap and, as the year draws to a close, they are celebrating their success, whilst always looking ahead to their next enterprise.

About Mend the Gap

Mend The Gap was formed on the back of funding provided by Network Rail after they electrified the Great Western Railway and erected metal gantries along the line. The programme is run by the Chilterns and North Wessex Downs National Landscapes, in association with Railway Action Group, which was established to protest about the design of the gantries. Whilst Network Rail did not go along with their suggestions, Mend the Gap's work is helping heal the scars left by the electrification; mitigating and compensating for the visual damage. The underlying chalk bedrock which gives the area its character has some of the most plant-rich habitats in the UK. The scarcity of these remaining habitats means that protecting them is a priority.

Project highlights

Mend the Gap's core mission revolves around two key aspects: nature and community. Whilst the programme is dedicated to protecting and improving our surrounding landscape and habitats, their projects are also designed to bring people closer to nature and are strongly influenced by listening to the

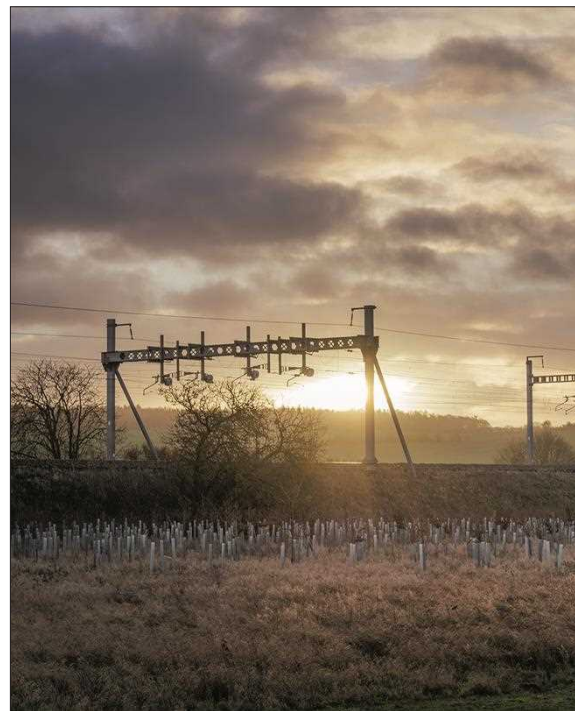


Withymead boardwalk

Photo: MIGGS

wishes of local communities. Janet highlighted how important it is that everyone can feel involved and is awarded agency, especially members of the community whose voices may not be as well represented. She commented that working with people is one of the most rewarding parts of her job. For example, a central tenet to the programme's goals is improving accessibility across the Gap, so

everyone who wants to can benefit from the tranquillity of nature. The partial funding of the new Withymead board walk, which was completed earlier this year and has been in use all summer, is a perfect example. There are also more improvements and events in the works at the reserve. At the end of summer, the new community gardens were completed in South Stoke, creating a communal space for residents to make the most of nature. A pond contributes to the local wildlife and the garden has opened opportunities for community members to grow their own produce. Something which they'll be able to take part in for years to come, a project like this does not just result in a one-off gain but will keep on serving the community long into the future. The Community Gardens have been co-funded by the Trust for Oxfordshire's Environment (TOE).



Tree planting near the railway at South Stoke



South Stoke Community Garden

Photo: Ruth Staples-Rolfe

of several major projects this year



Photo: Dave Olinski

Another venture which has established a sustainable positive cycle is the formation of flower-rich chalk grassland at Rectory Farm at Streatley. Wildflower seed from an established site on the farm is harvested, dried out and sown on other fields that would historically have had a more diverse mix of plants. Spreading the seed from one part of the farm to another ensures that the mix of plants is suited to the local conditions. The second season of harvesting was completed at the end of August and was planted on the next

field in September. Right on the edge of the Ridgeway National Trail, you can already see the results of the project's first year.

On top of creating and enhancing natural spaces, a large part of their work involves connecting the local area with specialised organisations, so that people can not only enjoy their environment, but understand it. This means that landowners and members of the community can continue taking care of the landscape after each project and after the Mend the Gap programme comes to a close in 2028.

For example, The Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust (BBOWT) was funded by Mend the Gap to undertake habitat improvement works at Cholsey Marshes and in the surrounding area and BBOWT Project Officer Phill Brass advised landowners along the Thames on ecological improvements. As part of this, he has also published a handbook on habitat management which is available on the Mend the Gap website.

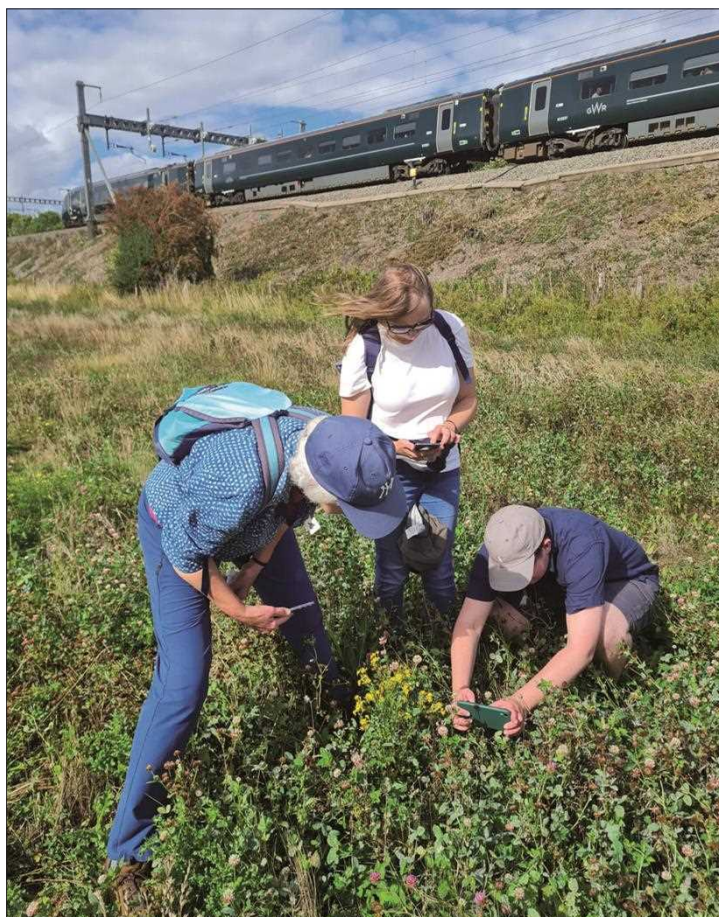
Over the summer, scientists and wildlife champions in local communities gave up their time to run walks and talks for the residents of Cholsey, inspiring a closer affinity with the local wildlife lying right on their doorstep. The success of the 'Springline Project' will be marked by a permanent mural in Cholsey Pavilion, created in partnership with two artists, which will be revealed on 21 November.

What's next?

Having completed several large projects this year, Mend the Gap is by no means slowing down. According to Janet, this is the busiest point of the year, with next year's projects starting to launch, as well as the next round of railway mitigation beginning shortly. This involves planting hedging and trees near the tracks to counteract the negative appearance of the gantries, a task they undertake every winter.

