



Astons Café

# CHRISTMAS BAZAAR

Craft Stalls  
Seasonal Foods  
Refreshments

**Tuesday 5th December**

**6pm - 8.30pm**

At Aston Tirrold & Upthorpe  
Village Hall

**FREE ENTRY**

But please support our Raffle  
in aid of Village Hall funds &  
Dementia UK

Offers of raffle prizes are very welcome

Contact Margaret  
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- 
- ★ Anna Dillon Artist **Books, calendars & cards**
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  - ★ The Pine in the Valley **Handmade eco silver jewellery**
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  - ★ Mark Wood **Local artist**
  - ★ Gail Jackson **Ceramics, bird tables & decorations**
  - ★ Denes Marffy **Woodturner**
  - ★ Sweet Daisy **Sweets and treats**

# ASTONS NEWS

Part of the Comms information group:

Astonsenews

theastons.net

The Astons Villagers Facebook Community

Astonsonline

Twitter (X)



**Don't forget to enjoy  
the ASTONS NEWS  
CHRISTMAS QUIZ**

**A bottle of fizz + box of chocolates to  
the winner! It's on the back page.**

December 2023 issue 596

## WHAT'S ON IN DECEMBER

DEC BINS: G+B: 14,30 GREY: 7,21

JAN BINS: G+B: 12,25 GREY: 6,18

**ARTICLES LIST Page 3 ADVERTISERS' INDEX Page 5**

### Weekly Events

Day	Time	Event	Location	Page
M to F	various	various classes	Village Hall	17
Mon	9pm	Football (1 hour)	Wallingford. Sports Centre. Over 16's	37
Tues	10-00-12.00	Astons Café	Village Hall	15
"	10.00-12.00	Post Office	"	15
Tues	10.00-12.00	Free Superfast Internet Access	"	17
Fri	9.30am-11.30	Toddler Group (Term time only)	Centre for Reflection	18

### Events in December

1-24	***	Advent Windows/Treasure Hunt	Around the Astons	9
2	5pm	3rd Friday men's Christmas outing	Goring	7
5	10.30am	Astons Online webinar	Online	9, 19
5	6.30pm	Christmas Bazaar	Village Hall	cover
12	10-12	Astons Online in person ( <i>by appt only</i> )	Village Hall	9, 19
12	7pm-9pm	Table c-piece & wreath workshop	Village Hall	13
17	4.00pm	Carol Service	St. Michael's Church	30
24	3pm/10pm	Crib service/ 'Midnight' Mass	St. Michael's/All Saints'	30
24	6.00pm	Candle-lit Carol Service + refreshments	URC	32
25	10.30am	Parish Eucharist	St. Michael's Church	30
27	***	Chequers closed until 12:00 10th Jan	Festive opening times too	4

### Events in January

9	10.30	Astons Online webinar	online	9,19
16	10-12	In person	Village Hall	9,19
25	Eve	Ladies' Book Club	TBC	7
31	7pm-8.15pm	Wildlife talk	Village Hall	13



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## 38 CHRISTMAS QUIZ-PRIZES TO BE WON

### Allen's Peace

I would like to thank all those who were able to attend the talk and walk of Allen's Peace on Friday 3rd of November. It was good to chat over tea and cakes and exchange views. Some interesting links came up, with our local neighbours in the Blewbury Chalk Stream group and others. We hope to build on the native species backbone planting we have already established this year and develop the lower shrub layer plus wildflower meadow in 2024. My aim is to create as much biodiversity as possible to support varied and sustainable wildlife on site.

Thank you for your support, Barbara Allen

**DEADLINE FOR THE FEBRUARY EDITION IS JANUARY 25th**

**SEND COPY TO: [editorastonsnews@gmail.com](mailto:editorastonsnews@gmail.com)\***

(\*Send in Microsoft 'WORD' main text in **font size 11**, or as a PDF)

**OR in writing to: Astons News, The Barn, Baker Street, Aston Tirrold Oxon OX11 9DD**

*Editor: Jeremy Imbush. Treasurer: Marcus Holburn*

# le clos

## Bar à Vin

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Christmas Day - Lunch only

Boxing Day - Lunch only

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on Wednesday 10th January at midday .

Food orders	Opening hours
-------------	---------------

Weds - Sat	Weds - Sat
------------	------------

12.00 - 14.00	12.00 - 15.00
---------------	---------------

18.30 - 21.00	18.00 - 23.00
---------------	---------------

Sun	Sun
-----	-----

12.00 - 14.30	12.00 - 17.00
---------------	---------------

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## ASTONS NEWS Advertising Rates 2023 (Community Adverts are free)

*Please note that there are no issues in  
January or August*

To place an advert  
or for further information

please contact:

Jeremy Imbush

**editorastonsnews@gmail.com**

### ASTONS NEWS Advertising Rates 2023

Advert size	10 issues	5 issues	1 issue
1/8 page (65x90mm)	£50	£35	£15
1/4 page (130x90mm)	£75	£45	£20
1/2 page (130x180mm)	£140	£80	£30
A4 page (260x180mm)	£poa	£poa	£40
Loose inserts (Flyers)	£25		
Community adverts & flyers	free		





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## Editorial: The Astons News Prize Christmas Quiz: it's on the back page.

Firstly, congratulations to the ARC bonfire team, helpers, and sponsors Peter and Ruth Welch of Scotlands Ash Garage, for providing us all with such a great evening; top food & drink at bargain prices, and an astonishing firework display, devised and conducted by young Richard Cox. All this takes a huge effort from volunteers- more of which in the next issue in February.

The village did extraordinary well in private firework show discipline. I'm sure that the many private and commercial animal owners in the village were very pleased and grateful that such concern and respects was shown by the community.

Light discipline has also been good, and long may it continue; I can just make out the JWST telescope on a good dark night...Obviously, there will be a modified code during the Astons version of Diwali, where there will be some fabulous Christmas light shows around the village. My neighbour in Baker Street is a keen fan, and is always encouraging me to add festive scenes, so I shall oblige him with some new additions.

Important events: **The Christmas Bazaar at the VH on 5th (see front covers). The Carols on 17th and Crib on 24th services (p30)** draw the strands of the village community together, showing that even in an increasingly secular society, the Church is still at the heart of the village. For the many newly-arrived villagers, even if you are not overtly religious, these are the perfect occasions way to become part of village life. The **Carols Around the Village** will take place this year (date TBC), so read your astonsnews messages and look on the village facebook page.

*Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to all our many readers, from myself and the Lady Mayoress.*

## Carols by Candlelight

on Christmas Eve at 6pm at the United Reformed Church, Spring Lane. Raising funds for Home Start, South Oxon.

Festive drinks and mince pies afterwards. We will also have a live zoom link for anyone in the village that wants to be there but can't attend in person.

## Buses for the Astons

Here is the current timetable. The 94 route serves East Hagbourne, Blewbury and Upton, and a new 94A route serving East Hagbourne, West Hagbourne, Upton, Blewbury, The Astons and the Moretons before returning to Didcot. Chilton/Harwell Campus will no longer be served by these services. The timetable will be posted on the Astons web site when available. Please note that the service runs anti-clockwise only.

