

Goring Gap News

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

Weeding warriors



The Goring Parish Council Weeding Day included children's activities. Seen here with the new weed-ripper (now called the Pavement Piranha) are the children's event team - Ilka Weiss, Rosie Brook, Clare Beagley, Krys Knox. See P20.

No job too small ...



The Bike Repair and Exchange team (Clockwise from left) Paul Hardiman, Andy McKenzie, Cllr Toby Thurston, Steve Rock, Rory Bewlay, Barbara Karayi, Cllr Robin Williamson (at front). See P42.

Photo: Ron Bridle

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Goring Gap News

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

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Distribution

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

July 2026 weekend of 25/26

August 2026 weekend of 22/23

September 2026 weekend of 19/20

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

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GRAPEVINE

Sunflower Trail

During the summer school holidays 25 July – 30 August, The Garden Design Studio will be running a sunflower trail in partnership with other Goring businesses, in a similar vein to the Scarecrow Trail in 2025 October half term. Families can buy a £1 map from the Design Studio, follow the trail and vote for their favourites by 30 August. Participating businesses should sign up by contacting Ben Halson-Classey by 30 June and have their sunflower-themed display ready by 25 July. Two family winners will be picked at random in the prize draw on 31 August. The votes will determine the winning display. All proceeds will be shared by the two primary schools.

English oak reprieved

Residents of Goring and Streatley will be pleased to hear that the notable English oak located in the car park at the rear of The Swan, Streatley, is to be saved. A Tree Preservation Order (TPO) was placed on the Oak by West Berkshire Council at the end of March 2026 and there has since been extensive dialogue between the Council's Tree Officers, The Swan's arboricultural consultants Bartlett Consulting and The Swan, regarding future management of the tree.

A TPO application has now been submitted to West Berkshire Council seeking consent for a programme of tree canopy reduction works. These works are intended to reduce potential risks associated with this mature tree while ensuring that a much-loved and prominent landscape feature can be retained. For a photo, please see March 2026 GGN Page 44.

Community grants

As Goring's District Councillor for South Oxfordshire District Council (SODC), Maggie Filipova-Rivers provides regular updates, which are available online in the meeting minutes of Goring Parish Council. In the May/June update her report includes news on SODC council matters, local government reorganisation, planning, waste, economic development and housing/homelessness. Lastly, she says the following about community grants:

'Recent grant schemes continue to attract strong interest from local organisations and community groups. South Oxfordshire District Council's annual grants programme currently stands at approximately £2 million per year. We do not know what will happen to our grants programme following unitarization, so do make the best of it now. South Stoke Community Shop and Goring Parish Council (playground) have benefited from substantial grants from SODC, which shows how by working together we can deliver really important community facilities. Please do look out for opportunities and apply.' See: <https://www.southoxon.gov.uk/south-oxfordshire-district-council/community-support/grants/>

The GAP Festival

I hope that everyone has enjoyed the 2026 GAP Festival. It got underway just as we were preparing June GGN, so the Festival articles and photos will be in next month's issue. *Editor*



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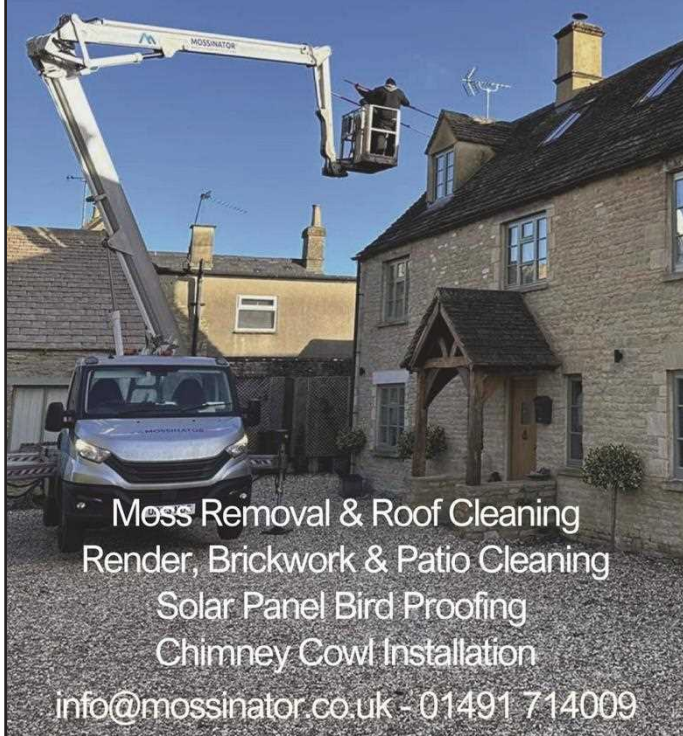
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28 July – National Finals Day for Goring in Bloom

The committed volunteers of Goring Gap in Bloom work in an environmentally friendly way, together with our partners in the village, to keep our community looking attractive and welcoming for both residents and visitors alike. As well as tending the beds on the railway station, the car park and the Gardiner Field, they strive to maintain the wild flower area by the BT site and other spots around the village where the introduction of sustainable planting, particularly for pollinators and wildlife, has been developed in recent years. In the streets and on the station there are 40 containers of different sizes and styles to take care of, filled with plants appropriate to the season. With the now very evident changes in our climate the watering burden is considerable but we love what we do and we hope you do too.

To keep our work up to scratch, to learn more and support the important culture of community gardening we enter the Britain in Bloom competition each year. This year, following Goring's achievements in the previous year in the Thames and Chilterns region, we have been nominated for the second time to represent Oxfordshire, Berkshire and Buckinghamshire in the National Finals in the Small Town category and we are asking for your help to prepare really well for this challenge.

The judges arrive the evening before their official tour of the village. The next morning they are taken on a two-hour inspection of our efforts, making an assessment in the categories of horticultural achievement, environmental responsibility and community participation. The judging criteria are exacting and include some matters which are beyond the control of the Bloomers to deal with, however hard they nag! Little escapes the judges' eagle eyes and because Bloom has been entering the competition since 2012 we know that the help of the public in preparing for this inspection by the Royal Horticultural Society experts is vital to our performance on the day.

Please help

This year the judges are coming on Tuesday morning 28 July and we'd like your help to present all of Goring in the best light. Our Bloomers will have been out weeding, sweeping and litter picking and hopefully the dulcet tones of the road sweeper will have been heard the previous day. But if you could please check the area outside your own property before 28 July and make sure it is clean, tidy and free of weeds, that would be great. As ever, thank you, for your support, and please wish us luck!

Goring's Bloom committee



Looking ahead: Goring-on-Thames Parish Council priorities for 2026/27

Following another productive year for Goring-on-Thames Parish Council, attention is now turning to an ambitious programme of projects and improvements planned for 2026/27.

While many residents will already be familiar with the successful completion of the new playgrounds at Bourdillon Field and Gardiner Recreation Ground, the Parish Council continues to make enhancements to both sites, including improved shade provision, fencing upgrades and the installation of a Goring Wildlife Book at the Gardiner Playground.

In the coming year, one of the Council's most significant projects will be an update to the Neighbourhood Plan. This will refresh the plan that was made in 2019 with details of the recently approved Goring Conservation Area Appraisal and with a new Design Code for the village. The updated plan will be submitted for examination in the second half of the year. It will ensure that the people of the village retain a strong voice in shaping future development and preserving the character of Goring.

The Council remains committed to promoting active travel throughout the village. Working alongside Mend the Gap, plans are progressing for an accessible central Goring walking loop, including improvements to Ferry Lane and sections of the Thames towpath. Efforts also continue to support cycling, with the Goring to Wallingford Greenway project moving forward and proposals being developed for additional cycle parking within the village.

At Sheepcot, the Council is exploring several exciting initiatives. Plans are being developed for a dedicated bike track, alongside improvements to visitor signage and wayfinding. There are also proposals to upgrade the pavilion, providing enhanced facilities that will support local sports clubs and enable teams to compete at higher levels.

Improving pedestrian safety is another major priority for the coming year. The Council is currently investigating several significant schemes and looks forward to sharing details with residents in the near future.

Recognising the need to provide facilities for all age groups, work is also continuing on the concept of a dedicated teen-friendly space, potentially located at Gardiner Field.

The Natural Burial Ground project at White Hill continues to make progress, with proposals expected to be presented to the community later this year. Funding generated from recent filming activity at the site will help support ongoing improvements to facilities there.

Residents may also notice a new approach to maintaining village streets and pavements. The Council has purchased a mechanical weed-ripper, which will be used regularly by the facilities team to help keep roadsides and pathways in better condition throughout the year. See Page 1.

These projects reflect the Parish Council's continued focus on improving village facilities, encouraging sustainable travel, enhancing public spaces and ensuring Goring remains a vibrant and welcoming place to live.

Cllr Toby Thurston
Chair Goring-on-Thames Parish Council

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Gap Comedy: Ignacio Lopez's Nada

Comedian Ignacio Lopez brought his latest show *Nada* to Goring Village Hall, transforming the familiar community space into a packed and intimate comedy club for the evening. The event, organised by Gap Comedy, drew a sell-out audience eager to see one of the UK circuit's fastest-rising stand-ups.

Lopez, who is half Spanish and half Welsh, has been steadily building a national reputation through appearances on shows including *Live at the Apollo* and *Have I Got News for You*, *Celebrity Mastermind* and Richard Osman's *House of Games*. His comedy blends sharp observational humour with affectionate cultural mockery, drawing heavily on his upbringing in Mallorca and his life now based in South Wales.

He opened the evening energetically, joking about growing up in Mallorca and claiming to have once beaten a four-year-old Rafa Nadal at tennis. The contrast between Spanish life and the peculiarities of Wales provided rich material, particularly when he turned his attention to British tourists abroad. 'They can't even say 'paella' properly,' he complained, 'a double L is pronounced 'Yay' and delighting the audience with an exaggerated lesson in pronunciation before cleverly reversing the joke by attempting Welsh place names like Llanelli in a Spanish accent.

Audience interaction formed a major part of the first half. Lopez playfully questioned audience members about their jobs, names, relationships and where they lived, seemingly improvising as he went. While this is a familiar device for many stand-ups, it soon became clear that Lopez was carefully storing away details for later use.