Mend the Gap has many more plans in place for 2026 to enhance the landscape and contribute to the community. Their work goes far beyond allocating funding – Mend the Gap is building a legacy, ensuring that outside engagement and interest within Goring and beyond will continue even after the funding from Network Rail stops. Considering that the work they have done would not have been possible without the dedication of these communities thus far, I am sure this will be the case.

Mend the Gap is always happy to hear from community groups and landowners who have been impacted by the gantries. And if you want to learn more about the Mend the Gap programme, you can visit their website, where they are also launching an interactive map with project case studies, videos and audio interviews this month: www.mendthegap.uk



Springline pollinators

Photo: Springline Project Team



Mitigation planting

Photo: Farming Wildlife Advisory Group

The Gap Hall of Fame

Marshal of the Royal Air Force Sir Arthur (Bomber) Harris, Bt GCB OBE AFC 1892 – 1984

Sir Arthur Travers Harris was born in Cheltenham in 1892 and died in Goring in 1984 at the age of (nearly) ninety-two.

He was born in England but moved to Southern Rhodesia at the age of seventeen. At the start of WWI he joined a Rhodesian unit but later moved back to England and joined up. He learned to fly and joined the RFC (Royal Flying Corps). At the end of the war he remained in what became the RAF in 1918. He served in Mesopotamia (Iraq), Persia (Iran), Egypt and Palestine.

In September 1939 he was given command of 5 Group Bomber Command and was appointed Commander-in-Chief of Bomber Command in February 1942. It was decided that area bombing tactics on German cities should be employed rather than 'precision' bombing of military targets as there was insufficient accuracy for this to be effective. He carried out these instructions to the best of his ability. At the end of the war he was criticised for using these tactics, particularly after the fire-bombing of Dresden which resulted in the deaths of up to 25,000 people.



Statue of Sir Arthur Harris outside St Clement Dane's church in London, the RAF church

Every night hundreds of bombers took off, crewed by thousands of brave young men and every morning many failed to return. Total losses were more than 55,000, which was 44% of the aircrew taking part. Harris felt that the sacrifice of his men was insufficiently recognised by the politicians and he turned down a peerage. Later he accepted a Baronetcy from Winston Churchill who was Prime Minister again then. He remained very bitter to the end of his life. I feel that he was vindicated by the establishment of the Bomber Command Memorial in Green Park of which he would have been so proud.

The Harris family moved to Goring in 1953 on their return from South Africa and lived in Ferry Lane. He owned the field at the bottom of Ferry Lane which was used for archery by the Goring Gap Bowmen. His younger daughter Jaqueline went to school in Cranford House in Moultsford. He is buried in Burntwood Cemetery (White Hill Burial Ground).

Bomber Harris retained his Southern African accent and connections. He had a treasured Ford V8 Pilot and every autumn after being checked over by (the late) Brian Cooke it was shipped out to Cape Town by Union Castle Line and he and Lady Jill spent the English winter there, returning to England in the Spring. I met Bomber Harris a few times. On one occasion

when he learned that I was an anaesthetist in training at St Thomas' Hospital in London he suggested that I should float a pipe across the river to the Houses of Parliament and gas the lot of them! I was privileged to attend his ninetieth birthday lunch at The Miller of Mansfield when he told one of his favourite Van de Merwe jokes (Van de Merwe is a common South African name and is frequently used as the butt of jokes in the same way as the Irish used to be). He was a great character and a great warrior.

Oliver Weldon



Bomber Command Memorial in Green Park, London, unveiled in 2012

Langtree School

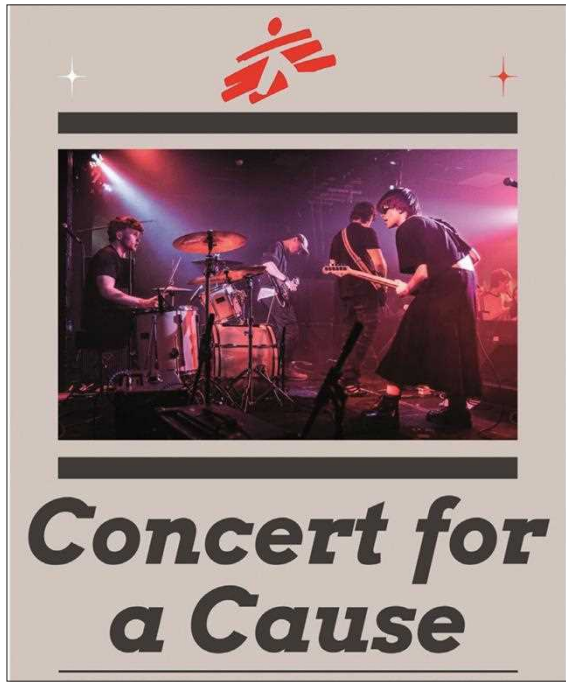
Christmas musical tickets now available

Rehearsals are now well underway at school for Langtree's whole school Christmas production of *Elf – The Musical*. There are students from across the school involved – be it on stage, performing in the band or as backstage crew. The show will be performed on four nights, Tuesday 9 to Friday 12 December. Please see the school website <https://langtreeschool.com> for details of how to obtain tickets, they will be on sale from mid-November.



Kathryn Foster

Concert for a cause



After seeing the suffering in Gaza on the news earlier this year, I felt that I couldn't sit back and do nothing, so I decided to organise a concert to raise money for the charity MSF (Médecins Sans Frontières), also known as Doctors Without Borders. 'Concert for a Cause' is on Saturday 20 December in Goring Village Hall.

MSF is currently active in over 70 countries, doing vital work for people struggling in war-torn areas and in places hit by natural disasters and is saving lives daily.

Their work is particularly crucial in the conflict between Israel and Palestine as well as the genocide caused by the Sudanese civil war, which is labelled as the worst humanitarian crisis at this time. They are also active in Ukraine, helping to treat people injured in the ongoing conflict, as well as in Syria and the DRC.

The concert will feature five local indie bands, each playing a set lasting around 45mins with a short break between each band. Doors open at 4.30pm and bands play 5-10pm.

Tickets are only £7.50 but there is also an option to donate extra or, even if you are unable to come to the concert, you can donate without buying a ticket. To buy tickets/donate, use the QR code or search Eventbrite for Concert for Doctors Without Borders.

There will also be refreshments on sale

on the night, and all profits from the ticket and refreshment sales will be going towards vital healthcare needed for those who are suffering.

I have a goal of raising £1,000 for MSF; however, I really hope to drastically surpass this. I hope that this is an opportunity for us all to unite and show our support for those suffering around the world; even if we, as the people, have no political power to change the ongoing struggles.



Will Paddick (17)

A Goring connection found in Uruguay



Memorial in the German Cemetery in Montevideo

My husband Steve and I have had a home in Goring for a couple of decades, but in 2014 we quit our jobs and set off on a 'Round the World' tour on our motorcycle, Tigger. Ten years later, having 'only' managed to complete a 145,000 km ride from Alaska to Ushuaia at the southern tip of Argentina and a return northward up to Brazil, we came home to Goring in March 2024.

In Argentina, I learned of a connection with our hometown of Southampton, as the Argentinian hero/dictator Juan Manuel de Rosas (1793-1877) had lived and died in exile there. In fact, his farm in Southampton was a five-minute walk from the house in which I was born and grew up.