Mondays to Fridays												
	94	94A	94	94	94A	94	94A	94	94A	94	94A	94
Didcot Parkway Railway Station	0735	0845		1010	1110	1210	1310	1410	1510	1610	1710	1810
Didcot Orchard Centre	0739	0844		1014	1114	1214	1314	1414	1514	1614	1714	1814
Didcot Southgate Road, South Vly		0848		1018	1118	1218	1318	1418	1518	1618	1718	1818
East Hagbourne Bus Stop	0745	0851		1021	1121	1221	1321	1421	1521	1621	1721	1821
Blewbury The Bunting		0858		1128		1228		1428		1628		1828
West Hagbourne Bus Stop	0845	0951		1027		1227		1427		1627		1827
Harwell Campus Broomfield Avenue												
Upton Village Hall	0848	0954	0903	1033	1133	1233	1333	1433	1533	1633	1733	1833
Blewbury The Bunting	0853	0959		1035	1135	1235	1335	1435	1535	1635	1735	1835
Harwell Campus Broomfield Avenue			0915									
Ashton Upthorpe The Church		0908		1044		1244		1444		1644		1844
South Moreton The Church		0814		1050		1250		1450		1650		1850
North Moreton Bus Stop		0818		1054		1254		1454		1654		1854
East Hagbourne Bus Stop	0708		0945		1145		1345		1545		1745	1855
Didcot Southgate Road, South Vly	0704		0949		1149		1349		1549		1749	1859
Didcot Orchard Centre	0718	0826	0954	1102	1154	1302	1354	1502	1554	1654	1754	1854
Didcot Parkway Railway Station	0715	0821	0959	1107	1159	1307	1359	1507	1559	1659	1759	1859
Saturdays												
	94	94	94	94A	94	94A	94	94A	94	94A	94	94
Didcot Parkway Railway Station	0735		0910	1010	1110	1210	1310	1410	1510	1610	1710	1810
Didcot Orchard Centre	0739		0914	1014	1114	1214	1314	1414	1514	1614	1714	1814
Didcot Southgate Road			0918	1018	1118	1218	1318	1418	1518	1618	1718	1818
East Hagbourne Bus Stop	0745		0921	1021	1121	1221	1321	1421	1521	1621	1721	1821
Blewbury The Bunting			0928		1128		1328		1528		1728	1828
West Hagbourne Bus Stop	0751			1027		1227		1427		1627		1827
Upton Village Hall	0754		0933	1033	1133	1233	1333	1433	1533	1633	1733	1833
Blewbury The Bunting	0758		0938	1038	1138	1238	1338	1438	1538	1638	1738	1838
Ashton Upthorpe The Church	0808			1044		1244		1444		1644		1844
South Moreton The Church	0814			1050		1250		1450		1650		1850
North Moreton Bus Stop	0818			1054		1254		1454		1654		1854
East Hagbourne Bus Stop		0845	0945		1145		1345		1545		1745	1845
Didcot Southgate Road		0849	0948		1149		1349		1549		1749	1849
Didcot Orchard Centre		0858	0954	1102	1154	1302	1354	1502	1554	1654	1754	1854
Didcot Parkway Railway Station		0851	0959	1107	1159	1307	1359	1507	1559	1659	1759	1859

## 94, 94A ROUTE MAP



The new bus timetable in the oxfordbus website:

<https://www.oxfordbus.co.uk/service-changes-26th-november-2023>.

The plan is still to add the extension to the Didcot schools from January 2024.

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## ASTON'S ADVENT WINDOWS/ FESTIVE TREASURE HUNT IS ON ITS WAY!

From 1<sup>st</sup> December up until Christmas Eve, 24 kind volunteers have each agreed to create and illuminate a magical, festive window display. Each window will be lit from dusk until 10pm every evening from their given date until the end of 2023 and will display a number. Once 'opened' that house will continue to light up every evening....some will be easier to spot than others. There is one that is particularly well tucked away!

Treat yourselves by wondering around the village to see if you can find them. Day by day, more and more windows will be on show for you, your kids, your family and friends to marvel at. A map of all the houses will be available to view on the Astons website and at the Crib Service at St Michael's Church from Christmas Eve.

*Please do not enter anyone's garden or driveway to look at the displays – the houses have been specifically chosen for their visibility from the road.*

If you enjoy this new bit of festive cheer, and would like to make a donation, please scan the QR code. The money will be equally split between the PCC and OxPAT.org (The money they receive is distributed to organisations

providing shelter, food, day centres, clothing, advice and medical care to people in need in Oxford). The QR code will take you to the PCC donations page. Once all the donations have been received, they will give 50% to OxPat. If you would like to read OxPat's response to our donation from last year, please go to their website [www.oxpat.org/news](http://www.oxpat.org/news)



For more information (or to be added to the list for Christmas 2024), please contact Amberley Diamond ([amberleyjones@hotmail.com](mailto:amberleyjones@hotmail.com) 07771995906)

### Book Group

Our last meeting for the year is on Thursday 14th December at 7.30pm. We will be discussing *The Secret History* by Donna Tart and enjoying some Christmas cheer. Our January meeting is scheduled for Thursday 25th. New members are very welcome!

Please contact Sarah Dalton at [dalton\\_family@hotmail.com](mailto:dalton_family@hotmail.com) for more information.





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## Fundraising Dinner supporting Jennie's Childrens' Trust



We are delighted to announce that The Lancaster family are hosting a fundraising meal in aid of “Jennie's Childrens' Trust” for the second year in a row. JCT is a charity that is very close to our hearts, we have volunteered for them over the last few years as they work to create happy memories for families who have suffered trauma. To find out more about the work they do, please visit <http://www.jennieschildrenstrust.org/>

We would like to invite you to an evening of fine food and scintillating conversation on the 24<sup>th</sup> of February 2024, at the Aston Tirrold and Upthorpe Village Hall. The evening will consist of a four course set menu with a selection of amuse-bouche upon arrival.

Vegetarian options and dietary requirements will all be catered for. Please notify of any dietary preferences when booking. Tickets are limited and will be on a first come first served basis. The suggested donation per ticket is £50 with all profits going directly to Jennie's Childrens' Trust. You are asked to bring your own drinks.

If you would like to join us, please email [gracelancaster@gmail.com](mailto:gracelancaster@gmail.com) with confirmation and the number of tickets required.

More details will be given nearer the time.

## **REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY SERVICE**

Thank you to the minsters for conducting the Remembrance Service and for reading out the names of the 'Astons Fallen' from both world wars.

Thank you to the PCC and the Churn Benefice, with special thanks to Amanda Le Conte, for her time. Guy Liverton and Christopher Hawker tolled the tenor with precision timing again at St Michael's Church. Thank you to RAF Benson for their flypast.

Thank you to Jane Imbush from the Parish Council and Chris Keeble for laying the British Legion Wreaths at the war memorial and thanks to Justin Keeble and everyone else who took part in the poppy appeal this year.

Thank you to the War Memorial Committee (*Christopher Hawker, Ryan Morris, Tom Coates and Anna Dillon*) for their work in keeping the grounds and memorial clean and tidy throughout the year.