The real surprise came after the interval. Given a show titled *Nada* – 'nothing' in Spanish – the audience may not have expected such an inventive second act. Lopez returned dressed in trench coat and porkpie hat, adopting the persona of a hard-boiled Spanish detective in the style of a classic film noir. Arriving in Goring to investigate 'serious crimes', he delivered an absurdly dramatic monologue in which the offences turned out to be entirely local and gloriously trivial: bins not being collected, falling house prices, and a suspicious absence of criminal activity. 'The only drugs around were Warfarin,' he deadpanned.

Using projected vintage sepia photographs of the two villages as a backdrop alongside details gathered from the audience earlier in the evening, Lopez brilliantly constructed an increasingly elaborate tale of intrigue, weaving callbacks, visual gags, sound effects and improvisation. The craftsmanship behind this uniquely structured performance became evident as seemingly throwaway comments from earlier in the night reappeared to explosive effect.

Rarely does Goring Village Hall witness such sustained laughter. By the climax, many in the packed audience were quite literally wiping away tears. *Nada* proved to be far more than a stand-up set: it was a theatrical, interactive tour-de-force from a comedian whose star continues to rise. The huge ovation at the end was richly deserved.

Gap Comedy's next show is on 12 September. For more details go to www.gapcomedy.co.uk

Mark Kibble



Ignacio in 1st half

Photo: Mark Kibble

Julian Nicholas at Goring Community Jazz

On 8 May the Goring Village Hall audience were introduced to multi-saxist Julian Nicholas, with Martin Pickett (keyboard), Dexter Norton (drums) and Goring's Howard King on bass. With a smiling, puckish presence, Nicholas praised Goring's community atmosphere and the hall's acoustics, then launched into his own composition, *A Thousand Ships*, referencing Helen of Troy and Nicholas's partner, another Helen. Ethereal improvisation floated over an insistent bass figure in 6/4 time. The melody was hard to discern, but it had a Herbie Hancock vibe. The next number featured a surprise guest, a violinist, introduced simply as 'Dexter's Mum'. In a bossa nova, she and Julian (on alto sax) played in unison, creating a sound more reminiscent of Ireland than Ipanema. In the next number, the lilting *Five Hundred Miles High*, 'Dexter's Mum' contributed an accomplished solo, but was never seen or heard again!

The first set ended, surprisingly, with the very traditional *When You're Smiling*. Julian's inventive solo included a quote from *Surry with a Fringe on Top*; Howard turned in a tuneful and nimble bass solo, and Martin Pickett's electronic keyboard sounded more like a real piano than the hall's own upright does. The second set was both more lyrical and more familiar than the first, including a Jobim bossa nova, then Charlie Chaplin's *Smile (tho' your heart is breaking)*, with Julian on soprano sax, followed by a ballad of lost love, *You've Changed*, featuring an elegiac, almost tear-jerking tenor-sax solo and a beautiful contribution from Howard King on bass. A Miles Davis blues was followed by a cheerful South African number with an infectious, skipping rhythm, and *Lawns*, a melody in the great American tradition by the much-admired jazz pianist-composer, Carla Bley, who died in 2023. The session was rounded off with *I'll be Seeing You* – at a fast swing with Julian on tenor sax and the group trading fours in the final chorus. An evening of new and old, performed with engaging

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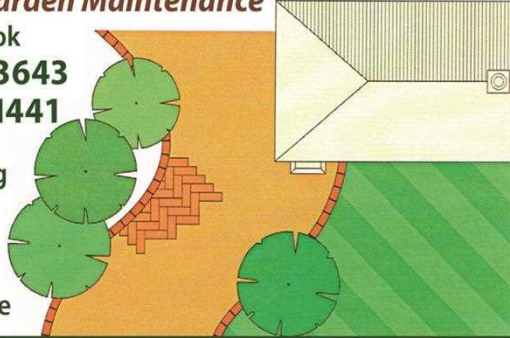
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Lithuanian harp - a rare treat in Streatley



Harp player Emilija Karaliute

Photo: Stella Robinson

At 4pm on 17 May, in St Mary's Streatley, there was a Lithuanian harp recital by Emilija Karaliute. This concert was the first time that most of us in the audience had ever seen or heard a concert 29 string Lithuanian harp or Kanklės (pronounced Kank-lays) played live. I was unprepared for how very beautiful the music produced by the instrument is.

Emilija spoke in-between each piece to tell us some of the history, legends and facts about the Kanklės. It is only made by a few craftsmen in Lithuania and takes six months to make; each Kanklės has its own 'personality' and the craftsman builds them with that precise player in mind. Originally, in pre-Christian times they were made in memory of people and it was believed that the soul of the deceased spoke when the instrument was played. The tree for the wood is selected first with care and even when the Kanklės is finished it is sometimes discarded as a failed instrument. They have existed for many centuries and the first Bibles translated into Lithuanian translate one of the Biblical instruments as a Kanklės.

Kanklės can be used to play any sort of music with similar versatility and range as a piano. Emilija began with classical music pieces by Mikulsiš, Naujalis and Svedas who were or are Lithuanian composers. The pieces were all based on folk music but composed in a classical style, telling us of the beauty of the forests and of Lithuania, an excellent introduction to the delight of Lithuanian music. This was followed by wonderful renditions of more traditional classical pieces. The recital ended with a new piece, *Rebmae*, composed especially for Emilija by Caroline Elizabeth Harding, an Irish composer. This was one of the most enchanting pieces of classical music I have heard, telling a Lithuanian legend about the Sea God.

Emilija sent a message of thanks to say that she very much enjoyed her trip to St Mary's and as for the audience, we are now all Kanklės fans! This instrument deserves to be more widely known and played for its beautiful notes and depths of tone and its versatility. Our next St Mary's Concert is on Sunday 13 September at 4pm with Ikuko Inoguchi, Sally Goodworth, both virtuoso pianists, and Hayley Tull who plays both flute and piano. This concert will include six handed piano trios which are rarely seen in performance. Unmissable.

Stella Robinson

Who doesn't love an underdog?

Underdog: The Other Other Brontë... Is that a typo? No, you read correctly ...The Other Other Brontë. A bold choice of a title by playwright Sarah Gordon. *Underdog: TOOB* is a comedic play that takes an irreverent look at the lives of the Brontë sisters, focusing particularly on the often-overlooked Anne. It's a play which manages to be both hilarious and thought-provoking, offering a contemporary lens on three very talented and competitive sisters with three very different personalities, rubbing along in a parsonage in Haworth, in the middle of the Yorkshire Dales.

This Sinodun Players' (SP's) production has a plethora of Gap people involved. It is being directed by Goring's own Dorothy Hirsch, better known for directing wide open farces; *The Titfield Thunderbolt* and *Murdered to Death* with the Goring Gap Players, *A Bunch of Amateurs* and *Breath of Spring* with the Sinodun Players, this is a somewhat more thoughtful offering, but she is greatly enjoying the challenge! And will undoubtedly still find a place or two for some schtick. The Producer for this extravaganza is another Goring local: BAFTA award winner Guy Gilks.

It's a very exciting cast with Anne being played by Sorrel Gibson in her Corn Exchange debut. Sorrel is finishing up her current round of professional training with every intention of building a career as a working actor. Completing our trio of female Brontës are Holly Gonzalez Smithson playing the pithy poet, Emily, and Natalie Davies as our forceful Charlotte. The final Brontë, their brother Branwell, is played by another new actor debuting with the SPs, Heather Banyard.

The set, designed by Nicola Webb (with Lighting Design by Bruce Williams) provides an inventive canvas for the Ensemble who, amongst the five of them, will cover 30+ roles ranging from critics, respectable publishers and housekeepers, to bratty children and lampposts. Dan Beauchamp (back on stage after a time out), Donna Thomson (fresh from her British premiere performance in *The Inheritance*), Will Lidbetter (a longstanding fan favourite), Martha Bullock (another fresh young face debuting with the SP's) and Alex Watts (better known as SP's outrageous panto Dame) are having a blast as the Ensemble.

One of the most exciting aspects of this production is a collaboration between the SP's and Pangbourne Choral Society (<https://pangbournechoral.org.uk>) whose Director of Music, Goring's Sara Benbow, and Board of Trustees, have accepted the challenge of recording a soundtrack reflecting 19th century Yorkshire and the Brontës' local and longest running choral society in nearby Halifax.

Underdog: The Other Other Brontë by Sarah Gordon will be at the Corn Exchange Wallingford, 14-18 July 2026. Tickets are on sale now at <https://cornexchange.org.uk>

Dorothy Hirsch

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Goring Gap u3a Poetry Group

As the second in a series of articles about the vibrant u3a in the Goring Gap, we will be looking at the Poetry Group, run by Lyn Ellis. It's a small group, usually six or seven people, that meets on the morning of the third Monday each month to discuss a wide range of poetry and poetry related subjects.

Some meetings are focused on a theme – for example *wind* or *landscape* – and some are about an individual poet – for example Louis MacNeice or W H Auden. At each meeting the members of the group each bring along one or two poems that are related to the theme or by the specified poet, and the group then discusses those poems. As the poems will be new to most of the members of the group the objective of the discussion is to understand how the poems appeal and enrich the thoughts and perspectives of the members.

There are several ways of approaching the discussion of poetry, from the academic to the more impressionistic, from a technical perspective to a more emotional response, and as will be already clear the focus of this group is on using poems as a springboard for discussing immediate reactions to the poems and discovering how the members feel differently after reading the poems. Sometimes it is important to understand the context within which a poem was created, for example the political situation or the personal struggle that the poet was going through, but the group is usually much more focused on seeing how a poem has affected each person and what it has made them think about. As reactions to poetry are usually highly personal, seeing the range of responses is extremely fascinating – and the members rarely go away from the meeting without a new sense of their own changed thoughts.

One of the fundamental rules of the meeting is that personal responses to a poem are not challengeable and are not in any sense wrong – and, in contrast, what is usually intriguing and thought provoking to the group is exploring why those personal responses have been formed. Part of the pleasure of reading a poem often lies in the fact that they are concentrated thoughts and sometimes that makes them difficult to read and appreciate, but this isn't a concern in the discussion because we are not interested in puzzling out difficult texts, but in finding emotional and intellectual responses.

Often people are so pleased to discover a poem that otherwise they would never have come across; often people are so pleased to find a different perspective from the wide-ranging discussions. And that is what keeps members coming back enthusiastically to the Poetry Group.

Paul Davies



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Grace & Gravity celebrate seven years

Tucked away beside The Swan at Streatley, overlooking the River Thames, Grace & Gravity Yoga Studio has been helping people find movement, mindfulness and community for the past seven years. While many local residents may have passed by without noticing, the tranquil riverside studio has quietly built a loyal following and is now inviting new students to discover all it has to offer.