I was disappointed not to find a connection to Goring on our travels. However, now back home, I was recently delighted to read Oliver Weldon's article about Rear Admiral Sir Henry Harwood, KCB, OBE in October's GGN. When we visited Montevideo, Uruguay on our travels, we had heard all about the sinking of the 'pocket battle ship', the *Admiral Graf Spee*. I had never heard of the ship or battle before and set off on a mission to learn about the history by visiting a local museum, gazing out over the River

Plate and visiting the German Cemetery where her captain and crew were buried.

So finally, I have found my South American connection to Goring.

Incidentally, I found an article in the *Cincinnati Post* reporting that Admiral Harward had died at his home in Gorington-on-Thames. I don't think that name will catch on.

Janette Douglas

Famed Admiral Dies in Britain

LONDON, June 13 (UP).—The death of Adml. Sir Henry Harwood, hero of the battle in which three British cruisers defeated the German pocket battleship Graf Spee, was announced today by his family.

Harwood, 62, died at his home at Gorington-on-Thames last Friday. The death announcement was delayed so that family members out of the country could be notified.

Cincinnati Post article

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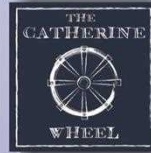
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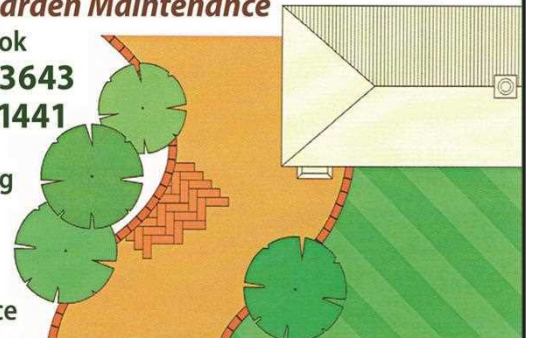
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Goring Cricket Club 2025 season review

1876 2025 was another great season at Goring Cricket Club with a wide number of players and volunteers contributing on and off the field. Our senior teams had a win rate of 68%, coming out victorious in 44 of our 65 games completed. There was some excellent cricket played and a number of memorable performances.

GCC Our Saturday 1st XI, led superbly by Navneet Singh Chawla, made it two promotions in successive years by finishing second in TVL Division 5A. This was a fantastic achievement for a young team and it is great to see how quickly the younger players are developing, supported by a sprinkling of experienced older players who are blossoming in their later years.

The T20 midweek team was its most successful in recent years – securing silverware for the first time by winning the T20 cup in devastating style against favourites Harpsden. Our 2nd XI had a tougher year after winning the league in 2024 – but finishing mid-table in division 9 is a good springboard for a promotion push in 2026.

Our academy at GCC goes from strength to strength – with over 225 players involved from All Stars (5-8 year-olds) up to U17s. There was real success on the pitch, with a number of pools won and finals days being reached. We had a big moment in September, hosting our very first finals day with the Oxfordshire Girls Finals being hosted at Goring. A great achievement for the club and it was fantastic to see our U11 and U13 girls teams competing in the county finals. The steady flow of academy players into our senior teams is very pleasing and we hope to build this out further in 2026.

The club gathered in October at Goring and Streatley Golf Club to celebrate the season at our annual awards night. It was great to see players and supporters from all areas of the club come together for a cracking evening.

Off the pitch, Under 15 player Pip Lord picked up the award for *Clubman of the Year* for his great contribution in senior matches, coaching of our All Stars and general excellent attitude. Keith Walker was our *Non-Playing Clubman of the Year* for his incredible efforts looking after the ground and playing facilities, alongside Peter Irving putting more volunteer hours into the club than can be imagined. Lewis Introna picked up the *Reg Jeffries Long Service* award as recognition for his five years of excellent service as Treasurer as well as superb project management on a number of club events.

Alex Crawford was chosen as the *1st XI Player of the Year* after making the difference in a number of tight games with his disciplined and devastating spin bowling. The *2nd XI Player of the Year* goes to youngster Jackson Galbraith who became the youngest ever Goring player to score a league century amongst a number of excellent innings. Many more runs to come in 2026!

Zac Leonard picked up the *T20 Player of the Year* for his contribution to our successful cup run – going unbeaten in that competition and averaging 94 for the season with the bat. Joe Richards secured the *Sunday Player of the Year* award for the second year running with four fifties and an average of 77.

A hotly contested award once again was the *Young Player of the Year* with the number of academy players now playing in the senior teams. The award was taken home by Alex Gilliam, who impressed with both bat and ball in the 2nd XI, finishing the season with a bowling average of 14.9 and a batting average of 76 – something Freddie Flintoff or Ian Botham would be proud



Pip Lord, winner of Playing Clubman and U15 Bowler of the Year



Alex Crawford collecting his Cricketer of the Year award



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SPORT continued

of! We also saw Will Slade collect the *Fielder of the Year* as he comfortably claimed the most victims and put in consistently excellent performances behind the stumps.

Alex Crawford claimed the *Bowler of the Year* award taking 54 wickets at an average of 10.9, topping the league bowling charts and being the fastest ever GCC player to reach 50 wickets in a season. The *Batsman of the Year* was secured by young opener Joe Richards who had a quite brilliant season in the 1st XI. Overall, Joe scored a mammoth 1,201 runs at an average of 55 and claimed 11 fifties. He also achieved his first ever league century – with an impressive display at league winners Aldershot.

The winner of our flagship award – *Cricketer of the Year* – was Alex Crawford who supplemented his 54 wickets with a batting average of 47, including a league century in his sole innings opening the batting. Alex was also voted *Player's Player of the Year* to claim the *Frank Crook Trophy*.

At Goring Cricket Club, we are excited about the future, are investing heavily in the club and want to get as many of the local and surrounding community involved in cricket at Goring as possible, whether that is a player, supporter, or official. We offer opportunities for all ages and skills, so please contact jonnyrussell100@outlook.com if you are interested in joining or would like more information.

2026 is also a big year for the club as we celebrate our 150th anniversary. Look out for ten days of sesquicentenary celebrations in late August!

Jonny Russell

Chairman, Goring Cricket Club

Sign up now for the Goring 10k – run in support of Goring Primary School



Photo: Simon Booker

The much-loved Goring 10k returns on Sunday 8 March 2026, bringing runners, volunteers and spectators together for one of the region's favourite road races.

Set against the beautiful backdrop of the Oxfordshire countryside, the Goring 10k offers closed roads, chip timing and a friendly, community atmosphere that welcomes runners of all abilities, from those chasing a personal best to those taking part for fun.

Now in its 26th year, the event has become a highlight of the local calendar and is the biggest fundraiser for Goring Primary School. Proceeds from the race have helped provide vital new facilities and resources for pupils, including a school minibus and a refurbished computer room. Whether you're running, volunteering or supporting from the sidelines, come and be part of this fantastic community event on 8 March 2026.