Finally, with thanks to Aston Outdoors for planting replacement plants at the back of the war memorial grounds.

Anna Dillon



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# Astons Outdoors

## Things get solved if you get involved

It's coming back.....

Some years ago, the Astons had a Villagers Christmas Post Box. Rather than you walk around delivering cards, Santa's helpers have returned and will deliver them. All you need to do is put the individual's name or family name and the house name on the card and pop it into the post box located in the reception area of the Chequers garage. Santas helpers time is free but, as per previous times, if you would like to make a donation, please pop it into the post box with your cards. The donations will go to a local charity. The last collection will be Monday 18<sup>th</sup> December.



### Get creative:

There are just a few places left on the Wreath / Table Centre Piece workshop (see Dates for your Diary table below for timings). The cost is £20 per person. We will be providing mulled wine and mince pies, along with all you need to make your decorations but if you do want to bring some of your own, to personalise, please do so.

### Wildlife Rehabilitation

Because the talks we have held previously relating to wildlife subjects have been so popular you will also see from the Dates for Your Diary that we have a guest speaker coming to talk about the work being carried out at a local Wildlife rescue centre.



### What to do in the garden:

- **Keep feeding** the birds and wash the feeders regularly to minimise diseases spreading
- **Rambling roses** flower on the long whippy shoots produced last year. After the birds have taken any rose hips, cut out all the stems that have flowered. Attach these to the support as horizontally as possible to encourage blooms that cover the plant rather than towering out of sight
- **Lightly prune Japanese Maple**, lightly to retain its shape. Pruning should be done before Christmas as they come into growth early in the new year and would bleed sap if pruned too late
- **Oriental Hellebore** If you haven't had chance to cut the leaves back to ground level do it now so you get a clear view of the flowers. The flowers may be emerging now so be careful not to cut them by mistake.
- **Native Hedges** contain useful food sources for wildlife so try and wait until the new year and then a looser, wilder look than a formal hedge

### Dates for your Diary:

12 <sup>th</sup> December at the Village Hall 7.00pm – 9.00pm	Table Centrepiece & Wreath making workshop
31 <sup>st</sup> January 2024 at the Village Hall 7.00pm – 8.15pm	Wildlife Rescue Talk & AGM (AGM takes 10 minutes)

Please contact Naomi ([contactnaomi@icloud.com](mailto:contactnaomi@icloud.com)) Louise ([louise.binder@live.co.uk](mailto:louise.binder@live.co.uk))

Emma ([emma.machin2018@gmail.com](mailto:emma.machin2018@gmail.com)) Jill ([jill.tegg@icloud.com](mailto:jill.tegg@icloud.com))

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# ASTONS CAFÉ & Post Office

*at the Village Hall*

**every Tuesday 10am-12noon**

Fresh coffee, tea & homemade cake



**Christmas Bazaar Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> December 6pm – 8:30pm**

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*Full details on the poster*



**Tea & Tech sessions: 12<sup>th</sup> Dec and 16<sup>th</sup> Jan**

Need help with technology?

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Contact: [theastonsonline@gmail.com](mailto:theastonsonline@gmail.com)

or 07780 958249

- **History table:** always something interesting to see
- **Wi-Fi:** internet & email • **BBC/ITV iPlayer**
- **Community book scheme:**  
books to buy, borrow & lend
- **Induction loop** (hearing assistance)
- **Disabled & baby-changing facilities**

**Pick-up & drop-off service**  
available for those who aren't easily able to get to and from the Café - let us know if you would like a lift.

*The Astons Café is a 'low maintenance' community effort, sponsored by the Village Hall Committee, which gives village individuals and groups an opportunity to meet and chat, sell or donate items for use or re-use, publicise their activities or fundraise, and village enterprises an outlet for their initiatives. Your support is appreciated.*



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**Café contacts:** Margaret Morant (850895), Louise Binder (851433), Jan Smith (850775)



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### South Moreton Primary School

#### School Tours for your family.

Are you new to the area, or considering school applications for your children in the near future?

We offer families 1:1 personal tours with Mrs Sánchez, Headteacher. S M P S was inspected by Ofsted last academic year, and the report noted that:

"Pupils clearly thrive at South Moreton Staff know each pupil as an individual, nurturing warm relationships so they feel safe and secure at school Staff share their infectious enthusiasm and help pupils to really enjoy school. Pupils' behaviour at school is typically first-class...they are well prepared for their next stages of education"

Book a tour with the School Office. On **01235 813110** or via [office.2566@south-moreton.oxon.sch.uk](mailto:office.2566@south-moreton.oxon.sch.uk). You can also find out more about us on our website

[www.south-moreton.oxon.sch.uk](http://www.south-moreton.oxon.sch.uk).

We look forward to meeting you!

Cheryl Sanchez

Headteacher, South Moreton Primary School

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## Weekly

Monday	<b>Yoga</b>	12-2pm
Tuesday	<b>Astons Café</b>	10am-12
	<b>Post Office</b>	10am-12
Thursday	<b>Pilates</b>	9:30am
	<b>Yoga</b>	8pm

## Monthly

3 <sup>rd</sup> Wednesday	<b>Parish Council</b>	8pm
3 <sup>rd</sup> Tuesday	<b>Tea &amp; Tech</b> <b>(Astons Online)</b>	10am-12

See Village Information (back page) for more details

All Village Hall enquiries to **Debbie - 01235 850238** before 9pm  
email - **astons.vhbooking@gmail.com**

*[theastons.net/astons-village-hall](http://theastons.net/astons-village-hall)*

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£1 donation per child

Free play, enclosed outdoor play area,  
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Enquiries: please contact Georgie  
[Astonstoddlergroup@gmail.com](mailto:Astonstoddlergroup@gmail.com)



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Visit our website <https://southmoretonpreschool.co.uk/>



**Have your say about  
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**Webinars using Zoom**

**Tuesday 5 December 10:30**

We'll be discussing Christmas shopping online and digital issues you bring to the meeting.

**Tuesday 9 January 2024 10:30**

When we'll discuss new devices like Apple watches and things you've come across for the first time.

Book your place(s) at [theastonsonline@gmail.com](mailto:theastonsonline@gmail.com)

**In person**

**Tuesday 12 December 10:00 - 12:00**

(By appointment only please)

**Tuesday 16 January 10:00 – 12:00**

**Astons Village Hall (OX119EQ)**

Please tell us, if you can, that you're coming to join our round table discussion, what you'd like to talk about and if you'd like a one-to-one meeting

[theastonsonline@gmail.com](mailto:theastonsonline@gmail.com)

# Astons Pet Services

## Passionate about animals

I am **professionally qualified and experienced**, in caring for family pets and small livestock.

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<b>Receptions/General Parties:</b>	£60 (villager)	£100 (non-villager)
<b>Children's Parties/Charity Events:</b>	£40 (villager)	£60 (non-villager)



*To arrange a viewing, and/or booking, contact Luci Didriksen-Penfold via email:*

**astonspavilion@gmail.com**



# Astons Community Speedwatch

“A national initiative where proactive members of local communities join, with the support and supervision of their local police, to record details of speeding vehicles using approved detection devices in their local community”

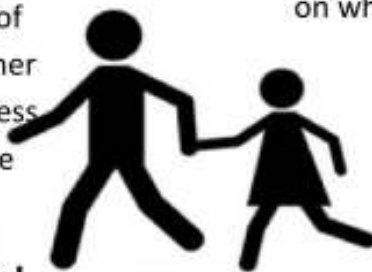
Care to join us?