As part of its seventh birthday celebration, Grace & Gravity is enabling newcomers to try out everything available in the studio through its popular 30-Day Freedom Pass, which allows you to explore a range of classes and find the style of movement that suits you best.

The studio's experienced teaching team includes local instructors Vicky Mills and Ellie Radziwill, who guide students with warmth, expertise and encouragement.



Grace & Gravity Studio

Photo: Victoria Mills

While the studio continues to grow, its focus remains firmly on the people who walk through its doors.

'Our students are our main focus – we wouldn't be here without them,' said studio manager, Luana. 'The Freedom Pass is a wonderful way for people to experience the studio, meet our teachers and discover the classes that feel right for them.'

Alongside its regular programme of yoga, Pilates and wellbeing classes, Grace & Gravity will also be celebrating its seventh birthday with a special Earth & Air Retreat at its sister site at Howbery Park, Wallingford, on 4 and 5 July.

Find out more at <https://www.graceandgravity.studio/events/earth-and-air-retreat>

Ready to roll out your mat? Visit our website to book a class and discover how movement, mindfulness and community can help you feel your best.



Grace & Gravity students Photo: Holly Spurrett

Luana Buratta

New friends find old connection at Lyndhurst Care Home

Moving into a care home is always an opportunity to make new friends, but when Vera Crook arrived at Lyndhurst Care Home in Goring, she discovered she had far more in common with fellow resident Barbara Scott than either of them could have imagined.

As they chatted about their backgrounds and where they had lived, Barbara mentioned that her sister, Iris, had lived in Henley – a town Vera knew well. But it wasn't until a card arrived in the post that the pair uncovered an extraordinary connection.

'I was sitting next to Barbara when the postman delivered a card for her,' recalled Vera. 'She opened it and showed it to me. I recognised Iris's handwriting straight away and couldn't believe it. We'd only just met, and I had no idea who Barbara was at the time.'

Vera had lived next door to Iris for more than 30 years. Although both women had heard each other's names mentioned in conversation over the years, they had never met.

The discovery has brought the two 95-year-olds closer together and created a special friendship.

'I'm always ready to make friends – I'd much rather have company than be on my own,' said Barbara. 'Vera is very, very friendly and she makes me feel at home here.'

The pair sit together in the home's lounge every day and share a love of knitting. Vera is always on hand to help if Barbara drops a stitch and together they have made a blanket.



Barbara and Vera have become close friends since moving in

Photo: Darren Pepe

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BUSINESS continued

Lyndhurst is a 20-bedroom care home overlooking Goring playing fields, providing residential, dementia and respite care. Activities Coordinator Eleanor Preston said it has been wonderful to see the friendship develop.

‘We put a lot of effort into finding out about our residents’ backgrounds and interests so we can help them build relationships when they move in,’ she said. ‘Barbara had only recently arrived when Vera joined us, and discovering they had so much in common helped them both settle in quickly. We always make sure they sit together at mealtimes, and they genuinely enjoy each other’s company.’ The pair take part in everything from baking and cocktail-making to trips out for coffee at The Swan in Streatley. Whatever they’re doing, they’re usually doing it together.

About Lyndhurst Care Home

Situated opposite Goring playing fields and the bowls pavilion, Lyndhurst is a small, family-owned residential home that has been providing care for older people for more than 20 years. It offers 24-hour residential, dementia and respite care, with a range of single, double and private patio-access rooms. It is part of Goring Care Homes which was established in 1986 by Jackie and Colin Northey. The Grange Care Home was born from their passion for compassionate care and they expanded their vision by acquiring Lyndhurst in 1999. Today, their legacy continues under the stewardship of their daughter Joy and grandson Aaron, combining decades of experience with family dedication.

Lisa Pettifer

01491 871325 / <https://goringcarehomes.com/>

Withymead Nature Reserve completes ‘Phase 1’ of its accessibility project

Readers may remember that Withymead was fortunate to receive grant funding from Mend the Gap and DEFRA’s Access for All funding almost 2-years ago, for Phase 1 of a project to increase the accessibility of the reserve. The scope of the project was significant – creating a new boardwalk to the Kingfisher hide, a welcome shelter and finally a new entrance gate with bespoke carved signage. The difference this project has made is massive and we have already welcomed many delighted individuals and groups for whom Withymead was previously off-limits.

The final piece of the project is now in place – a new entrance gate with bespoke, oak-carved name plates. The carved name plates, created by the talented joiners at Jack Badger Ltd, reflect the flora and fauna found at Withymead and the sites’ boat building heritage. They are a beautiful, tactile addition to our main entrance – hopefully more people will now be aware of the wonderful, natural space accessible beyond the gates.

‘The new, oak-carved name plates, with ivy creeping around the wording ‘Withymead Nature Reserve’, incorporates flora and fauna found in the reserve and the copper used in Sam Saunders’ ‘Consuta’ boat building technique, to reflect the uniqueness of Withymead’ – Jenny Hedge, Trustee, The Anne Carpmael Trust CIO

However, work to protect and enhance the reserve doesn’t stop with the completion of this phase of the project. In the Autumn, we will commence a new project funded by Mend the Gap – focusing on nature recovery. This project will involve dredging waterways within the reserve to remove years of silt build-up to restore the flow of water through the reserve. Watch this space for further updates.

We are also delighted to advise you that we have reached three-quarters of the funding for ‘Phase 2’ of the accessibility project – upgrading the bridge and remaining 60m of boardwalk. We are grateful for significant contributions to the Phase 2 fundraising from South Oxfordshire District Council, the Bernard Sunley Foundation, Ninevah Charitable Trust and numerous generous individual donations. This will complete the accessibility project – enabling visitors of all abilities to experience the nature that calls the Withymead reedbed home.

We still have a small shortfall to raise before we can plan to commence work on replacing the bridge and boardwalk later this year. So, it’s not too late to ‘buy a board’ and make a lasting difference to Withymead.

Watch our fundraising video at <https://withymead.org/watch-our-fundraising-video/> to find out more, and ‘Buy a Board’ at <https://withymead.org/buy-a-board/> – every donation will help us meet our £115,104 fundraising target to make it happen!

If you’d like to know more, or would like to help in any other way, please contact Phil Rooney, Chair of the Anne Carpmael Trust CIO which manages the reserve, at info@withymead.org

Phil Rooney



Withymead, The Gates

Photo: Kate Ashley



Withymead Gate Panel

Photo: Phil Rooney

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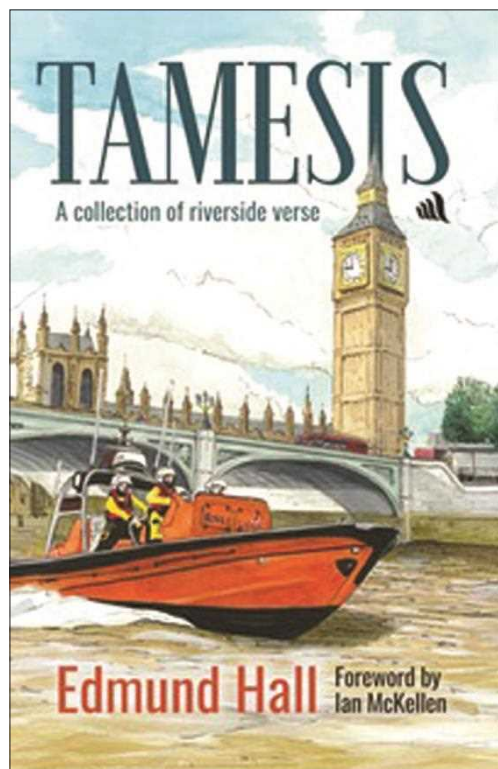
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Poetry by the River: an afternoon with Edmund Hall

The Friends of Goring Library and The Carpmael Trust are delighted to be joining in a joint venture to welcome visitors to the Withymead Nature Reserve for an enchanting summer afternoon.

Walk, cycle or drive (but remember parking is limited!) to hear anecdotes and poems from a gem of a book written to raise funds for the RNLI.

The book *Tamesis* is a lyrical journey along the Thames where water, history and humanity interlace in verse composed by Edmund Hall, a lifelong sailor and a volunteer lifeboatman on the Thames.



Reviews of Hall's verses confirm that they capture the river as a living, breathing force, in turns majestic, dangerous and tender. Sir Ian McKellen claims they record high drama alongside wistful reverie, as they flow from Oxfordshire tributaries, Sonning trout pools to Waterloo sunsets and London's tidal reaches. Jeremy Treglown recommends you read them aloud but here is the chance to hear the author himself read them aloud, beside our own special part of the Thames here in Goring.

Take time to enjoy the riverside setting of the Withymead Nature Reserve, watch and listen to the abundant wildlife it supports, explore the hidden boat-building of the past then reward yourself with tea and cake!

Join us on Sunday 12 July 2pm-4pm, doors open 1.30pm. Tickets are available from Eventbrite and the Library. The cost is £6, under 16s free if accompanied by an adult. Price includes refreshments.

All proceeds from book sales will go to support the RNLI; tickets sales will support both the Withymead Nature Reserve and the Friends of Goring Library



Please note in the case of inclement weather, particularly strong wind gusts, the event may need to be cancelled. Please check either www.fogl-oxon.co.uk or www.withymead.org for weather updates in advance of the event.



Edmund Hall on a lifeboat

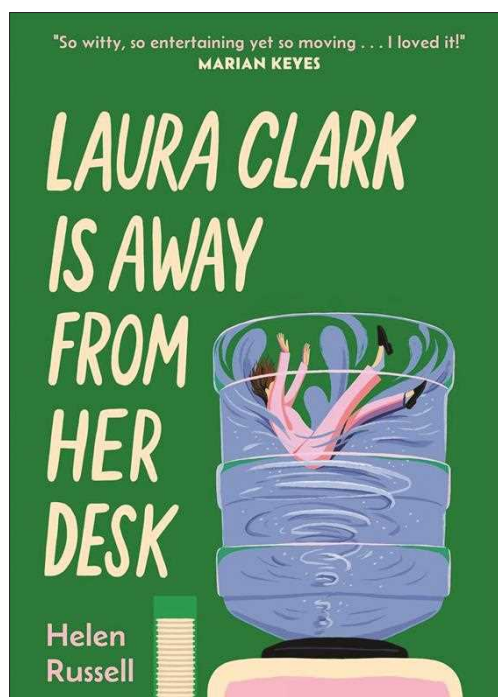
Gaye Walsh

Events Organiser, Friends of Goring Library

Author interview: Helen Russell

The Friends of Goring Library are delighted to welcome local author Helen Russell to discuss her latest book, *Laura Clark is Away from Her Desk*. We are very lucky to be getting an exclusive Goring interview as this novel is launched.