For race entry and further details, visit our new-look website and simplified online booking at www.goring10k.com

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Christmas Toys and Games Exchange

Goring Village Hall, Saturday 6 December, 10am-12.30pm

Save money this Christmas and help prevent unnecessary increases in carbon emissions, by exchanging your children's unwanted toys and games (just the 'good as new' ones, please) to give them a new lease of life! The next Exchange event (aka Swap Shop) will offer families with pre- and primary school age children the opportunity to exchange their outgrown or unused toys and games for someone else's – and for free. Statistics show plastic toys dominate the UK market, accounting for up to 90% of all toys sold. Many of these are perfectly reusable, but not recyclable, so they usually end up in landfill. Every toy or game that's exchanged is therefore one less sent to landfill and avoiding a replacement product needing to be manufactured and shipped, often half way around the world, further increasing greenhouse gas emissions. The Goring Gap Environmental Organisation (GGEO) runs a regular Exchange event, in parallel with its Repair Cafe, six times a year to reduce waste and the next one on 6 December focuses on helping families to reduce the need to buy new toys and games in shops or online.



The environmental toll of discarded toys.

Data from Earth Day 2024 (Planet vs Plastic) suggests that over 8.5 million toys end up in landfills each year. Another report from 2023 stated that 3 million electrical toys alone were sent to landfill in a six-month period. Other research indicates that each child may own several hundred toys and games by the age of 13, most of which are later discarded and a British Heart Foundation poll found that more than a quarter of parents admitted to throwing away toys that are in perfect working order.

The Goring Toy and Games Exchange works on a one-in one-out basis, so you can bring one or up to five toys or games in and take one or up to five different ones away. This event, which will take place in both the Bellême and Garden Rooms, is also a good way to connect with other local families with children and have a cup of tea or coffee and homemade cake and share in our community's effort to live more sustainably. These events are run entirely by unpaid volunteers and so donations are welcome to cover the costs of hiring the venue, insurance and other necessary expenses.

The Goring Repair Cafe will be running in parallel with this Exchange event in the main hall, so you can bring in toys that may need a small repair to try to get fixed, if need be, as well as any other general items in need of repair.

For details of both events, check out the separate Repair and Exchange sections of the website www.goringrepaircafe.info

Ron Bridle

Chess sets raising money for the RNIB

Not everyone plays chess. However, most people (players and non-players alike) appreciate chess sets of character, especially when sympathetically painted to add charisma.

My name is Joe Green; I live in Goring. My hobby is hand painting interesting chess sets and I noticed that many other people enjoy the resulting sets. As a long supporter of the RNIB (my mother lost her sight and the RNIB was invaluable), I decided to sell these unique sets to fundraise for them. Our late Queen Elizabeth was the patron of RNIB and now King Charles in her place. All profits from selling my sets go to the RNIB.

I have more than 50 sets available on various subjects and of different sizes (the heights of kings, for example, vary from 1-5 inches); also, some boards for those who want to display the sets or play. Sets include Romans, Vikings, Greeks, Greek Gods, Elizabeth 1, Henry VIII, King Arthur, Egyptians, Waterloo and Harry Potter, among others.



You may find me at Andrea's Artisan Market, or by phoning me directly on [07967 582549](tel:07967582549). Every set sold helps the RNIB.

Joe Green

Goring and Streatley Community Christmas Gathering

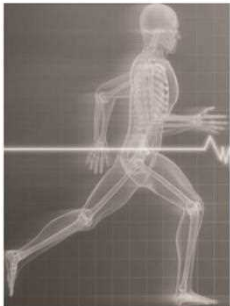
Last month's Grapevine asked for volunteers for the Christmas Gathering. This will take place on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day 12-4pm in Goring Community Centre. More volunteers are needed, especially for Christmas Day. Can you help?

Everyone is welcome – families with children, couples, friends visiting, those of us over 50, those who are on their own for Christmas... and those who want to escape family for a short respite! At some point we have someone coming to play the keyboard, and we will have a carol singalong, but in the main it will be a chance to get to know your neighbours over a cuppa, biscuit or cake. Everyone is welcome to pop in for as long as they like. For the younger members of the community there will be some colouring books, and pencils supplied by the wonderful Jeanne and Kevin of Inspirations.

If you can bake a cake or mince pies to donate, we would be very grateful, but please let me know in advance. We are hoping to get eight groups of at least two people to host for an hour each on one of the days so that no one must miss out on Christmas Eve last minute shopping or Christmas dinner on the day itself.

If you are available to help, please contact me: Dee Singleton, at Reeds Art and Framing in the Arcade or telephone [01491 902122](tel:01491902122), email dee@reedsartandframing.co.uk

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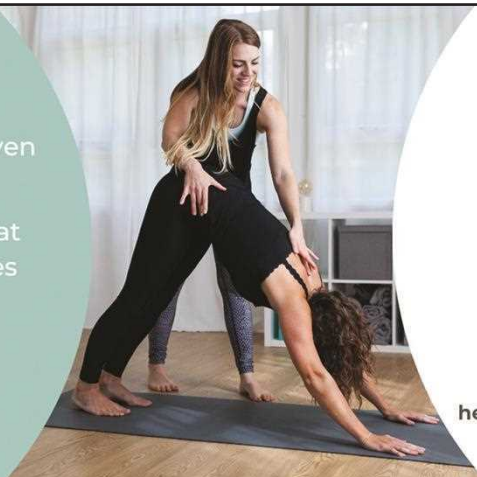
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LIVES REMEMBERED

Dr Katharine (Katy) Barnwell 9.8.1938 – 29.9.2025

Friends at Goring Free Church give thanks for the life of Katy Barnwell, who died after a short illness on 29 September 2025. A much-loved member of our church family, Katy was known for her gentle spirit and sharp mind – yet few people locally knew that she was internationally recognised as perhaps the most influential figure in modern Bible translation.

Katy was born in London in 1938 and spent her early childhood during the Blitz. After studying English Language and Literature at St Andrews University, she discovered both a personal Christian faith and a fascination with linguistics. These two passions came together when she joined Wycliffe Bible Translators and its partner organisation SIL International.

In 1964 she moved to Nigeria, then newly independent, to begin work with the Mbembe people – learning their unwritten language from scratch and helping to translate the New Testament. Nigeria became the base for a remarkable career that would span six decades, several continents and hundreds of languages.

Decades ahead of her time, Katy developed a unique approach: training local people to do the translation, rather than relying on outside experts to do the work. Starting with Mbembe speakers, who by now had the New Testament in their language, she trained them to translate the Old Testament into Mbembe and then broaden their work into other dialects. This proved effective not only in empowering the local church but also significantly accelerating the pace of translation.

Her approach caught on and soon she was in demand to oversee similar work around the world. In 1975 she published a textbook, *Bible Translation: An Introductory Course in Translation Principles*, which became the primary training resource for Bible translators worldwide and is now in its 4th edition. Katy's vision changed the face of global translation work and has shaped projects in thousands of languages, making the Bible available to literally millions more people. Colleagues across Africa affectionately called her 'Mama Katy'.

Though she never retired as such, in later life Katy returned to her house in Goring, continuing to mentor translators daily over Zoom and worshipping faithfully with us at Goring Free Church. We remember her with gratitude – for her friendship, her servant heart and a lifetime quietly devoted to helping people everywhere hear God's word in their own language.

Anyone interested in reading more about Katy can find her biography on Amazon: *Katharine Barnwell: How One Woman Revolutionised Modern Missions* by Jordan Monson, published earlier this year.