Our Speedwatch activity is about raising awareness of the dangers of driving fast in a residential area with no pavements, narrow roads, children, older people, walkers and dog-walkers.

Speeding is a real problem in our villages. If **we** make every effort to drive within the 20mph speed limit it should encourage others to do the same and certainly slow down those following us.

We are a small band of volunteers who give an hour of our time when we can to gather statistics and to raise awareness with those driving at excessive speeds.



**Volunteers needed please!**

We would appreciate your feedback on what we are doing (in confidence) and are happy to answer any questions you may have.

Please help us if you can.

Contact: 07887 567261

[bob\\_pickens@hotmail.com](mailto:bob_pickens@hotmail.com)

## DIDCOT & DISTRICT UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE D&D U3A

meetings are held on the third Tuesday of each month at 2pm at Didcot Civic Hall. Visitors are welcome to come to one meeting as a taster before joining. For details email [chairman@didcotu3a.org](mailto:chairman@didcotu3a.org) or [secretary@didcotu3a.org](mailto:secretary@didcotu3a.org) or visit [www.u3asites.org.uk/didcot](http://www.u3asites.org.uk/didcot).

## Astons eNews

All Astons residents are welcome to sign up to the Astons eNews - the Astons community email service. About 200 already have done so.

Astons eNews sends infrequent village-wide emails with important news/information that cannot wait for the next monthly Astons News. The editorial team consists of Astons News editor and Astons Webteam.

The following criteria apply to eNews emails:

The email will be available to everyone in the two parishes.

Addressees will be invisible to all other recipients in order to preserve privacy.

There will be a simple unsubscribe facility on every email.

No commercials, no jokes, no opinions etc - just succinct information about events/activities.

eNews emails are not sent to highlight individual events unless the editorial team agrees that there are special circumstances.

Email addresses supplied to eNews are not used for any other purpose nor are they passed on to other groups, clubs or organisations.

(We have consulted the Information Commissioner's Office and are complying with their and GDPR guidelines for handling personal data)

Please sign up by emailing [astonsenews@gmail.com](mailto:astonsenews@gmail.com) if you wish to receive eNews emails and are not on the circulation already.

## The Astons Villagers Facebook Community (AVFC)

The Astons Villagers Facebook group was set up for residents of the Astons. With over 170 members joining, it is becoming a valuable channel for all types of local information and knowledge sharing, including updates on local news and events, details of impromptu get-togethers, items (or pets!) that have been lost or found, or for sale, or donated, and promoting local activities and clubs.

With Astons' Facebook, you can share information and get immediate responses about time-critical events –such as last minute ticket availability, and updates on travel delays. As a social media channel, it's also a great way of interacting with other villagers, complementing our other village communications channels such as the **Astons News**, **e-news** [see below], and **website**, [www.theastons.net](http://www.theastons.net).

*We are a closed site, which means that you will be asked to confirm that you are a resident of the Astons (or if not, to give a reason why you would want to join).*

This is to ensure that information is restricted to members of the community and doesn't get used for any commercial purposes (although we encourage local businesses to promote their services during the **first** week of each month).

### TO JOIN:

If you already use Facebook, please search for **Astons Villagers Facebook Community**; the more members we have, the more representative the group will be!

If you'd like to join, but aren't sure about how to use Facebook, then why not come along to one of our friendly, regular technology help sessions in the Village Hall at the Astons Café on Tuesday mornings, 10.30am-12noon and occasional evening specials.

They are for complete computer and internet novices, as well as more experienced users [see pages 9 & 16]. For any more general questions about the group, please contact:

Kathryn Hawkey at [kathryn.hawkey@gmail.com](mailto:kathryn.hawkey@gmail.com) or Luci Didriksen-Penfold at [luci.didriksen@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:luci.didriksen@hotmail.co.uk) who are the administrators for our Facebook group,.

## David Johnson MP

Thank you very much to the 2,127 people who signed my petition to re-open Grove Station.

We are the proud home of the 11 EOD and Search Regiment at Vauxhall Barracks in Didcot, and it was a pleasure to visit again and meet Lt Col Rob Swan and the team. Just this year they have so far responded to more than 1,800 requests in the UK to deal with explosive devices and I planted a remembrance stake in Parliament's Garden of Remembrance in their honour.

Parliament Week takes place every November, and I was pleased to visit local schools and talk to different youth organisations about my role as an MP and how they can get involved in politics, including: Wallingford School, St Michael's CofE Primary School in Steventon, Brightwell Primary School, St Blaise Primary School, the 7th Abingdon Beavers, Chilton Explorer Scout Unit and Brightwell cum Sotwell Scouts.

I have been campaigning to improve our roads since I was elected and I have now launched my Local Roads Survey to give you the opportunity to tell me exactly where you are seeing issues on our roads that need to be resolved – including potholes, congestion, speeding and other safety concerns. I want to pull together a complete map of all the issues we are facing, and where, so that I can raise these with the road authorities.

Fill it out at [www.david-johnston.org.uk/RoadsSurvey](http://www.david-johnston.org.uk/RoadsSurvey).

Now that I am the Minister for Children, Families and Wellbeing, one of the things I have responsibility for is overseeing the Government's big new expansion in childcare for parents. Once it is completed in Autumn 2025, it will give working parents 30 hours of free childcare every week from when their child is 9 months old until they start school. It is great to be involved in delivering this exciting new policy and you can see exactly what you're eligible for at [www.childcarechoices.gov.uk](http://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk)

I wish you a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

As ever, if I can help with anything then do, please get in touch [via.johnston.mp@parliament.uk](mailto:via.johnston.mp@parliament.uk)

## Cholsey Repair Café

**Saturday 20th January at the Cholsey Pavilion 11.00-13.45.**

There is a charge for any spare parts needed but repair help is given free by volunteers — although a donation towards running costs is always appreciated. The fixing crew can look at electrical faults, PAT testing, sharpening, bicycle repairs, small woodwork jobs, needlework, general glueing and even ultrasonic cleaning of small items. Advice is freely available if a repair isn't possible on the day.

More information can be found at [www.cholseyrepaircafe.com](http://www.cholseyrepaircafe.com)

## Blewshed.

Opening times and membership: Tuesday and Saturday afternoons 1.30-4.00 pm.

Also on Thursday afternoons 1.30-4pm for those with a special interest in electronics.

BlewShed annual membership fee is £25 including the use of a very well-equipped workshop.

'Club night' meetings are on the second Tuesday of each month at 7.30-9pm in the Shed (opposite the tennis club) and everyone is welcome, whether or not you are a member.