Helen is a best-selling author, journalist and speaker. A former editor of Marie Claire she turned to writing non-fiction when she moved to live in Denmark. Her books *The Year of Living Danishly* and *How to Raise a Viking* have both become international best sellers, translated into many languages. She is currently the author of six books with this, her first novel, due out in July this year.



Helen tells us that the novel is an ideal summer read and the reviews from fellow authors and readers alike confirm this statement. Marian Keyes writes that the novel is 'so witty, so entertaining, yet so moving. Countless women will identify with Laura Clark.' Readers have found it funny, wise and everything in between. The novel tells the story of Laura, a forty-something HR manager who juggles work, family life and an elderly mother on a daily basis until one day she doesn't! What has happened to Laura is revealed as her family and colleagues try to find out why Laura Clark is away from her desk.

Join us on Wednesday 29 July at 7pm in Goring Library when we talk to Helen to discover the story behind the story and settle down to a great summer read. Tickets cost £10 to include a complimentary drink and nibbles, available from the library or on EventBrite.

Gaye Walsh

Events Organiser, Friends of Goring Library



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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

who accepts no responsibility for views expressed

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

Tennis Club members rally round

Dear Editor—We've had a great start to the season at Goring Tennis Club (GTC) on Sheepcot Recreation Ground, with lots of local families joining us and a brilliant turnout for our new pickleball sessions.

Our momentum took a bit of a hit mid-May when the clubhouse was targeted with graffiti and litter. However, I want to say a huge thank you to the volunteers and neighbours who stepped up immediately to paint over the mess and get everything sorted out.

GTC is run entirely by volunteers who work hard to keep the facilities in top shape for our members and the wider villages. While dealing with this kind of behaviour is frustrating, the quick cleanup showed what a great community spirit we have here.

The incident has been reported to Thames Valley Police (CRN: 43260244171). We just ask that residents keep acting as our eyes and ears around the recreation ground in the evenings. If you see anything suspicious, please call 101 so we can keep Goring and Streatley's community spaces safe for everyone.

Bob Kapp

Treasurer, On behalf of the Goring Tennis Club Committee

Blankets for Ukraine

Dear Editor—I was so pleased to see the article in GGN last month about the blankets sent to Ukraine by Inna Velychenko.

I would like to thank all the people who knit squares for these blankets. Most of them are in the Goring & Streatley area but I have a friend in Ireland who sends me 100 squares each month. I would also like to thank the friend who crochets the borders of the blankets.

If there is anyone who would like to knit squares for these blankets, please let me know via GGN.

Judy Holden

Christian Aid Week – thank you

Dear Editor—The total raised last month during Christian Aid Week in Goring, Streatley and South Stoke was £2,455!

A very big thank you to all those who donated so generously, those who prepared the envelopes for distribution and those who delivered them. We are especially grateful to those who delivered envelopes in several roads and enabled us to reach considerably more houses than we did last year. Thanks are also due to Ann and Chris Moody and their band of helpers for organising and hosting the Ploughman's Lunch at Oriel House, and to Westholme Stores and Inspiration for their kind cooperation in receiving the envelopes in their shops.

Judith Aguda

Thames Path

14 months have passed since the National Trail between The Close and Friars Ford closed for much-needed repairs due to erosion and flood damage. (See GGN June 2025 P27.)

Wooden barriers were erected blocking access to the path, but recently someone took a saw to both ends, destroying the barriers. West Berkshire District Council (WBC), who are responsible for the path in Goring, have said that the damage has been reported to Thames Valley Police. The



fencing will not be replaced; instead, hazardous areas have been marked out with tape.

Hannah Gutteridge,

Thames Path Manager at the Thames Path National Trail in Oxford, says that they hope that by the end of March 2027 the options for repair will have been examined and technical drawings produced. West Berkshire can then make an application to the Environment Agency, which takes about 22 weeks, to get permission to carry out the work, after which, if funding is available, a contractor can be assigned.

Further erosion may take place in the interim and WBC asks walkers to respect the safety measures.

Dan Gordon-Potts



Adults get weeding while the little ones have fun

Saturday 16 May saw an impressive turnout for Goring Parish Council's Village Weeding Day and Picnic, organised this year in collaboration with Goring Villagers Against Glyphosate and Goring in Bloom. Volunteers of all ages from eight upwards fanned out across the village and together they collected and disposed of a scarcely believable thirty black bags of weeds from our streets, lanes and driveways!

Meanwhile, over on Rectory Gardens, the Little Adventurers' fun sessions were enjoyed by children from Goring and Streatley primary schools and pre-school. The children explored six activity zones that aimed to teach about the weeding cycle, how to spot a weed ('a weed is a plant in the wrong place') and concluding in a magnificent bug hunt led by Goring in Bloom. Bloomers, Rosie Brook and Krys Knox, led the 'pollinators' bug trail where twelve larger than life creatures made from upcycled materials were spun from trees or nestled into bark, waiting to be discovered.

At the end of the day the children, parents and all the hungry weeding volunteers were treated to a delicious curry, kindly donated by Masoom's, and cakes baked by Viv's Cafe, Patricia Williams and Linda Palmer, among others.

The idea with the bug hunt and the themed play zones was to set up a safe enclosed space for the children to have fun and learn why the village is exploring alternatives to chemical weed control. Not only was



Weeder with wheelbarrow of weeds



Children learn about common weeds from Bloomer Rosie

seemingly small act like weeding together side-by-side has led to unexpected conversations and also a reminder that we all can "do something"?

The debut appearance of Goring's brand-new weed ripper was also a big draw for the children. Young villagers were encouraged to name the weedy wonder that promises to take the hard work out of weeding in future. *Pavement Piranha* was voted favourite with Robyn Sutherland-Pearce age four winning the prize draw for the Little Adventurers' tool set kindly donated by Goring Hardware Store. Weed rippers use mechanical brushes to remove stubborn weeds from roads and pavements, and many towns and boroughs across the UK now use these as part of their non-chemical weed management programmes.

this event a good way to learn about weed cycles and pollinators but crucially, it's been an opportunity for inter-generational learning between the children and the Bloomers – how to take better care of our village, our planet and each other.

My co-organiser for this event, Ilka Weiss, observed: 'It was wonderful to see Goring and Streatley villagers of all ages coming together to create a positive impact on the local environment. Even a



Feeling pleased about a job well done

The purchase of the ripper comes as a result of over nine months of knowledge sharing and research between the Parish Council and our organisation, Goring Villagers against Glyphosate. After listening to residents' views and reviewing alternative approaches used successfully elsewhere, the Parish Council has agreed to trial a revised weed management programme over the next 12 months.

Parish Councillor David Bermingham reflects: 'It's been wonderful to see what community collaboration can achieve. With the new weed ripper and community effort as we've seen with the recent Weeding Day, we hope that we won't need to resort to chemical weed treatment and that community days such as this will become a feature of the annual village calendar.'

Our next event will be The Big Sweep on Saturday 7 November – with



The community working together - Vicar Ben Phillips, Deputy Parish Clerk Nick Mallen and Bloomer Gill Hunter



Family effort

tasty treats and more family-friendly fun and activities. The big autumn sweep prevents wet mulch accumulating which drastically reduces those spring weeds! So, save the date, start your broom collection (handy for Halloween too!) and join us with your family and friends this autumn.

Clare Beagley



Never too young to start! A toddler with a mini-broom

Summary of the June Goring on Thames Parish Council meeting

The principal points of the most recent Goring on Thames Parish Council full Council meeting are summarised below. The draft minutes will be available at www.goringparishcouncil.gov.uk in due course.

- The council approved the Traffic and Transport Committee proposal to make an application to Oxfordshire County Council to designate Battle Road as part of the 'Quiet Lanes' pilot scheme.
- The council discussed five Pedestrian Safety Improvement Projects proposed by the Traffic and Transport Committee and identified priorities for progression. These ideas will be shared with the community shortly.
- The Council Scheme of Delegation was approved.
- The proposed Expenses Policy was rejected.
- A budget of £600 was approved to purchase a double bin for Manor Road.
- A budget of up to £1800 was approved for replacement benches for Wallingford Road (Heron Shaw and Farm Road junctions).
- It was approved to fit security cameras to the Council office.
- The Annual Meeting of the Parish 2027 has been booked for Saturday 13 March 2027.
- It was approved to waive all fees for Mike Ward's burial at White Hill Burial Ground in light of his exemplary service to the village over many years.
- A budget was approved for additional bin emptying and watering of the Jubilee Garden by the Facilities Assistant over the summer.

Next meeting: Reiss Room, Goring Village Hall 13 July 6.30pm.
See www.goringparishcouncil.gov.uk from 8 July for the agenda.



We were delighted to welcome a record-breaking field of nearly 400 runners to Hairy Legs 2026, making this year's event our biggest yet.

The cooler conditions provided ideal running weather and we were immensely proud to see runners of all ages taking part across the day's events. From our youngest Little Legs competitors to seasoned Hairy Legs veterans, the enthusiasm, determination and community spirit on display made for another memorable occasion.

Nic Watson, Goring resident and Hairy Legs participant, said: 'Events like this create lasting memories and are a wonderful way to bring families and communities together. It was also a particularly special day for me as my son, Huxley, took part in his first race this year. Watching him line up and give it his all made me incredibly proud.'

We would like to thank everyone who entered, volunteered, sponsored, supported and cheered from the sidelines.

A community effort

Hairy Legs would not happen without the support of our incredible volunteers. More than 40 people gave up their time to marshal the course, run refreshment stalls, manage registrations, operate water stations and help with the climbing wall and race village activities.

We are enormously grateful to every volunteer who helped make the day run so smoothly. If you would like to join our volunteer team in 2027, please get in touch via info@hairylegs.net

Record participation and familiar faces

This year we welcomed more than 217 Little Legs runners and 180 teenage and adult competitors. It was particularly wonderful to see several returning champions successfully defend their titles.

Elliot Parsley and Martha Sudbury each won their Little Legs 2 categories for the third consecutive year, while Josh Sudbury retained his Teenage Kicks 2 title for a second year. Jonty de la Harpe successfully defended the Hairy Legs Solo Men's title, and relay team Jumping Jills (Susan Francis and Jessica Franklin) won the Open Relay for the second year running.