Derek Carter 25.08.1935 – 18.10.2025

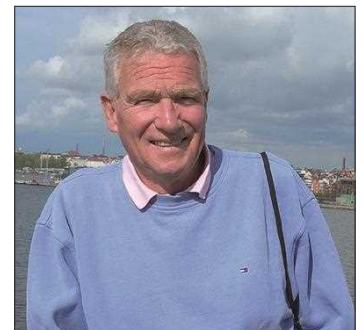
Derek recently passed away at 90 years old after a short illness. He remained an active and dedicated member of a wide range of clubs and societies and treasured a wide and diverse group of friends from throughout his life.

Born in Bristol in 1935 to William and Kathleen Carter, he attended Bristol Grammar School before completing his National Service. After two years spent in the UK and Germany, he returned to study at Bristol University where he became a member of the Climbers' Club, beginning his life-long love of being in the hills. Finishing university, he started his career in social care as a Probation Officer in Stoke on Trent. In 1963, on a skiing holiday in Austria, by chance he met his wife-to-be, Linda. They married in 1964 in Chingford and settled in Stoke. Derek had always been involved in the Scouts and became a scout leader, leading the Staffordshire Scouting Contingent to the World Jamboree in the United States. Robert arrived in 1967. Promotion to Senior Probation Officer meant a move to Banbury and Julia was born whilst there. In 1972 he joined the Social Services Department in Reading and the family moved to Goring, where they have happily remained ever since, Derek commuting to Wandsworth when he was Director of Residential Care for the Borough, rather than moving.

In Goring, Derek became a member of Round Table and later 41 Club where he participated in all the fund-raising activities and entertaining the ladies on Ladies' Night. Derek and Linda made many lifelong good friends there. He loved all kinds of music and joined the Goring & Streatley Concert Band where he learned to play the trumpet – although he never made 1st trumpet, he loved being part of 'the band'! He maintained his links with scouting as the secretary of 1st Goring on Thames Scouts for many years.

Derek took up golf very belatedly and enjoyed it mostly for the company rather than the sport. After he retired, he enjoyed all kinds of activities – completing a foundation course with the OU on English Literature and Art and later starting a book group with his friends. He researched the history of the original 1st Goring on Thames Scout Group and wrote a book about it. He was the Secretary of the Community Centre for nine years and held several posts in the Probus Club, being very proud when he finally became President. He started the local u3a by calling for a meeting in the Village to discuss the idea and it became a thriving society. He also loved board games and led a mahjong group. Latterly, he joined the croquet club, where he made many new friends.

Throughout his life, he loved to be in the hills. He and Robert had regular trips to the Peak District, the Lakes, North Wales and Scotland. Once retired, Derek was able to trek further afield and went to most of the mountain ranges throughout



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LIVES REMEMBERED continued

Europe, as well as trips in this country. His greatest expedition was to Everest Base Camp when he was 65. He enjoyed travel, latterly cruising with Linda throughout Europe and visiting beautiful cities; particularly enjoying visiting cathedrals and churches. He and Linda made very many trips to the United States where Julia and her family have lived for over 30 years.

Derek was an energetic man, full of enthusiasm for life. He was devoted to his family and his grandchildren gave him great joy. Celebrating his 90th Birthday surrounded by his whole family was one of the best days. He will be massively missed and fondly remembered.

Would you be interested in joining our Trustee group at Withymead Nature Reserve?

This is an exciting opportunity to get involved in a decision making and advisory role for a small, local charity that seeks to promote, protect and preserve the flora and fauna found in and around Goring-on-Thames, Oxfordshire and to utilise the reserve for the general education and benefit of the public with regard to nature.



Withymead Nature Reserve (www.withymead.org) is a 13-acre riverside wetland site midway between Goring and South Stoke. The site is a hidden gem and encompasses a variety of habitats within a relatively small acreage. Riverine, fenland and woodland habitats support a profusion of flora and fauna. It is owned and managed by The Anne Carpmael Trust (CIO), a registered charity.

We are seeking someone to join the Trustee Board, ideally someone who will 'roll their sleeves up and get stuck in'. Trustees currently meet formally three times a year. We are a friendly group, and we work as a team with our resident wardens. All trustees are expected to support some events and open afternoons which are held during the spring and summer months when the reserve is open to the public, and some of our 'Withymead on tour' events when we are fundraising for specific projects.

If you have a passion for preserving special places and for sharing them with others and the time to get involved behind the scenes and during our open season – this could be for you.

If you think you may be interested and would like to know more, we'd love to hear from you. You are most welcome to visit the reserve.

Jenny Hedge

Chair of Trustees, Anne Carpmael Trust (CIO), email trustees@withymead.org

Harvest time at Goring Primary School

One of the many highlights of the school year at Goring Primary School is our Harvest Celebration when the whole school community of children, teachers and parent helpers walk to St Thomas' Church for our Harvest Service. Walking to and from the church, the older children pair up with a child from one of the younger classes.

After the service, when we had returned to school, the children in Ibis class wrote about their day. Here are some of their reflections:

'This year we got to walk with our little brothers or sisters in Reception class. It was fun! I also got to walk with my granny who was helping. I loved it!'

'When we got to St Thomas', Mrs Wheatcroft (our headteacher) greeted us with a warm smile. The Worship Squad acted out a story called *Frank and the Pea Stalk* with artwork from Robin and Goldcrest class. Ben talked about Fairtrade so now I finally know what the symbol on food means.'

'Nightingale and Owl classes made pictures of fruit and vegetables and Ibis and Greenfinch made pictures of autumn leaves.'

'We sang songs, said a few prayers and had stories. Ben told us about Fairtrade and how people get paid fairly if the food has the Fairtrade logo on it. Ben also pointed out that the logo can look like a bird but you are meant to see a person waving against a background of grass and sky.'

'When we were walking home, my partner and I both felt hot and took our coats off. I carried my partner's coat for her as she was younger than me, which made me realise what it is like to be a parent!'

'When we got back to the school, everyone was really tired from walking. I was too! For me, it was a successful trip to the church at harvest time.'

When you read this article, the children will be busy rehearsing for our nativity productions, carol service, Christmas concerts, Christingle service and singing carols at some of the care homes and in the Goring arcade for the late-night shopping. We hope you are able to enjoy one of these events with us.



Harvest artwork

Photo: Mrs Parkinson

Audrey, Emily, Maya, Toby and Tom from Ibis Class



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Update on proposed weight limit on B4009 at Streatley Hill

Once again, 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 weight limit on Streatley Hill in order to stop through HGV traffic using the B4009 as a short cut, becoming stuck at Streatley Cross Roads, creating traffic chaos and damage to the adjacent buildings.

In total there were 125 respondents to the questionnaire, once again a very high response in a relatively small community such as ours, demonstrating the strength of feeling about this matter. 98% were in favour of the imposition of a weight limit, with 66% suggesting it should be a 7.5T limit as opposed to an 18T limit.

Particularly helpful are the many respondents who supplied additional comments, anecdotal evidence or raised further questions as to what might be the knock-on effects of a weight limit.

To address some of the main concerns raised about a weight limit: As this would be imposed for the 'quiet enjoyment' of the community (as opposed for structural reasons), such a limit would not prevent vehicles over 7.5T using the road for legitimate access reasons, such as local deliveries, nor prohibit use by school buses, farm and agricultural vehicles, emergency services etc It would however become an offence for an HGV over the prescribed weight limit to use the road as a through route.