Mike Wrottesley, BlewShed secretary <https://blewshed.home.blog/news/>



# **ASTON TIRROLD & ASTON UPTHORPE PARISH COUNCILS**

## **Parish Council Business**

**Parish Council meeting 8<sup>th</sup> November 2023 was held face to face in the village hall.**

### **Planning**

- \* **P23/S3346/HH-** for development work at the following location: Milestone Cottage, London Road, Aston Tirrold, Didcot. The application is for: Demolish existing SE and NW extensions and construct new single storey SE Entrance/Utility room and 2 storey NW extension with Kitchen at ground floor level and Bedroom over - The PC support this application.

### **Roads and Traffic**

- \* The drains down the Moreton Road have been cleared so that water can flow freely.
- \* The Millennium bench on the Hagbourne Road is looking tired and in need of some repairs to improve its condition. Littering around the bench has also become an issue. The PC wonder, is another bin needed, or does the bench need moving, perhaps? Some ideas are needed on what to do. However, the PC feel it is best to leave any repairs to the bench until the Spring and will re address then.
- \* There is a Link available on Facebook for residents to report any large vehicles passing through the village that shouldn't be and any damage that is caused.

### **Environment Group**

We are still waiting for the postcards from OCC RoW officer.

### **CIL Monies**

- \* There is one area we feel as a church we could justify asking for money and that is the handrails that go from Aston Street towards St Michaels church. Although this is partly on church grounds the path is used very frequently by all villagers. The wood on the hand rail is rotting and some of the posts are now very unsafe. We have asked for a quote but not forthcoming as yet but it will need to be hard wood. I think it is likely to cost about. £2-2.5k. - The PC would like some quotes for the above work which they will then consider further.

### **Fibre Broadband**

- \* The successful roll out is virtually complete.

### **SODC**

- \* [https://www.theastons.net/files/Astons\\_DC\\_Report\\_081123.pdf](https://www.theastons.net/files/Astons_DC_Report_081123.pdf)

### **Next Meeting**

The next meeting will be on Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> December 2023  
and will be held in the Village Hall at 7.30pm.

## **PARISH COUNCILLOR VACANCY**

The PC's work is varied – from planning to ecology, speed awareness to tree planting. So whatever your particular interest within our thriving village, you'll find a place to make a difference. We are keen to represent as wide a range of villagers as possible, so please contact Jane Imbush (below) to find out more. She can also put you in touch with other councillors if you're unsure how to get involved.

Contact Jane Imbush (Chair) 07739 644 064 or email [astons.parishclerk@gmail.com](mailto:astons.parishclerk@gmail.com)

## THE ASTONS HISTORY PROJECT

### *Discovering and recording the Astons through the ages*

#### OUR LATEST ADDITION:

The marvels of eBay! Below top right is a photo by EL Leach of the original Boot Inn in Thorpe Street - a view we've never seen before. I say the original because it burnt down in the mid 1930s and a new pub, now 'The Old Boot House', was built. John Lightfoot (who lived in the Astons as a child during WW2) told us that it was up and running before the war started, and also told us that when the Allies' victory was declared in June 1945 the pub piano was taken out onto the forecourt to accompany the celebratory singing and dancing. (We think the new pub was probably built further back to provide space for parking - obviously not a factor when the original was built).

This photo also shows Stockwells Cottage further along the road, and if you look closely you will see a front door opening directly onto the road, since removed.

The door can be seen more clearly in the street view taken from the other direction, see bottom right. That photo appeared on the Astons Facebook back in 2020, with memories by David Brownlie and John Lightfoot - see below to the left of the photo.

Old photos and village memories are vital aids to our understanding of past elements of village life which would otherwise be forgotten.

Brakspears Brewery sold The Boot in 1992, much lamented.



*An earlier (1900s) view showing just the Boot sign and a picket fence.*



*The Boot in the 1970s, now with a different sign indicating the Astons' racing connections.*

"The barn on the right is where they kept the Green Goddess fire engine. I can remember them doing fire practice in the orchard and using water from the pond in Baker Street". David Brownlie.

"On the right before the wall you can see a large door that was the Strange's barn/shed; they dealt in fruit cherries etc. They used to buy up lots of cherry orchards at Stoke Row and Checkendon and that building was their store. My family remember the new Boot being built, the first Landlord was a family named Clargo; they moved away to Blewbury and built the mobile home site still there today". John Lightfoot.

*(Remember you can see photos in zoomable detail in the online Astons News on the village website).*



Below is a photo of a presentation to Bob and Jean Carter (landlords of The Boot in the 1950s) at their retirement, with the names of those present added. It also gives us the name of the Boot landlord during WW2, a Mr. Brandon - marvellous.



This picture was taken on the early 1950's on the retirement of Bob & Jean Carter who were members of the Board. During the war he was the ~~Barrensburg~~ <sup>Barrington</sup> park he lived, he Carter took over on the end of the war.  
R.T.O. for more information.

Mr. Foster at this time was head boarding laid and subsequently became head laid w<sup>th</sup> ~~Cundell~~ Cundell's.

B. H. Brown was a farm under living in one of the farm workers houses on the  
Mashua Rd., Astoria Island.

The birds are also a form under living in Chalk Hills.

The bearington (from which probably) and lived on a house on the R.H.S. on the main road as you turn out of the Ashes towards Goring.



Remember you can see photos in zoomable detail in the online Astons News on the village website.

Astons History Project contacts: Jancis Smith 07714 734441, Anna Dillon 07786 876411



# ASTONS TEENS

## Weird Christmas Traditions

As it is the run up to Christmas I thought that I would pause the guitar series and instead get you in the festive mood by telling you about some strange Christmas traditions around the world.

### **Japan:**

In 1974 KFC launched a clever marketing campaign. This, combined with tiny Japanese ovens, led to many locals beginning to eat fried chicken on Christmas day. Nowadays, around 3.6m Japanese people are indulging in KFC for Christmas; in fact demand became so high, that an online service had to be created which enables families to order in advance and have it delivered in festive packaging.

### **Venezuela:**

In the week leading up to Christmas, Venezuelans attend a daily early morning mass church service. Bizarrely, in the capital, Caracas, it is customary to travel to the service on roller skates. This trend has proved so popular that many roads in the capital are closed until 8am to provide safe passage for the worshippers.

### **Sweden:**

Cities across Sweden construct 'Yule Goats' at the beginning of advent each year. These goats are straw structures in the shape of a goat which can reach heights of 40 feet. This unusual tradition was first mentioned in the 11th century as a 'man-sized' goat figure that accompanied Saint Nicholas, however it has increased dramatically in size since. Unfortunately, as you may have guessed, some people see the goat to be more use as a bonfire and thus these goats have been destroyed 36 times since 1966.

Merry Christmas everyone and have a happy new year!

### December Trivia:

1. Which country started the tradition of putting up a Christmas tree?
2. How many Christmas trees are grown in Europe?
3. How many years do Christmas trees grow before they are sold?
4. How many Christmas trees do they have in Buckingham Palace?
5. In which US state do you find the town 'Santa Claus'?