Seeing competitors return year after year is one of the things we value most about Hairy Legs and is a testament to the fantastic community that has grown around the event.

Phil Rose, who co-founded the Hairy Legs race in 2002 and continues to support the event as a sponsor and participant, said: 'It's wonderful to see how the race has evolved over the years while retaining the community spirit that inspired it from the beginning.'

Category winners

Little Legs Boys 1: Boonie Martin 3:27; Jack Wright 3:33; Albert Coyle 3:38. **Little Legs Boys 2:** Elliot Parsley 6:07; Bryn Griffiths 6:08; Will Nicholson 6:19. **Little Legs 1 Girls:** Emilie Knight

Hairy Legs 2026 breaks records and



4:15; Penny Newport 4:16; Freya Pettit 4:18. **Little Legs 2:** Elena Bastawrous 6:49; Juno Martin 7:12. **Teenage Kicks 1:** Boys: 29:41; Girls: Lucy Williams 38:09. **Teenage Kicks 2:** Boys: Anna Howe 29:49.

Hairy Legs Solo: Men: Jonty de la Harpe 46:48; Women: 56:18. **Crumbles:** Men: Giles Humphreys-Evans 56:18; Women: 56:18. **Winners:** Couples Relay: Team Big Calves 59:47.8; Parent & Child Relay: (Charlie and Mark Homer) 50:06; Open Relay: Jumping Jills (Susan Francis and Jessica Franklin) 53:42. The **Fancy Dress** award went to Maud Elms for her colour and fun to the race.

Full list: <https://www.stuweb.co.uk/events/2026/05/10/4>

Thank you to our sponsors and supporters

We would like to extend our sincere thanks to our principal sponsor, Managing Director Paul O'Loughlin for presenting the prizes, and a huge role in making Hairy Legs possible.

We were also incredibly grateful to Alma Toyer, Yvette Goring and the ladies of Goring Free Church, for starting the race. We were presenting them this year in recognition of the wonderful work they do for our community. Their commitment to supporting young people is what sits at the heart of Hairy Legs.



raises thousands for local schools



Photos: Laura Greenham of Greenham Photography



Alma Toyer, Yvette Gordon Potts and Helen Dodd, the ladies of Goring Free Church, who started the race

Girls: Martha Sudbury 6:43;
11 Boys: Rafferty Winstanley
Josh Sudbury 23:10; Girls:

11 Girls: Laura Oldfield 1:03:58. **Old**
Helen Dickens 1:13:45. **Relay**
& Teen Relay: Team Homer
(Susan Francis and Jessica
Come and Rose Callaway, adding

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don Potts and Helen Dodd, the
particularly pleased to invite
for children and families across
ple reflects the community spirit



A special thank you goes to our longstanding sponsors: The Swan and Coppa Club, Humidity Solutions, The Sup Life, Bodyset Physio and Clarity Leadership.

We would also like to thank Cranford School for once again sponsoring the event climbing wall, James Hanson for expertly compering the event, Laura Greenham from LG Photography for capturing the day so beautifully, Josh Monk and Ascend Sports for organising race village activities, Hartslock Ice Cream for the treats, Barry Purnell for supplying the hay bales, Betty for the top of the-hill key fob, and Dan, Kat and Vanessa at The Catherine Wheel for hosting the post-race BBQ.

Supporting local schools

One of the most rewarding aspects of Hairy Legs is the difference it makes within our local community. This year's event raised more than £6,000, which will be shared between Goring and Streatley primary schools to help fund much-needed sporting equipment.

On behalf of the Hairy Legs committee, we would like to thank everyone who helped make the event such a success. We are already looking forward to welcoming you back on 9 May 2027 and making next year's event even bigger and better.

Lotte, Kelly, Jon, Caroline and Bev
The Hairy Legs Committee

Diamond days for Goring Gap Local History Society

Society members and local people turned out in force on Saturday 16 May to celebrate the 60th Anniversary of the Goring Gap Local History Society. Founded in April 1966 by a small but enthusiastic group of villagers, the Society has grown from an initial 30 members to over 160 today.

Talks on Goring Gap's history

The day began with a talk by the Society's Chairman, Alan Winchcomb, entitled *An Armchair Walk Around Old Goring*. With the help of a wide selection of slides, Alan described the many changes that have happened in Goring over the years, especially the number and variety of shops. Some have had a long history: there was a shop at Goring Mill for 100 years, three generations of Nappers the grocers in business for 150 years and a pharmacy in the village for 112 years. In the past Goring would have been totally self-sufficient, with a range of services to meet every need. Many of the older buildings have had a radical change of use, for example, the old Temperance Hall is now the library and the Old British School building is a carpet shop. Some houses have had famous residents; Bomber Harris, Mike Hailwood and Oscar Wilde all lived in Ferry House at various different times.



Looking round the exhibits

Photo: Bernard Novell



Interest in the exhibits

Photo: Gill Haigh

The second speaker was Mike Hurst, who for many years was responsible for organising a variety of popular visits for the Society's Transport History Group. In his talk *Transport History of the Goring Gap* he illustrated his wide knowledge of the subject, talking about boats, roads, stagecoaches and railways. He described how in the past Streatley was larger and more important than Goring, as it was on the main stagecoach route from Reading, until the coming of the railway led to the growth and dominance of Goring. Mike's



Members toast the Society at the evening party

Photo: Ron Bridle

vast knowledge of railways was apparent as he spoke about the history of the building of GWR in the area and several memorable events that had occurred on the railway. He gave a brief history of Samuel Saunders, the famous boat builder, who lived and worked in the village and is celebrated by the Blue Plaque on the old boathouse.

Archives exhibition

The exhibition in the afternoon included a wide selection of displays, documents, and scrapbooks from the Society's archives. These included a detailed illustrated history of Samuel Saunders and his many achievements; a display about the Society; and many photographs of village events. One of the 1965 scrapbooks was from the WI and included details of the fashions of the day with fabric samples. A series of newspaper cuttings described the proposal for a Streatley by-pass in 1967 and the successful fight to prevent this. Copies of old guidebooks to the area provided fascinating recommendations to visit the wide range of shops and services which existed then.

Historic films

There was also a rolling programme of historic films, showing past local celebrations: the 1953 Coronation, the 1977 Silver Jubilee, the Society's 50th Anniversary in 2016 and the Platinum Jubilee of 2022. Visitors enjoyed re-living past memories and trying to recognise familiar faces.

Evening party

The party in the evening was for members only. There was a 'What is it now?' quiz prepared by Archivist Helen Turner, followed by a buffet and drinks. Alan then paid tribute to Janet Hurst, who has been the Society's Secretary for more than 20 years, and whose knowledge, enthusiasm and efficiency have greatly contributed to the success of the Society. Alan proposed a toast to the Society and Janet then cut the cake.

Large number of activities

Over the decades, the Society has flourished and, as well as its monthly talks, organises visits and exhibitions, produces an annual Journal, catalogues and up-dates a large collection of archives, carries out local history research and maintains a website and Facebook page. New members are encouraged and visitors welcomed to the talks. If you would like further details of the Society's activities, please contact our Secretary, Janet Hurst on goringgaphistory@gmail.com You can also find us on Facebook.



Birthday cake

Photo: Ron Bridle

Janet Jones
Membership Secretary, Goring Gap Local History Society www.goringgaphistory.org.uk

Sir John Soane: Goring, London, Italy and the world 1753-1837

Did you know that Sir John Soane, one of the country's greatest architects, was born in Goring? As one of the most famous men of Regency England, Soane was somewhat reticent about discussing his childhood before school in Reading, apprenticeship in London and trips to Italy laid the foundations for his glittering career. Sir John Soane's Museum in Lincoln's Inn Fields is surely one of the most dazzling and memorable of all private collections.

Jeremy Musson, the architectural historian and broadcaster, will present a richly illustrated lecture at Our Lady and St John Church in Ferry Lane on Friday 17 July at 7pm, celebrating Soane and his work. Architectural editor of *Country Life* between 1998 and 2007 and a contributor to its pages for over 30 years, he brings a wealth of knowledge to his subject. As presenter of BBC2's *The Curious House Guest*, he is a consummate communicator.

Tickets price £15 (students free) are available from www.galileegoring.org.uk, Eventbrite or 01491 872181. There will be a reception and an opportunity to meet Mr Musson after the lecture.

Father Kenneth Macnab



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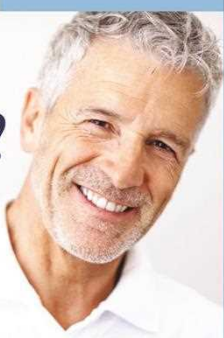
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Goring Primary School – Story Museum trip

Last term, Reception and Year 1 children from Goring Primary School went on a fabulous trip to the Story Museum in Oxford. The children had lots of fun exploring different story telling activities led by the Story Museum staff and were able to explore some of the exciting exhibits.

Early Years visit to the Small Worlds

Greenfinch Class visited the fantastic Small Worlds area at the Story Museum. They explored themed zones from some of our favourite stories and nursery rhymes. The children loved exploring Traction Man's under-sink world, going on a bear hunt through some swishy, swashy grass and riding on a bright red bus.

The children enjoyed playing on the giant bed and took part in a retelling of *What the Ladybird Heard* which was read by one of the amazing Story Museum staff members.

Early Years workshop – story play

The Greenfinch children had lots of fun taking part in their workshop. They listened to a story about how the stars and night sky were made. They then worked in small groups to create their own imaginary lands using lots of exciting and interesting materials. Each group had a chance to share their world and the children loved talking about the different features they had included.

Year 1 workshop – story porridge

The Owl children had fun telling the story of *The Three Billy Goats Gruff* with one of the Story Museum staff. They worked in small groups to explore the rule of three to create their very own versions. The children used lots of imaginative language and enjoyed telling their own stories as well as listening to the other groups.



A member of Owl class at the exhibition

Year 1 – Guided gallery tour

Owl class enjoyed visiting the Dragon Room where they could dress up, read stories and take part in interactive activities. They then explored the Enchanted Library where they could go into different story worlds. Entering the rabbit hole from *Alice in Wonderland* was a favourite as was travelling through the wardrobe to Narnia. The Owls visited the Whispering Wood and valiantly attempted to get the sword from the stone to become King or Queen!

All the children had an amazing day and agreed they would definitely visit again!

Article and photo by Mrs Dryden and Mrs Thomas

Join us for a fantastic school fête on Saturday 4 July!