Although signage and a weight limit would not be 'foolproof' in stopping illegal usage, it would certainly gradually stop those vehicles which are blindly following their navigation systems. It is interesting to note that the West Berkshire Council Freight Strategy shows the B4009 at Streatley (and all other villages to Newbury) as being unsuitable for through HGV traffic and so all the more surprising that this has never been formalised by clearly designated road restrictions and accompanying signage.

While accepting that a weight limit would significantly reduce the number of HGVs erroneously using the B4009, it is equally accepted that not all HGVs would abide by any imposed limit. Realistically, at present West Berkshire are unlikely to provide enforcement. However, a local voluntary group, similar to the Community Speedwatch, should be able to provide photographic and other evidence of infringement to the authorities who would in turn bring action against the offenders. Wiltshire Council – who recently voted to designate all B roads as 7.5T to stop HGVs using narrow lanes at a short cut – are proposing to use ANPR cameras for enforcement. So perhaps down the line other methods of enforcement may become more readily available.

Moving forwards West Berkshire Council have advised that they do not have the capacity to consider this matter in the current fiscal year (ending March 2026). However, armed with your excellent support, Streatley Parish Council now intend to press to have the imposition of a weight limit on the B4009 at Streatley included in the 2026/2027 work program.

We will of course provide updates as the matter progresses.

Adrian Lockwood
Streatley Parish Council

Join us for a long weekend in France

This is the time of year our thoughts turn to holidays and short breaks. How about coming for a long weekend in France with Whitchurch & Goring Heath Twinning Association? The dates for 2026 are Friday 15 May – Monday 18 May.

We can promise you a wonderful time, with the chance to make new friends, both French and English. Our twin is the pretty village of La Bouille, on the banks of the Seine, near Rouen. Our friends there provide incredible hospitality in their homes, plus they arrange outings and special joint meals.

All this comes at a very reasonable cost, as we stay in private homes. The only expenses are for the travel, usually a small gift for your hosts and any items you may want to buy yourself during the weekend. On alternate years we enjoy welcoming and hosting them back here in our own homes.

We would love you to come along and join us, all ages, individuals and families, are welcome. In case you're wondering, no, you don't have to speak the language. Some people do, others don't, but there is a lot of fun to be had with *franglais* and gesticulations!

It's always good to have something to look forward to, so book now. Contact Wendy Ferguson [07506 123163](tel:07506123163)
wendyefergie@gmail.com

Su Fung

Goring Repair Cafe, 6 December



The last Repair Cafe before Christmas is on Saturday 6 December in the main hall of Goring Village Hall, 10am-12.30pm. Bring in any product (up to two items) and the skilled team of up to 15 repairers will do their best to restore them to good working order. (Unfortunately Christmas tree lights are not likely to be repairable).

Doors open at 10am until 12.30pm. For full details visit www.goringrepaircafe.info

Everyone is welcome to come for tea and cake in the Bellême Room and to see the Toy Exchange happening at the same time.



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Streatley Parish Council

The principal points of the Parish Council meeting on 13 October are summarised below. The official minutes can be seen at www.streatley.org or by contacting the Clerk at clerk@streatley.org

Planning applications

- 25/02154/HOUSE Westlinks Cottage, Rectory Road, Streatley, Reading, RG8 9QA. Refurbish and extend an existing dwelling including a single storey rear extension and two-storey side extension. Received Mon 22 Sep 2025. Consultation Thu 16 Oct 2025. Council do not object.
- 25/02122/HOUSE Hillview, Townsend Road, Streatley, Reading, RG8 9LH. Replacement conservatory. Received Thu 18 Sep 2025. Consultation Fri 17 Oct 2025. Council do not object.
- 25/02071/FUL Land at Golden Hill, Reading Road Streatley Reading. Formation of a new access onto a classified road. Received Thu 11 Sep 2025. Consultation Tue 21 Oct 2025. Council do not object.
- 25/02224/TPO Snowdrop Cottage, High Street, Streatley, Reading, RG8 9JD. Lime: Re-pollard. Received Thu 25 Sep 2025. Council do not object.
- 25/02281/HOUSE Ickleton Fields, Wantage Road, Streatley, Reading, RG8 9PY. Proposed detached oak framed garage with studio. Received Mon 06 Oct 2025. Consultation Wed 29 Oct 2025. Council do not object on the proviso that the new building is not to be used as a separate dwelling as also noted under an existing covenant on the land.
- 25/02282/HOUSE Yarnton House, High Street, Streatley, Reading, RG8 9HY. Timber orangery to replace the existing conservatory. Received Mon 06 Oct 2025. Council do not object.

Decisions by WBC

- 25/01636/HOUSE Lardon House, Wantage Road, Streatley, Reading, RG8 9LD. Erection of four bay garage with overhead storage to serve Lardon House on contiguous vacant land. Streatley Parish Council do not object, noting that installation of a 'garage' does not undermine the terms of the legal covenant applicable to the property. The garage is not to be converted into a dwelling. Approved 24/9/25
- 25/01815/COND Lower Thurle, Rectory Road, Streatley, Reading, RG8 9QH. Approval of details reserved by Condition (5) Tree Protection of planning permission 25/00179/HOUSE: Single storey extension with 1st floor extension above North wing. Refurbishment. Council do not object. Approved 25/9/25

Next meeting

The next Council meetings will take place in the Morrell Room on Monday 10 November 2025 and Monday 8 December at 7.50pm. See www.streatley.org for the agenda.

Goring-on-Thames Parish Council

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

- A budget of £725 was approved for an initial engineer site visit for pedestrian safety projects identified and approved by the Travel and Transport Committee. The five proposed projects are:
 1. Manor Road/High Street junction: introduce a new uncontrolled pedestrian crossing including a pedestrian refuge.
 2. High Street (Social Club): introduce a new straight across uncontrolled pedestrian crossing.
 3. High Street raised table: improve the conspicuity of the existing pedestrian crossing.
 4. Boathouse parade: introduce a new pedestrian crossing or dropped kerbs outside Pierrepoints and replace one or more of the existing on-street parking spaces with a parklet or build-out
 5. Reading Road: improve pedestrian accessibility.

After the engineer's site visit, the next step will be further public consultation.

- A budget of £400 was approved for Speedwatch signs.
- A budget of £20,000 for the surfacing of the existing right of way along the southern edge of the Ferry Lane Open Space was approved.
- The Council approved the job description and person specification for a new part-time post of Grounds and Facilities Manager for the Parish (approximately 2.5 days per week). The role will be advertised (see below).
- The Council reaffirmed that the notice board in the Arcade is the primary official noticeboard for Parish Council communication.
- The Council voted to continue the experiment of livestreaming selected meetings, with livestreaming on the GPC YouTube channel to be accessed via a link available from the Clerk in advance.
- The Council approved a new contractor to be instructed to take on the maintenance of the Jubilee Garden under the auspices of the new Grounds and Facilities Manager.
- The Council noted the Autumn Village Cleanup day is 8 November and approved a budget of £300 for advertising, purchase of brooms and leaf collectors.
- The Council noted with concern an increase in dog mess on the recreation areas and approved the Clerk to take action to improve the situation.