1. Germany 2. 60 million 3. 15 years 4. 3 5. Indiana

### Sudoku Medium

[https://www.puzzles.ca/sudoku\\_puzzles/sudoku\\_medium\\_1495\\_solution.html](https://www.puzzles.ca/sudoku_puzzles/sudoku_medium_1495_solution.html)

					5			
9			3					6
			2	9		7		
3			6	1				
1		9	4		7			
6			9	3	2	4		
	5					1		7
4		6			1		9	5
	9			6				

# ASTONS KIDS

## HOLIDAY WORDSEARCH



CANDY CANE  
CHRISTMAS TREE  
COZY  
ELF  
HOLLY  
HOT CHOCOLATE  
ICE SKATES

WORD LIST  
IVY  
JINGLE BELLS  
MITTENS  
NAUGHTY  
NICE  
PRESENT  
REINDEER

SANTA CLAUS  
SLEIGH  
SNOWMAN  
SWEATER  
TINSEL  
WINTER

*Homemade*  
GIFTS MADE EASY

## CHRISTMAS WORD SEARCH

S	T	C	H	R	I	S	T	M	A	S	M
I	R	P	T	Y	H	O	L	I	D	A	Y
M	E	R	R	P	R	O	E	S	N	T	S
I	E	U	R	P	R	E	S	E	N	T	S
C	A	N	D	Y	C	A	N	E	S	A	C
W	O	N	O	R	N	A	M	E	N	T	S
G	I	N	G	E	R	B	R	E	A	D	R
H	E	R	E	I	N	D	E	E	R	U	Z
S	J	K	V	R	I	B	B	O	N	O	Z
S	N	O	W	F	L	A	K	E	S	W	E

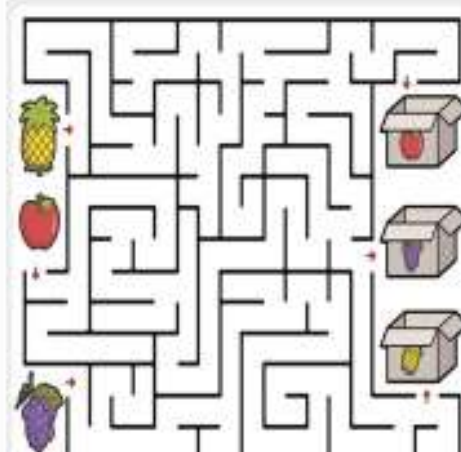
Christmas  
Santa  
Holiday  
Tree  
Ornaments

Presents  
Snowflakes  
Gingerbread  
Merry  
Candycane

Reindeer  
Tails  
Ribbon



HOMEADDEATHER.COM



Name \_\_\_\_\_



## Church Services for December 2023 and January 2024

		<b>Prayer Focus</b>
<b>+Sunday</b> <b>3<sup>rd</sup> December</b>	<b>ADVENT SUNDAY</b> <b>9.00am</b> All Saints' Aston Upthorpe Parish Eucharist	Sidesmen, those who help with hospitality & catering. Flower arrangers
<b>+Sunday</b> <b>17<sup>th</sup> December</b>	<b>3<sup>rd</sup> SUNDAY OF ADVENT</b> <b>4.00pm</b> St Michael's Aston Tirrold Carol Service	Families, children's outreach, family services & Mothers' Union
<b>+Sunday</b> <b>24<sup>th</sup> December</b>	<b>4<sup>th</sup> SUNDAY OF ADVENT / CHRISTMAS EVE</b> <b>3.00pm</b> St Michael's Aston Tirrold Crib Service <b>10.00pm</b> All Saints' Aston Upthorpe Midnight Mass	All the churches in our benefice & our relationships together
<b>Monday</b> <b>25<sup>th</sup> December</b>	<b>CHRISTMAS</b> <b>10.30am</b> St Michael's Aston Tirrold Parish Eucharist	Sidesmen, those who help with hospitality & catering. Flower arrangers
<b>+Sunday</b> <b>7<sup>th</sup> January</b>	<b>EPIPHANY</b> <b>9.00am</b> All Saints' Aston Upthorpe Parish Eucharist	Children, our village schools & Sunday clubs
<b>+Sunday</b> <b>21<sup>st</sup> January</b>	<b>3<sup>rd</sup> SUNDAY OF EPIPHANY</b> <b>4.00pm</b> St Michael's Aston Tirrold Carol Service	CYGnets youth group & teenagers

### How to contact us:

Bookings for weddings, baptisms and funerals can be made by contacting the Benefice Office 01235 850267 or [office@churnchurches.co.uk](mailto:office@churnchurches.co.uk)

### You can contact the clergy & staff on: -

Revd Jason St. John Nicolle	01235 850267	<a href="mailto:office@churnchurches.co.uk">office@churnchurches.co.uk</a>
Revd Louise Butler	07837 009730	<a href="mailto:revlouiseb@aol.com">revlouiseb@aol.com</a>
Revd John Clarke	01235 510073	<a href="mailto:jphclarke@gmail.com">jphclarke@gmail.com</a>
Revd Dr Mark Rhodes-Smith	01235 850267	<a href="mailto:mark.rhodes-smith@churnchurches.co.uk">mark.rhodes-smith@churnchurches.co.uk</a>
Elaine de Ridder	01235 850267	<a href="mailto:office@churnchurches.co.uk">office@churnchurches.co.uk</a>

The Benefice Operations Manager, Elaine de Ridder, is in the office from 9.00am - 2.30pm Monday to Friday.

The Astons Churchwarden email is [tirroldupthorpechurch@gmail.com](mailto:tirroldupthorpechurch@gmail.com) if you wish to find out information locally.



### Online Services

The online services continue every Sunday at 10.30am. Login after 10.00 to chat beforehand or to check your technology. Access the Churn Churches website for login details on how to join:

<https://www.churnchurches.co.uk/services-this-week/sunday-service.php>

The new permanent link for the Sunday service is <https://meet.goto.com/ChurnBenefice/sundayservice>  
Weekday evenings Compline at 8.00pm for 10 minutes. Access via <https://meet.goto.com/312446493>

### Short reflection and daily prayer

During weekdays Fr Jason writes a short reflection and prayer. If you would like to receive this, please contact the office as above.

### Home Communion



**Home Communion** is available to anyone who is unable to get to church through sickness or frailty, either for a short time or on a long term basis.  
If you, or anyone you know, would like to receive Holy Communion at home, please contact the office 01235 850267 and Elaine will arrange it for you.



## Conversations at Christmas time

Christmas is very much a time for conversations - conversations with friends and family, conversations with neighbours and perhaps also with strangers, as we do our Christmas shopping or take part in communal carol singing. Sometimes these conversations will be light-hearted and full of fun, but I'm also well aware that Christmas can also have it's awkward moments. It can be a quite a stressful time, and it's easy for tempers to fray.

As I write these words, I am struck by the number of times conversations feature in the traditional Christmas readings. The accounts of the events surrounding the birth of Jesus found in the gospels, especially in the gospels according to Matthew and Luke, are fully of conversations. Some of these conversations involve a dialogue between a human being and an angel, perhaps most famously in the story of the Annunciation, found in the 1st chapter of Luke's gospel. In this story, the angel Gabriel is sent to the Virgin Mary, and he begins the conversation with the memorable words : "Greetings, favoured one! The Lord is with you". The conversation finishes with Mary saying, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word".

I think there is something very special about a good conversation. A good conversation is the opposite of a speech or a monologue, in which one speaker gives the audience the benefit of their own particular thoughts and views. A good conversation is a dialogue, in which the parties listen to each other and learn from each other, sharing experiences and allowing the conversation to go where it will go.