Get ready for one of the most exciting days in the Goring Primary school calendar – our annual School Fete, taking place on Saturday 4 July 12noon–3pm. This year's event promises to be bigger, brighter and more fun-filled than ever and we can't wait to welcome pupils, families, neighbours and friends for a community celebration.

From 12noon onwards, the school grounds will transform into a bustling summer fair packed with activities for all ages. For those with a creative side there will be craft stalls, face painting, and glitter tattoos, whilst the book stall offers brilliant bargains for keen readers. Our ever-popular bottle tombola will be returning, along with the teddy tombola too.

The pre-loved uniform stall will be running a special 'fill a bag for £5' offer, using our PTFA tote bags. This is a great way to stock up on uniform at an amazing price.

Food lovers are in for a treat. Expect sizzling barbecues, tasty homemade soup, delicious cakes, bakes and sweet treats, refreshing drinks and the return of the fete bar. Whether you're after a quick snack or a full lunch, there'll be something to tempt every appetite.

There will also be performances from the school orchestra and the school choir, organised by the wonderful Mrs Parkinson.

Not forgetting our extremely popular raffle with some amazing prizes, that have been very generously donated by local businesses, including gift vouchers, hampers, days out, family swim, meals out, takeaways, etc

All funds raised will support school projects and enrichment activities, helping us continue to provide fantastic opportunities for our pupils.

Mark the date, bring your friends, and join us for a wonderful day of fun, food and community spirit. We look forward to seeing you at Goring Primary School on Saturday, 4 July 12noon-3pm.

*Summer Fete Committee
Goring Primary PTFA*

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Tour de France? Or...Le Tour de Cake?

For those of you who don't know me, and let's be honest that is likely to be 97% of you because, while I have lived in Streatley for 17 years, I'm very quiet, shy and retiring (that may possibly be a lie), my name is Heth. I'm an extremely good cyclist (what? two barefaced lies in the first paragraph? What is GGN coming to?)...although, unfortunately I did just miss out on team selection for this year's Tour de France. I'm not sure whether it was my age (52), general cleanliness of my bike (shoddy) or inability to go over 9mph, but for whatever reason the Ineos Grenadiers didn't knock on my front door and ask me to pop on one of their team lycras.

Hmmm.

However, if any of you are in the same boat, not having quite made the cut, then don't panic because, there is, in fact, a far cooler Tour that you can take part in this summer.

And, even better, for this Tour you do not need:

- To be sprayed top to toe in Lycra (I think we can all agree that Lycra should generally never be worn by anyone over the age of 27½. Unless, perhaps you are Ryan Gosling. Or possibly Daniel Craig.)
- An £11,000 bike (I know, I can hear you all saying 'Do they even make bikes that expensive? Well, yes, they do, I've heard. I certainly don't own one. And I can tell you this – I bet those bikes don't live in the back of a shed with a dozen hibernating ladybirds living on them.)
- A tiny Renault full of race-coaches with walkie-talkies yelling into your earpiece and telling you to climb hills faster (who needs that? I should think that's even more annoying than Nigel Farage telling us all to vote Reform. On repeat.)
- And finally, you don't even have to leave the country. Pourquoi? Because this tour is right on your doorstep.

Yes! I introduce you to 'Le Great British Tour de Cake'! The perfect summer activity and exactly like Le Tour de France.

Except different. In about every single way.

Le Great British Tour de Cake

Le Great British Tour de Cake is a collection of easy bike rides for those people whose thighs are not made of steel, but may in fact, have seen better days. All neatly packaged into one easy to read book (I don't know any long words), there are 26 in total, all circular, all on quiet country lanes and all in West Berkshire and Oxfordshire. But best of all? Every ride includes cake.

Quite a lot of it.

Let's talk about cake!

Each ride has at least three coffee stops. Stretching across the county there will be ones you know (eg The Maker Space in Nuffield) and plenty that you don't (ever heard of Childrey Stores or Priscilla's Kitchen?). All are independent and all have space to prop your bike up (or dog), (or children for that matter if they are being particularly trying that morning) outside. With 68 coffee stops in the book, frankly it's more a more a dictionary of cake and where to find the best – stuff the actual cycling ...

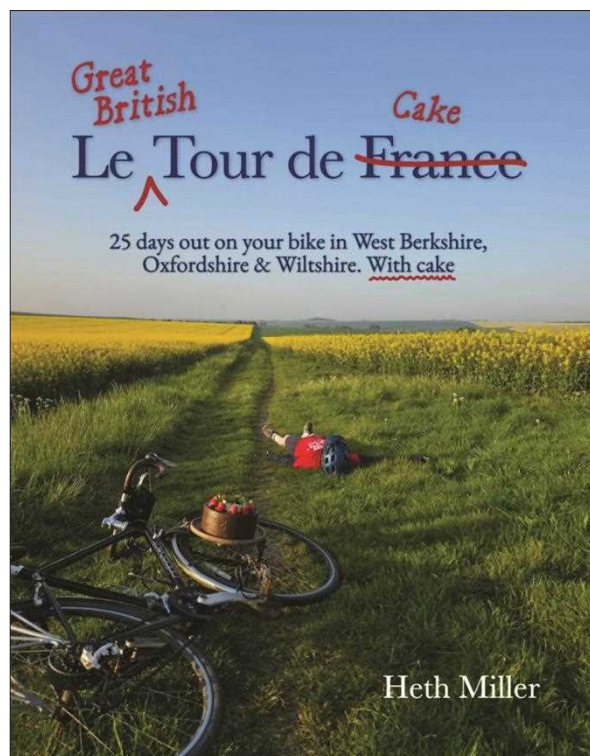
A summer of cake awaits ...

So if you're looking for something to do this summer then why not have a go at The Cake Tour? Yes, if you're feeling really energetic you could reach the cafes on your bike. Then again, the dog needs walking, kids getting out of the house (before you all kill each other) and so you could just pick a café, plug the postcode into the Satnav, shove the lot in the car and drive there instead...

(After all, exercise is overrated anyway.)

Le Great British Tour de Cake by Heth Miller available at The Goring Grocer / Amazon / www.hethgoesbiking.com/shop

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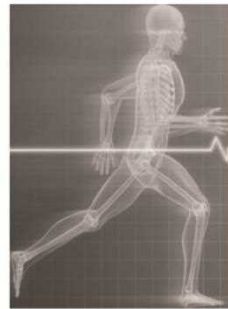
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LIVES REMEMBERED

Ian Laurence King 23.8.1950 – 15.3.2026

Ian was born in Buenos Aires in 1950, delivered by his aunt. He moved to England with his mother and sister when he was 11 years old and they lived with his grandmother in Bognor Regis. He attended the local grammar school and was placed in the year above his age. In Argentina he had been taught in English for half of the day and in Spanish for the rest.

At the earliest opportunity he escaped Bognor Regis and in receipt of a Kitchener scholarship, he headed off to university at St Andrews where he studied astronomy. While there he pursued his interest in learning to play the bagpipes, quickly realising that if you joined the territorial army, you actually got paid to learn. His TA career did not finish there but lasted for more than forty years.

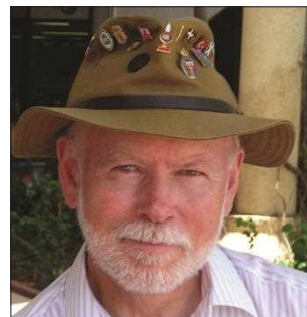
After university he headed south and worked for Metal Box in Palmers Green before moving to their market research department in Reading. He continued his piping and TA career by transferring to the London Scottish Regiment. The 1980s saw a complete change of career when Ian moved into financial services.

After numerous changes of contract, he retired to spend more time on his hobbies: philately, target rifle shooting, building his model railway and beekeeping. He was an active member of CAMRA, the local wine society and Village Greenfingers. He was greatly valued as Company Secretary at GGN.

Ian maintained his piping interest rising to be Pipe Major of the London Scottish and thus becoming Personal Piper to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother from 1990 until 1999, for which he was awarded the Royal Victorian Medal in 2001. He also enjoyed the post of piper to the Caledonian Club in London. In years gone by many local people will have seen Ian at local Burns Night celebrations or leading the torchlight procession on Christmas Eve, magnificently arrayed and filling the night with the sound of the Great Highland Bagpipe. On pages 22-23 of November 2021 GGN there was an article about Ian's life and the portrait of him in the Caledonian Club (see goringgapnews.co.uk or contact the Editor).

Ian moved to Goring in 1996 when he married Margaret. Ever logical in his thinking, he searched for a non-estate house, on a rail link to London and with a Real Ale pub. Goring fitted the bill! When both retired, they enjoyed travelling, mostly in Europe but with three trips back to Argentina.

Ian died suddenly, away from home, while taking part in a shooting competition in Cheshire. He will be missed by many residents and members of the various groups to which he belonged.



Wendy King 1.10.1934 – 22.04.2026

Wendy was born in Freedom Fields Hospital Plymouth in 1934. Her mum lived in Plymouth supporting her elderly parents, whilst her father, who was in the Army, was based in Aldershot as a farrier. Money was very tight, so her mother was in service, which is how Wendy learnt to care for others and cook. When war broke out 1939-1945 the family moved back to Compton where they could all be safe. Wendy left school at an early age and like her mother went into service.

Wendy married John in 1956 at Compton parish church. It was a lovely ceremony surrounded by friends and family. Wendy worked at the Swan in Compton waiting on tables. One day Lester Piggot, the jockey, gave Wendy a large tip, with which she bought herself a bike to get around on. She also worked cleaning a large house in Grazely Green, which was a tough cycle ride! Her next job was at Harwell and because of her amazing cooking skills, she would be asked to make the pork pies. (Jim, Wendy's second husband, would often request Wendy's pasties and I knew at times she would rise early in the morning so they could be made before she went to work!)

John and Wendy managed to buy a house in Caversham where David was born in September 1961. Unfortunately, John ended up with leukaemia. Wendy nursed him for a while at home but he passed away at the John Radcliffe when David was three. Eventually Wendy felt it was time to move back to her beloved Compton and with some savings and a new job as a lab technician, she purchased a house in Compton.

In 1976 Wendy's life took another twist as she was invited to a Christmas dinner and dance by Jim and something clicked. They married in June 1977 and Wendy and David moved in with Jim and his family in Goring. Wendy carried on working as a lab technician in Compton and eventually retired after 20 years, having made some great friends and being well respected by colleagues.