Next meetings: Bellême Room, Goring Village Hall 10 November and 8 December 7.30pm See www.goringparishcouncil.gov.uk for the agenda.

Grounds and Facilities Manager – Goring-on-Thames Parish Council

Are you an experienced facilities professional looking to make a difference in our beautiful Goring Gap village where two National Trails meet? Goring-on-Thames Parish Council are seeking an organised, hands-on Grounds and Facilities Manager to ensure our parish remains safe, clean, and welcoming. You'll lead the maintenance of our grounds and facilities, oversee contractors, carry out inspections and reports, and ensure all standards and procedures are met. This is a varied role combining practical work with administration and coordination.

The Council is looking for someone with solid maintenance experience, excellent organisational skills, and a community-minded approach. You'll work closely with the Clerk team and contractors. This is a part time role of 0.5 full time. Equivalent full time salary: £29,540 – £36,363 (SCP 14-25). For the full job description see www.goringparishcouncil.gov.uk/meetings/staffing-committee/vacancies/
Closing date for applications 26 November. Interviews w/c 1 December. Contact: clerk@goringparishcouncil.gov.uk

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- **Local pharmacies** can offer advice and treatment for some conditions. Goring Pharmacy: **01491 872124**
- **Nearest First Aid Units:** Townland Hospital, Henley **01865 903755**, or West Berkshire Community Hospital, Thatcham **01635 273508**, or Abingdon Community Hospital **01865 903476**
- **Goring & Woodcote Medical Practice:** Monday-Friday 8am-6.30pm **01491 680686** Requests for appointments are triaged to direct patients to the correct help and should be made using the form available at www.goringwoodcotemedicalpractice.nhs.uk If you are unable to use the form, the practice can be contacted on the above number to support you.
- **Nearest Casualty Department:** Royal Berkshire Hospital, Reading **0118 322 7020**
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- **Goring transport office** – 10am-12noon Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, to arrange volunteer transport to local surgeries, dentists and hospitals **01491 873565**.

GORING AND STREATLEY CONCERT BAND, CHRISTMAS CONCERTS

Two opportunities to support your local Concert Band and get you in the Christmas mood!

Sunday 7 December: Goring and Streatley Concert Band, Christmas Concert. 3 – 5pm, GVH. Join us for some seasonal music and carols, and hear the first performance of our new Flute Ensemble. Tickets £12 / £6.

www.trybooking.com/uk/FLMR, on the door (cards only) and via www.goringandstreatleyband.co.uk

Sunday 14 December: GSCB Starter Band Christmas Concert. 4-5pm GVH. Come and help us celebrate our Christmas Cracker! A wonderful one-hour romp through carols and seasonal favourites for all the family. All in support of Goring and Streatley Young Musicians Trust. Tickets, £7.50 and £2.50 www.trybooking.com/uk/events/landing/97096.

FESTIVE FUN AT THE SOCIAL CLUB

Goring Social Club invites the children of our members and their guests to a free afternoon of festive fun! Join us on Sunday 14 December, from 3-5pm, for a fantastic show featuring two very special guests: Father Christmas and the hilarious Cookie the Clown. Cookie will bring a lively, fun-packed show, featuring magic, games, music, colourful balloon animals and plenty of silly jokes. Snack and a drink. This is a free event, but due to high demand, advance tickets are essential to guarantee entry. Secure your free tickets by popping in to the Club and asking at the bar. Don't miss out!

AN EVENING WITH KATE HUMBLE

On Thursday 4 December, Friends of Goring Library (FOGL) are delighted to be welcoming to Goring and Streatley writer and broadcaster Kate Humble for an evening of chat. Kate is a familiar figure on our televisions but she is also an author of a variety of books as well as a writer for various publications. We look forward to finding out more about the life and interests of this extremely busy celebrity who is very kindly travelling from her farm in Monmouthshire to support our library, not something she does regularly! Please book early for this event at Goring Library. Doors open 7pm, talk starts 7.30pm. Tickets, £12 to include a glass of wine or soft drink. Tickets available on Eventbrite and from the library. See P19.

GORING CHRISTMAS FAIR

It's time for Goring's annual seasonal spectacle. The Christmas fair will be on Friday 5 December from 4-8pm. It has been such a success in the past due to support from our lovely local residents. We have confirmed the fire engines will be there, with lots of food and music on the evening as well as our guest star Santa who will be hosting a grotto in Inspiration. The Craft Fair will be in full swing with tables in the Arcade and dotted about the village. Local shops will be running their own promotions so pop in to the shops and have a look around. The Free Church will be having hot chocolate with marshmallows and putting on all sorts of family activities. The Library will have a gingerbread trail and decorate a gingerbread person. There is too much happening to mention all, so come and see for yourself. We hope everyone will come and enjoy and support us on the day.

Further afield

WITHYMEAD ON TOUR 2026

Withymead Nature Reserve is going on tour! We're running the Woodcote Community Coffee Shop 10am-12.30pm, on Saturday 24 Jan. We'll have our delicious signature cakes and bakes, tea and coffee for sale, plus second-hand books, merchandise and a really great raffle too. It's in aid of our fundraising campaign to raise £115k to replace the last section

of our old precarious wooden boardwalk and footbridge, with a new accessible boardwalk and step-free bridge so that everyone can enjoy the freedom of being outdoors. It will also connect to last year's new section to reinstate the continuous loop through the wetland reedbeds. The Coffee Shop is in the community centre next to the Library, on the Reading Road in Woodcote. Join us to find out why it matters, what your support will achieve and the difference it will make, as well as enjoying some very good cake!

SUE RYDER, CELEBRATE A LIFE THAMES VALLEY

Join Sue Ryder this December for Celebrate a Life Thames Valley, a special event bringing together families, friends and the community to remember and honour those who have died. Taking place at The Barn, Purley on Thames, RG8 8DR at 4 pm on Sunday, 7 December, the winter remembrance event offers a safe, warm and supportive space for those living with loss. Attendees will have the opportunity to write a personal dedication to someone special and add their name to our dedication screen, as well as listen to readings and enjoy live music. Sue Ryder Celebrate a Life Thames Valley is open to everyone, regardless of when someone special died or if they were a patient of Sue Ryder, Limited spaces are available. For more information and to register visit sueryder.org/RememberThames or contact thamesvalley.fundraising@sueryder.org or call 01535 640430. Sue Ryder offers a range of free grief support to help people learn to live life with grief in it. Visit sueryder.org/Grief

WALLINGFORD PHOTOGRAPHIC CLUB

Wallingford Photographic Club wallingfordphoto.club continues into winter with talks, presentations, competitions and practical sessions. We meet on Thursdays from 7pm at Crowmarsh Pavilion, with a handful of sessions online during the season, to make the most of inviting speakers from far away.

On 4 December we have a talk from Ted Kinsey called *Under Tracks*. Ted is a photographer specialising in black and white images, and shoots only on film. On 11th we have a club social featuring a quiz.

In the new year the opening evening on 8 January is sharing progress on our themed assignments. On 15th we have our first external competition of the programme - a second match-up against a photography club based in Spain (so an online-only session). The 22nd will be a club night where we collaborate to select images that will be entered into the upcoming *Intimate Landscapes* competition. Followed by our second internal unthemed competition of the season on 29th.