I think we can learn so much from a good conversation, and this is why recently I have started hosting a series of conversations around Christianity. These conversations provide an opportunity to explore the questions and issues which might be occupying our minds. The next series starts on Sunday 26th November, and it runs for 4 weeks – you are very welcome to drop in to any one of the sessions, or come to all four! They take start at 230pm at the Benefice Centre in Blewbury, and last an hour. Seasonal refreshments will be provided – conversation often flows better with some tea and cake! There is no need to book a place, and everyone is most welcome, whatever your particular beliefs.

May this Christmas time be a rich source of blessing to you all. - Father Jason

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Conversations around Christianity</b> <b>2.30pm to 3.30pm in the Benefice Centre</b> <b>Starting 26 November</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">The opportunity for more "Conversations" and explorations around some themes relating to the Christmas celebrations and to see where our conversations will take us!</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Sunday afternoons 2.30-3.30pm, 26 November till 17 December.</b> Seasonal treats and coffee/tea too!</p> <p style="text-align: right;"></p>	
	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>ECUMENICAL ADVENT GROUP</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">An Advent Course based on the four songs of the Christmas Story: The songs of Zachariah, Mary, the angels &amp; Simeon <b>10:30 to 12 noon – Fridays 1, 8 &amp; 15 December</b> at the home of Jenny Loder. Josie Midwinter to lead, based on Amy Scott Robinson's "They Sang".</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Please let Elaine in the office know if you would like to take part, also so that she can put you in contact with Jenny and Josie and give you the address. Contact via <a href="mailto:office@churnchurches.co.uk">office@churnchurches.co.uk</a> or 01235 850267</p>
	<p><b>Churn Climate Change Action Group</b></p> <p>The purpose of the Churn Climate Change Action Group is to encourage conversation and action within the communities served by the Churn Benefice to reduce the impact of Climate Change. If you would like to get involved with the CCCA, please contact Elaine in the Office and she will put you in touch with the group. New members always welcome!</p>

# ASTON TIRROLD UNITED REFORMED CHURCH

## SERVICES OF WORSHIP

DECEMBER 2023 – JANUARY 2024

All services are in church and by Zoom (hybrid)  
Except Monday 25 December: Christmas Day, 31 December and 28 January  
2024 which are Zoom only

For a Zoom invitation, please email: [jgallop@freeuk.com](mailto:jgallop@freeuk.com)

	Worship Leader
Sunday 3 December 10.45 for 11.00am (hybrid)	Rev Philip Mader-Grayson - Communion
Sunday 10 December 10.45 for 11.00am (hybrid)	Cath Sefton and Rachel Tole – Theme of Joy
Sunday 17 December 10.45 for 11.00am (hybrid)	Worship Group – Theme of Peace
Sunday 24 December <b>6pm Christmas Eve</b>	Carols and readings by candlelight Refreshments in the Centre following service
Monday 25 December <b>Christmas Day</b> 10.45 for 11.00am (Zoom Only)	Abigail Perrow
Sunday 31 December 10.45 for 11.00am (Zoom Only)	Abigail Perrow
Sunday 7 January 10.45 for 11.00am (hybrid)	Rev Stephen Thornton – Communion
Sunday 14 January 10.45 for 11.00am (hybrid)	Scott Wheeler
Sunday 21 January 10.45 for 11.00am (hybrid)	Rev Donald Norwood
Sunday 28 January 10.45 for 11.00am (Zoom only)	Joanna Tulloch

**All are welcome**

Our regular writing group is currently meeting in the Centre for Reflection on the first Thursday of every month 2 – 4pm. Please contact Margaret Gallop on [d.margaret.gallop@gmail.com](mailto:d.margaret.gallop@gmail.com) if you would like to join this group.

The meditation group will meet in the Centre for Reflection on the first and third Wednesdays of the month at 11.30am. Contact: [julieireneyoung@gmail.com](mailto:julieireneyoung@gmail.com).

With very best wishes from our corner of the village.

## Recommended Tradespersons

If you have a personal recommendation, send it to [editorastonsnews@gmail.com](mailto:editorastonsnews@gmail.com)

**Recommended Tradesmen Advice:** You are advised to contact the recommender before you employ the tradesperson, especially if the last recommendation is several years old. Tradespersons are kept on the list for three years, after which they are removed, so they need a new recommendation in order to stay on the list after that time.

Name	Comments	Recommended by
<b>Builders, Decorators, Property Maintenance, Handyman</b>		
Jamie Weatherley. Mobile: 07951 852690 Landline: 01189 615234	Jamie has recently completed both internal and external redecoration works at our house. This was all completed to his usual very high standards, he is meticulous in his work and the end result is excellent. He is very clean and tidy and takes great care in the home. He is also completely trustworthy. I can recommend him without hesitation.	Mike Hill 851149 (2022)
<b>Computers + electronics etc</b>		
Steve Wicks, PC Technician 01491 825449 , 07513 297 547 <a href="http://www.thepctechnicians.co.uk">www.thepctechnicians.co.uk</a> , contact @thepctechnicians.co.uk	Desktop / laptop / tablet / printer? Problems with hardware/ software, e-mail, internet, wi-fi, or peripherals? Steve makes things very simple and straightforward and manages not to make me feel like an IT simpleton!	Christopher Hawker 850534 <a href="mailto:c.hawker433@btinternet.com">c.hawker433@btinternet.com</a> (2023)
<b>Domestic: Cleaners, Ironing etc</b>		
House Cleaning Gabiella 07845 782906	Gabriela has worked for several villagers and currently has space for another client. I can thoroughly vouch for her as hard working, with attention to detail and honest.	Lizzie Thornton-Allan 851732 (2021)
Magdalena Kosinska -Cleaner <a href="mailto:sjmk@hotmail.co.uk">sjmk@hotmail.co.uk</a> 07805375872	I really recommend Magdalena's cleaning service. She is exceptionally good at cleaning, focusing on detail. Reliable, flexible and trustworthy. I have never had a cleaner like her. She never let me down	Isabelle Dupont <a href="mailto:isabelledupont69@gmail.com">isabelledupont69@gmail.com</a> (2023) 0000 000 0000
Theresa James Ironing 07780 820754	Theresa will pick up and deliver your ironing back within a couple of days. She provides a friendly, reliable and quality service.	Lizzie Thornton-Allen 851732 (2019)
<b>Electricians</b>		
Robin Wilkinson Causeway Electrical Solutions Ltd. E-mail: <a href="mailto:info@causewayes.co.uk">info@causewayes.co.uk</a> Mob: 07802 487159	Robin has done lots of excellent work in the churches, in the Village Hall and in my house. Efficient, reliable, reasonably priced and very competent, I have always been more than happy to entrust him with any electrical task or project.	Christopher Hawker 850534 <a href="mailto:c.hawker433@btinternet.com">c.hawker433@btinternet.com</a> (2019)
<b>Gas &amp; Oil</b>		
Colin McMordie <a href="http://www.oiltec.co.uk">www.oiltec.co.uk</a> <a href="mailto:colin@oiltec-services.co.uk">colin@oiltec-services.co.uk</a> . 0776 654 2116, 01635 2011472	Colin continues to provide excellent service to my oil-fired central heating boiler and I find him excellent for regular servicing. Also diagnosing and repairing any rare problems. Reliable, knowledgeable, friendly and reasonable charges.	Edward Betts 01235 850726 (2019)
<b>Pest Control</b>		
Shire Pest Solutions: <a href="mailto:office@shire-pest-solutions.co.uk">office@shire-pest-solutions.co.uk</a> 07709 323095	Came out promptly and resolved a rodent issue. Friendly and good value.	Joanna Hart 01235 850517 (2019)