Wendy and Jim enjoyed lots of holidays to Spain with their friends, where she admitted 'getting smashed'; those of us who knew her well knew she was not a drinker! They went to the Rovers Return, got blown away at the top of Snowdon, visited Blenheim Palace and had several Devon holidays with family. Wendy loved to knit and made lots of baby blankets for her grandchildren and also sent a lot to charities.



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Wendy was an amazing caring woman who supported her family throughout her life. She loved family and friends to turn up, filling the house with laughter, the chaos of grandchildren and then great grandchildren and always had a cuppa for everyone.

Jim passed away in May 2025 and Margaret spent Wendy's final Christmas with her in Springhill Road last December – once again she 'got smashed' on her favourite Buck's Fizz! Wendy was determined to stay in her own home but this was cut short by a stroke and it was decided to make her final move to the Grange Residential Home. There she spent her final days being cared for by the local surgery, palliative care nurses and the lovely staff.

Wendy will be greatly missed by all her family and friends.

Not just for the chaps: a fresh era for Goring & Streatley Probus

Founded in 1976, the Goring & Streatley Probus Club provides friendship, intellectual stimulation and social opportunities for retired and semi-retired people in the local area. Originally established for retired professional and business men, the club became a mixed-gender organisation in 2025, reflecting its commitment to remaining relevant and welcoming to new members. The club meets on the second Wednesday of each month at Goring & Streatley Golf Club, where members enjoy coffee, a speaker presentation on a wide range of subjects and an optional lunch. In addition to its regular meetings, the club organises social events, outings and visits to places of interest, helping members maintain active social networks and pursue new interests. Membership is open to retired or partly retired residents of the Goring and Streatley area, with an emphasis on fellowship, participation and community spirit. Now approaching its 50th anniversary, the club continues to thrive as an important part of local village life.



A Probus social event

Photo: Bernard Novell

Recent talks have covered diverse subjects:

- In May, Hayley Scott of The Forensic Experience delivered an engaging and thought-provoking talk on 'The Life of a Metropolitan Police Crime Scene Investigator' based on her professional experience. Blending real-life forensic science with compelling storytelling, she explained how forensic techniques – such as fingerprint analysis, DNA profiling and crime scene reconstruction – play a crucial role in solving cases.
- In April, Graham Harvey (Probus member) gave a fascinating talk on *The History of HS2 – how it all went wrong*, drawing on his decades of experience as a senior project manager in the civil engineering sector.
- In March, Janine Kilroe talked to us about 'Working with some of the most dangerous men in the country', reflecting on her years spent in education in prisons.
- In February, Professor Sir Brian Hoskins gave us an authoritative but accessible overview of the current position on climate change.

If you might be interested to come as a guest to an upcoming meeting, check out the website for more information: <https://www.goringandstreatleyprobus.co.uk/> or contact the Chairman, John Gray 07836 505677.

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Goring Primary friends race to incredible double Schools Triathlon victory

Pupils from Goring C of E Primary School celebrated an unforgettable few weeks of sporting success after teams delivered outstanding performances at two Knight Frank Schools Triathlon events.

At Bradfield College on 17 May, two Goring Primary teams secured first and second place in the Year 5/6 event, competing against teams from 107 schools across Berkshire. Just seven seconds separated the two Goring teams at the finish line after a hugely competitive race.

The winning team, '3 Es and an O' — Year 6 pupils Edward Williams, Eddie Lancaster, Elliot Parsley and Oscar Franklin — successfully defended the title they first won together when they were in Year 4, showing the same teamwork and determination that has made them such a strong group. The super-sporty Goring Primary children are all good friends who regularly compete on behalf of the school and in local teams and events.

Pushing them all the way were the 'Goring Glads' – Elena Bastawrous and Henry Wright from Year 6, and Arlo Smith and Bryn Griffiths from Year 5 – who delivered an outstanding performance on their first team outing in the competition to take second place.

Goring Primary also had a younger Year 3/4 team competing, the 'Goring Giants' – Jack Wright, Jack Tassendorf, Bertie Jones and Harrison Williams – who finished an impressive 34th out of 101 teams in their category, a fantastic result in such a large and competitive field. In addition to the Giants, the all-girl 'Chicken Lickens' team of Zalika, Daisy, Tabitha and Amelie came a very creditable 54th in their first ever Triathlon.

The remarkable success continued on 7 June, when more Goring Primary teams took part in the Knight Frank Schools Triathlon at The Oratory School. Once again, '3 Es and an O' won the whole event (competing against 63 other teams), this time with Arlo Smith joining Edward Williams, Eddie Lancaster and Oscar Franklin, as Elliot Parsley was injured.

The Knight Frank Schools Triathlon raises money for Restless Development, a long-standing charity partner, alongside fundraising for participating schools including Goring Primary School.

Supporters praised the determination, sportsmanship and team spirit shown by all the Goring C of E Primary teams, describing the school's results as an extraordinary achievement in such competitive fields.



Successful triathlon title defenders '3Es and an O'



Team 'Chicken Lickens' cross the line



Second place triathlon team 'Goring Glads'

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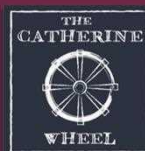
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Junior Season tees off at Goring & Streatley

Goring & Streatley Golf Club recently hosted a successful Junior Evening, bringing together our young members and their families to launch the 2026 season.

The evening provided a great opportunity to outline an exciting programme for the year ahead, including coaching pathways, competitions, team matches and our popular Wednesday 'Blast' evenings. The focus remains on creating a fun, safe and inclusive environment where every junior has the opportunity to learn, improve and enjoy the game.

Our junior section continues to go from strength to strength and plays an important role in the future of the Club. The structured programme offers a clear pathway from beginner through to competitive golf, supporting players of all abilities as they develop their skills and confidence.

Of course, all are very welcome, but we are particularly keen to encourage more girls to get involved in junior golf at Goring & Streatley. Golf is a fantastic sport for building friendships, confidence and lifelong skills, and we are committed to growing an inclusive and welcoming junior community.

If you would like to find out more about junior golf at the Club, we would be delighted to hear from you. Please contact Keith Sutton (Junior Organiser) keithsuttongoringjuniorgolf@gmail.com or Sarah Brown (General Manager) generalmanager@goringgolf.co.uk

Paul Scott

Celebrating Goring Library Garden

On Saturday 6 June, the Friends of Goring Library hosted a party to celebrate the completion of our community garden. Weather conditions were challenging but a few brave souls dodged the rain to congregate under the gazebo! Beautiful bouquets by local florist, Yuki Clarke, were presented to Cyndy Ashton and Amanda Heron, without whom the garden would never have become a reality. Speeches were given but

kept as short as possible, with particular thanks being given to our major donors: the Gatehampton Trust, Gap HR Services, Outside25, Celebrating George Michael, the Trust for Oxfordshire's Environment, with funding from Grundon Waste Management Ltd through the Landfill Communities Fund, and the *Goring Gap News* Association.

The garden is open whenever the library is open; please do come and visit. You can access it round the side of the library but we would love it if you came into the library and said hello, perhaps even borrowed a book!

Wet garden

Jacqui Gray
Chair, Friends of Goring Library

Cyndy and Amanda with their flowers
Photo: Bernard Novell



Photo: Bernard Novell



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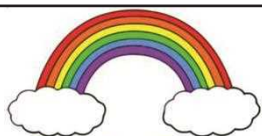
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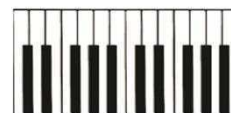
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SKITTLES NIGHT FUN TOURNAMENT

Join us at the Social Club on Saturday 11 July from 7pm for an evening of friendly competition at our Skittles Night. We're setting up the alley right inside the Club for a fun tournament open to all. Whether you're a pro or a complete beginner, it's all about a bit of light-hearted competition and community spirit. Entry is free for members and their guests. Come along, grab a drink, and see if you've got what it takes to top the leaderboard!

GORING SOCIAL CLUB: OUR SPORTS BAR IS OPEN

We are excited to unveil the brand-new Sports Bar at the Goring Social Club. Following a stylish refurbishment completed entirely by our own members, our back room has been transformed into a modern, welcoming space. We'll be showing all the big FIFA World Cup matches, including the semi-finals on Tuesday 14th (9pm) and Wednesday 15th (8pm), building the tension right up to the final on Sunday 19th at 8pm. The new bar is open to all members and their guests. Come down, and join us for a game. Regular Club Highlights: beyond live sport, the Goring Social Club remains your local hub for community events. Join us throughout the month for our popular live music nights, skittles tournaments, and social gatherings. It's the perfect, friendly environment for meeting neighbours.

GORING SUMMER READING CHALLENGE

From 4 July to 5 September, Goring Library will be participating in the Summer Reading Challenge 2026: *Read to the Beat*, in partnership with Universal Music Group UK. All children taking part can collect stickers and rewards as they enjoy reading library books. There's a host of fun activities taking place in the library from noisy story times, decorating pebbles, making your own Lego music festival and a special Monster Soup Puppet Workshop run by the talented people from the Puppet Barge. Pop into the Library to collect an events schedule; some events are drop-in and some will need to be booked but they are all free! Children who finish the Challenge at an Oxfordshire library will receive a medal, a certificate and entry into a prize draw. Under 4s can take part in a mini challenge with their own special collector's folder and stickers.

Further afield

AFTERNOON TEAS AT ALDWORTH ST MARY'S CHURCH

These will start on Wednesday 1 July and then every Wednesday in July, August and September 2.30 – 4.30pm. Delicious homemade cakes in the company of The Aldworth Giants. For further details and to book groups contact Gill Wilding 01635 578624 or gillwilding@hotmail.com

IPSDEN MUSIC IN THE BARN

Live music on a summer's evening. In the beautiful 18th century Barn Courtyard at Ipsden Farm, 6-9pm on Saturday 25 July (gates open at 5.30pm). Bring your own picnic (please no BBQs) and drinks, blankets or chairs. Come and relax and enjoy a varied programme of acoustic music by local musicians and singers. Tickets £8 for adults at the gate and from The Ipsden Village Shop or £9 from Ticketsource. Under 16s free. All proceeds to St Mary's Church, Ipsden. Online tickets from <https://www.ticketsource.co.uk/pcc-of-ipsden-entertainment-committee>

WALLINGFORD PHOTOGRAPHIC CLUB

Although on summer break, Wallingford Photographic Club has a few activities to look out for ahead of our next season in September. We have an amateur photography competition

which is open to all: *Summer Vibes* is the theme and we have a £100 voucher up for grabs so why not give it a shot? See www.wallingfordphoto.club for details. Then come and see us over Bunkfest weekend: we will be holding our annual exhibition at St Mary-Le-More Church (behind the Town Hall) on Saturday 5 September. Drop by to view or buy our best work, chat to members and have some refreshments.