BENSON CHORAL SOCIETY, BACH'S CHRISTMAS ORATORIO

What better way to start the Christmas season than with Benson Choral Society's performance of J S Bach's *Christmas Oratorio* at 7.30pm on Saturday 6 December in Dorchester Abbey? Bach made this compilation from the series of six cantatas written in Leipzig for the Christmas feast-days in 1734/5. It's a powerful account of the Christmas story and promises to be special in a number of ways: it's the first concert with our new Musical Director, Tom Neal, who has a strong affinity with this work: to bring out its baroque authenticity we have the renowned period orchestra, Instruments of Time and Truth; we have a quartet of sparkling soloists: Julie Cooper - Soprano, Jacob Werrin - Countertenor, Toby Ward - Tenor and Daniel Tate - Bass. Don't miss this opportunity! Get tickets now for £20 reserved, or £17 unreserved, online at www.bensonchoralsociety.org.uk



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Saturday 22 November

- **Goring Gap Players, Bell, Book & Candle** Final performance MR. Doors open 7.30 for 8pm. Tickets: £12.50.
- **The Goring Craft Fair** GVH.

Sunday 23 November

The Goring Craft Fair GVH.

Tuesday 25 November

Chess Club, Children 4.45-5.45pm, Adults 5.45-7pm, GL.

Wednesday 26 November

• **The Arts Society Goring**. 11am and 2pm, GVH. *The Paintings & Wit of Winston Churchill & Noel Coward*: Speaker: Nicholas Reed. Guests are welcome to attend for £5 through prior booking email: info@theartssocietygoring.org.uk Details of all events and activities may be found at www.theartssocietygoring.org.uk

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

Thursday 27 November

Goring Gap u3a. 10.30-12noon, GVH. Speaker: Tim Healey. *A 17th Century Christmas*.

Friday 28 November

- **Bingo/meat draw**. GSC, 8pm.
- **Goring Unplugged**. 7.30pm for 8, GVH. Entry is £5. BYOB + nibbles.

Saturday 29 November

Live music. M'Jojo, 8pm, GSC.

Sunday 30 November

Musical Mystery Tour Family Cushion Concert. 3pm, MR. With Simon Mayor and Hilary James. Tickets £10 from Eventbrite or [0118 926 8615](tel:01189268615) or mail@mandolin.co.uk

Monday 1 December

- **Goring Mobile Post Office**. 8-11am, Westholme stores, Wallingford Rd, Goring. Every Monday and Thursday.
- **Goring and Streatley Bridge Club**. 6.45pm, GVH. Held every Monday

Tuesday 2 December

GLib Library Book Group. 5-6pm, GL. See library staff if interested.

Wednesday 3 December

- **Goring Gap News**. Copy deadline for December events. News and articles of local interest goringgapnews@gmail.com
- **Crib Evening**. Social Club, 7.30pm
- **Stay and Play**. 10-11am GL For under 5s and carers. 1st Wednesday of the month.

Thursday 4 December

Goring Mobile Post Office. 8-11am, Westholme stores, Wallingford Rd, Goring. Every Monday and Thursday.

• **Storytime**. 10.30-11am, GL.

Drop in. Every Thursday.

• **An Evening With Kate Humble**. 7.30pm, GL. See pages 19 and 43,

Friday 5 December

- **Bingo/meat draw**. GSC, 8pm.
- **Goring and Streatley Wine Society**.

8pm, GVH. As another year passes the Wine Society is pleased to welcome back our founder Tim Syrad who will present the Christmas Extravaganza. This will be an exceptional range of wines that have made the headlines in 2025. Please bring some finger food for afterwards and enjoy a little more Christmas cheer. Any enquiries to gswwstreasurer@outlook.com

Saturday 6 December

• **Goring Repair Café** (see page 41) and **Toy Exchange** (see page 33) 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

• **5Aside chess**. 10.30-11.30am, GL Drop in.

Sunday 7 December

Goring and Streatley Concert Band, Xmas Concert. See page 43.

Tuesday 9 December

Lego club. 4.45-6pm, GL. Please book: [01865 815155](tel:01865815155).

Wednesday 10 December

• **Cleeve by Goring WI**. 7.30pm, SL. A traditional Christmas celebration with The Goring Chamber Choir. Just come along on the night or contact Katrina Cooper, [01491 875334](tel:01491875334).

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

Thursday 11 December

Story Time Christmas Special. 10.30-11am, GL. Drop-in.

Friday 12 December

- **Bingo/meat draw**. GSC 8pm.
- **Genie News Copy Deadline**. Genie is published twice a month. Email us: news@genienews.org

• **GREADIES Library Book Group**. 10-11pm. See library staff if interested.

Saturday 13 December

Meat and Bottle Draw and Games Night. GSC

Sunday 14 December

• **Christmas Children's Entertainment**- Father Christmas and Cookie the Clown. 2pm, GSC. See page 43.

• **GSCB Starter Band Christmas Concert**. 4-5pm GVH. See page 43.

Monday 15 December

Goring Gap Local History Soc. 2.30pm, GVH. Rob Clarke: *The Maiwand Lion in the Forbury, Reading*. Contact Janet Hurst, goringgaphistory@gmail.com

Tuesday 16 December

Social Scrabble Club. 4.45-7pm, GL. All welcome with refreshments.

Wednesday 17 December

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

• **Christmas Special with the Mandolinquents, Slim Panatella and the Mellow Virginians**. 7.45pm, GVH

Join Simon Mayor and his merry crew of Mandolinquent friends for a seasonal riot of music and fun. Tickets £20 from Eventbrite or [0118 926 8615](tel:01189268615) or mail@mandolin.co.uk

Thursday 18 December

Pick a Flick. 10.30am-2pm, CR. *Downton Abbey: The Grand Finale*. In the summer of 1930 the Crawleys grapple with the threat of social disgrace when Mary finds herself at the centre of a public scandal and the family faces financial trouble.

Please contact Sarah Fraser [01491 871838](tel:01491871838) or Jenny Boyd [01491 872109](tel:01491872109) to book and to ask for transport if required. The cost is £5 per event, including a light lunch.

Friday 19 December

- **Meat and Bottle Draw and Games Night**. 8pm, GSC.
- **Goring Unplugged**. 7.30pm for 8, GVH. Entry is £5. BYOB + nibbles.

Saturday 20 December

Concert for a Cause. 5-10pm, GVH. Charity concert raising money for MSF Médecins Sans Frontières (also known as Doctors Without Borders), Featuring five local indie bands. Tickets/donations via Eventbrite – search for Concert for Doctors Without Borders (See page 27).

Tuesday 23 December

Chess Club. Children 4.45 – 5.45pm, Adults 5.45 – 7pm. GL. Drop-in.

Friday 26 December

- **Boxing Day Raffle**. 3pm, GSC
- **Genie News Copy Deadline**. Genie is published twice a month. Email us: news@genienews.org

Wednesday 31 December

New Year's Eve Disco. 8pm, GSC.

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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Remembrance Sunday



Handmade wreaths in Goring



Scouts laying a wreath in Streatley

Photo: Derrick Lello

Aerial view of the Goring Gap



Photo: Geoff Storey



The Thames below Streatley in October

Photo: David Anderson