PANGBOURNE CHORAL SOCIETY SUMMER CONCERT

A concert of music from across the world to be held at Falkland Islands Memorial Chapel, Pangbourne College, on Saturday 11 July at 7pm. The PCS Summer Concert usually strikes a more informal tone and always seeks to bring new music to its audience. This July Concert is no exception. The programme offers a range of music from Iceland to New Zealand, from Japan to Brazil, not to mention Ireland, Antarctica, Australia, North America, and Africa (Swahili and Xhosa!), Wales, Scotland, England. Every continent, ten languages! Some of the songs will be very familiar to all, and others will be new but no less accessible. The full programme of up to 20 works in 10 languages may be viewed on the PCS website: www.pangbournechoral.org.uk Tickets (£15, £5 for under 18s), are available online from PCS website; also from Garlands Organic & Natural, Pangbourne, from PCS members, and on the door.

CHOLSEY REPAIR CAFÉ

The next Cholsey Repair Café will take place on Saturday 18 July at the Cholsey Pavilion. Doors open at 10am and close at 12.45pm. Talented fixers offer help and advice free of charge, to get a wide variety of broken household items back into working order, although donations to cover operating costs are always appreciated. Excellent refreshments are available next door, in the Cholsey Community Café. Further details can be found at www.cholseyrepaircafe.com or you can email repaircafe@cholsey.com.

CONCERT AT CHOLSEY PAVILION

As part of Cholsey's *Month of Music*, *Three Pressed Men* will give a concert at The Cholsey Pavilion on Friday 10 July, starting at 7.30pm. With a rare talent for harmony and a repertoire of English traditional folk music that's as large as it is varied, *Three Pressed Men* have been delighting audiences in Berkshire and Oxfordshire for many years. Whether playing lively dance tunes or blending unaccompanied voices, there is always something fresh in their arrangements and a story to be told about the origins of the piece. Tickets are £10 at the door (cash or card) and there will be a reasonably priced real-ale bar. An email to concerts@cholsey.com or a call to 01491 652295 will help us plan seating and provisioning, so we'd love to hear from you.

NETTLEBED ART AND CRAFT SHOWS

We are delighted to announce the Annual Nettlebed Art & Craft show will be taking place on Saturday 1 and Sunday 2 August at Nettlebed School — a wonderful weekend celebrating local creativity, talent, and a great slice of cake. Come along to enjoy a wide variety of artwork, handmade crafts, and exhibits from local artists and makers. Refreshments will be available, and everyone is warmly welcome to browse. We are also keen to welcome new local artists and craftspeople to exhibit their work this year. Whether you are an experienced exhibitor or showing your work for the first time, we would love to hear from you — please email Nettlebedas@gmail.com to more info and entry forms. Proceeds from the event will go towards supporting local charities and community causes. We look forward to seeing you there!

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Wednesday 1 July• **Goring Village Green Fingers.**

7.30-9.30pm, SL. *The Gardens of the Cotswolds* by Anna Steven. Visitors welcome - £5. www.villagegreenfingers.uk

• **Cribbage.** 7.30pm, SC.

• **Knit and Natter.** 3-5pm, SC. Weekly every Wednesday.

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

Thursday 2 July

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

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

Friday 3 July

• **Bingo.** Meat Draw. SC. Weekly every Friday

• **Withymead Nature Reserve.** Now open on Fridays up to and including 28 Aug 28.10am-5pm. No need to pre-book, just turn up and enjoy. More info at www.withymead.org

• **Goring & Streatley Wine Society.** Outdoor summer party with buffet /bbq /quiz. Wines for a summer celebration. Presenter: Tim Syrad Enquiries email gswinesoc@gmail.com

Saturday 4 July

Summer Reading Challenge starts. GL. See P39.

Sunday 5 July

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

Monday 6 July

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

Tuesday 7 July

• **Goring Caregivers Group.** 10am-12noon. SC. Drop in or call Hilary Dobson 01491 872063.

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

Wednesday 8 July

• **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.

• **Goring by Cleeve WI.** 7.30pm, SL. *Living on a House Boat! Speakers.* Karen and Brett Wiles. Contact Katrina Cooper: 01491 875334, kcooper@rsk.co.uk

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

Saturday 11 July

• **Skittles night.** 7pm, SC. Open to all members and guests.

• **Goring Gap U3a Open Day.** 10am-2pm, GVH. See below.

Sunday 12 July

• **Poetry by the river.** 2pm-4pm Withymead Nature Reserve. See P15.

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

Monday 13 July

Life Drawing. 10am-12noon, MR. Every second and fourth Monday of the month £17 for 1 session, £60 for four sessions. If you have any questions. contact goringandstreatley@gmail.com

Tuesday 14 July

Fifa World Cup Semi-final. 9pm, SC. Live sport on the big screen.

Wednesday 15 July

• **Fifa World Cup Semi-final.** 8pm. SC. Live sport on the big screen.

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

Thursday 16 July

• **Pick a Flick.** 10.30am-2pm, CR. *The Calendar Girls (2003).* The true story of the Yorkshire Women's Institute members who stripped for a charity calendar to raise funds for a local leukaemia unit. Please contact Sarah Fraser 01491 871838 or Jenny Boyd 01491 872109 to book and to ask for transport if required.

The cost is £5 per event, including a light lunch.

• **Parkinson's Group.** 10.30-12noon. SC. Drop in or call Hillary Dobson 01491 872063.

Sunday 19 July

Fifa World Cup Final. 8pm, SC. Live sport on the big screen.

Monday 20 July

Goring Gap Local History Society. AGM and Social Event. 7.30pm, GVH. www.goringgaphistory@gmail.com

Friday 24 July

Reading challenge event. 10am-12noon and 2pm-4pm, GL. Decorate a garden pebble in our library garden, help create our garden caterpillar and enjoy stories outdoors!

Sunday 26 July

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

• **Quiz night.** 7.30pm, SC.

• **Genie News Copy Deadline.** Genie is published twice a month. Email us: news@genienews.org For more events on the Events Calendar at www.genienews.org

Wednesday 29 July

• **Monster Soup.** 2pm-3.30pm and 3.30pm-5pm. Puppet Workshop (ages 5–10). Delivered by the Puppet Barge for Goring Library. Booking essential, at the library.

• **Author interview:** Helen Russell. 7pm GL. See P17.

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

Celebrate 20 Years of friendship, activities and community – Goring Gap u3a Open Day

Goring Gap u3a is celebrating its 20th anniversary this year, and we're inviting local people to join us at our Open Day on **Saturday 11 July 2026, 10:00–14:00 at Goring Village Hall**. u3a is all about making the most of your free time—meeting new people, trying new activities, and enjoying being part of a friendly, welcoming community. Whether it's walking, singing, discussion groups, crafts, or simply a chance to get out and connect with others, there's something for everyone. Although we're called 'Goring Gap', you don't need to live in Goring or Streatley to join us. Our members come from across South Oxfordshire and West Berkshire.

Come along for coffee and cake, chat to members, and explore the wide range of groups and activities on offer. There's no pressure—just a chance to see what we do and whether it might suit you. If you're retired or semi-retired and would like to meet new people and enjoy new experiences, we'd love to welcome you. Find out more at: www.goringgapu3a.org.uk/openday

Re-cycling at the Repair Café

This month's Repair Café at Goring Village Hall took a two-wheeled turn, shifting its focus to bicycles to coincide with the Great Big Green Week.

The event featured an expanded 'Bike Swap', where people could bring bikes for repair, or donate outgrown and unused cycles to be rehomed in exchange for a donation.

To handle the high number of bikes expected, the regular Repair Café bike crew partnered with additional volunteers from Goring Gap Active Travel. The team of five was kept busy for over four hours, fuelled by frequent tea and biscuits from the wonderful Repair Café catering team. 28 bikes were brought in for repair or donation. Repairs were successful on 25 of these, with new parts fitted when necessary. 20 bikes were returned to grateful owners or passed on to new owners in return for a donation to Repair Café funds.

We even had a visit from two passing cyclists who were en route from Lyme Regis to Norwich, following the ancient Icknield Way. They were grateful for some local knowledge of the best route to take from Goring to Chinnor, avoiding the parts of the Ridgeway National Trail not currently legal for cycling.

Eight donated bikes remained unclaimed at the end of the day. These have been passed on to the Reading Bike Kitchen (RBK), a volunteer-led, not-for-profit community interest company.

RBK will refurbish the donated bikes for resale or salvage parts from those beyond repair. Proceeds from the sale of refurbished bikes directly support the project.

Looking for a cost-effective bike? Scan the QR code (at top right of photo) to find out more about Reading Bike Kitchen or browse their current sales on Gumtree.

See photo on P2.



Photo: Robin Williamson

The Garden Design Company green wall in May

May 2026 saw us not only celebrating the 100th Birthday of Sir David Attenborough but also the 30th birthday of The Garden Design Company Ltd.

In 30 years an amazing set of gardens and friendships have been created. From the start we wanted to bring a sense of pride and professionalism to our work and we have never just been about a contract to build a patio, say, which maybe explains why we have reached this ripe old age. So thanks to all our clients, suppliers, staff and contractors who have been on the journey with us.

This year to get into the Chelsea Flower Show spirit (which we as a company always attend with a small selection of invited company guests) we created a living green wall to green up Goring High Street, aided by our friend Claire of Applegarth Blooms.

With foliage of yew and leaf alder (that later was chipped and composted), alliums and chives, all cut or supplied from Rob's garden, along with moss, that was transformed into kokedamas, and campanulas and trailing petunias (which were replanted afterwards), the green wall reminded us of how we can sustainably green up even a brick wall.



Do visit us to see a selection of last year's gardens that we designed and built.

Ben Halson-Classey www.gardendesignco.co.uk

Crimson clover field near Icknield Road



Crimson clover is a green manure used as a cover crop by farmers. It prevents soil erosion, fixes nitrogen and provides nectar-rich plants for pollinators.

Photo: Mandy Nathan

Poppy field looking toward Lardon Chase



Photo: Adrian Turner

Curious cows near the Great Chalk Wood



Photo: Gail Rainsden

Families of Greylag Geese near Nun's Acre



Photo: Janet Haresnape