## Recommended Tradespersons Continued

### Pets

<p>FORWARD FOCUS Veterinary Physiotherapy <i>Hands-on complementary therapy for dogs, cats and horses</i> Alison Pearce 07989 396 369 <a href="mailto:Alisonpearcevetphysio@gmail.com">Alisonpearcevetphysio@gmail.com</a> <a href="http://forwardfocusvetphysio.co.uk">forwardfocusvetphysio.co.uk</a></p>	<p>Jo Tidmarsh recommended Alison because our dog Amber had become painfully lame. Alison is very calm and gentle, but gives owners huge confidence in her abilities. She will continue with maintenance visits every few months. We couldn't be more pleased. It has been worth every penny. (Veterinary consent is required before Alison can treat an animal.)</p>	<p>Biddy &amp; Christopher Hawker 01235 850534 (2020)</p>
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### Plasterer

<p><a href="mailto:mitchpurvisplastering@yahoo.co.uk">mitchpurvisplastering@yahoo.co.uk</a> 0756 3079829</p>	<p>Mitch Purvis We have used Mitch for many years for our various plastering/rendering requirements. He is fast; efficient; tidy and cost effective. Highly recommended.</p>	<p>Tim Millin 01235 850207 0770 6663631 <a href="mailto:middlefell@ic24.net">middlefell@ic24.net</a> (2020)</p>
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### Plumbing and Heating Engineers

<p>Adam AA Plumbing Services, Tel: 01235 812971, mob: 07763221257; <a href="http://www.aadplumbingservices.co.uk">www.aadplumbingservices.co.uk</a></p>	<p>Adam is a tidy fast worker with excellent results at a reasonable charge. He offers free estimates with no call out charge and covers anything from a simple leak to a complete bathroom installation, including associated electrics and tiling. A very experienced expert who has done many jobs for me over the last few years.  Adam came replace the thermostat in our immersion heater. Excellent service!</p>	<p>Edward Betts 01235 850726 (2019)  Penelope Curtis 01235 850794 (2023)</p>
<p>KWC Heating Services Ltd <a href="http://www.kwc-heating.co.uk">www.kwc-heating.co.uk</a> <a href="mailto:contact@kwc-heating.co.uk">contact@kwc-heating.co.uk</a> 01235 537389</p>	<p>Michael Clarke is a first-class heating engineer who I have used for many years (and his father before him)  Professional Engineer with many years' experience in all types of boiler/central heating/plumbing/under floor heating etc. Cost effective and very tidy. Gas Safe certified  Highly recommended</p>	<p>Tim Millin 01235 850207 0770 6663631 <a href="mailto:middlefell@ic24.net">middlefell@ic24.net</a> (2020)</p>
<p>Seamstress</p>		
<p>Sophie Morris Mobile:07765 355217 Landline 01235 815316.</p>	<p>Sophie has done a number of alterations for me of dresses, jackets and a coat beautifully . She has made clothes and done alterations for a number of others in the village. She is a former Annabelinda seamstress based in Didcot. A really lovely and helpful lady. Highly recommended.</p>	<p>Katharine Verrill <a href="mailto:kmvrrll@gmail.com">kmvrrll@gmail.com</a> (2023)</p>

## Asylum Welcome

Asylum Welcome is always looking for more donated bikes for men, women and children. We can only accept donated bikes if they are in reasonable working (rideable) condition – gears and brakes fully functioning, needing no more than lubrication, adjustment or very minor repairs.. We currently accept bikes by appointment only. Please contact Nasser, our Bike Project Coordinator, or Mark and Tino, our Bike Project volunteers at [bike@asylum-welcome.org](mailto:bike@asylum-welcome.org)

Many thanks for the bikes already donated. Appreciation is so positive; they really do help clients at Asylum Welcome who can't afford public transport.

I go in to Asylum Welcome on Wednesdays and am happy to take in any bikes that have been accepted by AW

Tessa Mayhew, [tessamayhew@btinternet.com](mailto:tessamayhew@btinternet.com).

**Claire Belcher (38)**

Experienced mother of two boys, with previous care and babysitter experience. Available for babysitting, evenings and weekends. References available. Weekday evenings £8phr, Weekend evenings £10phr.

**07568 477 599**

**Zara Butcher (16)**

Available for babysitting in the evening  
Lives in the Astons

**07377115093**

**Felix Diamond**

- ♦ Aged 16
- ♦ Lives in the Astons
- ♦ Is available for babysitting duties

Phone **07553 763 980**.

**Sam Ferguson (18) Phone 07555549201**

Available for babysitting or pet sitting weekends, evenings and school holidays.  
Lives in the Astons

**Katie Ferguson (16) Phone : 07523178076**

Available for babysitting or pet care weekends, evenings and school holidays.  
Lives in the Astons

**James Hart (16)**

Available for babysitting  
weekends  
and school holidays.

**Home 01235850517**

**Mobile 07485284784**

**PLEASE NOTE: PARENTS ARE RESPONSIBLE  
FOR THEIR CHILD'S WELFARE AT ALL TIMES  
WHEN EMPLOYING A BABY SITTER**

**Lottie Hart (15)**

Available for babysitting  
weekends  
and school holidays.

**Home 01235850517**

**Mobile 07484295323**

**Eve Lancaster (15)**

Available for babysitting  
at weekends, evenings  
and during school holidays.

**Mobile: 07962 182844**

**Roselle Isaac (15)**

Available for: Babysitting  
Pet care/pet-sitting  
weekends, evenings and school holidays  
Lives in the Astons

**Please contact: 07751195432**

**Olivia McCarthy**

18 years old  
Available to babysit  
Lives in Aston Tirrold

**07544 109 504**

**Lucy Vallings**

**Age 15**

Available for babysitting and pet care  
(weekends and school holidays).

**07568 629963**

**01235 850659**

## COMMUNITY SERVICES AND POLICE INFORMATION

**DEFIBRILLATOR SITES: VILLAGE HALL Car park [outside library room] & PAVILION at The REC. Ring 999 to get an access code to open the cabinet door.**

**Countywide Dial a Ride Service** for the disabled & mobility impaired

**0845 3101111** <http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/content/oxfordshire-dial-ride#routes>

### Thames Valley Alert, contacts

Email [emma.wilkes@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk](mailto:emma.wilkes@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk), or phone **07800 702188 (on duty only)**. Non emergency calls quote my shoulder number C9976. 'Community Messaging' provides information about crime and police activity in your area via phone or email. Visit our website, where you can sign up: <http://www.tvpcommunitymessaging.org/rmwebportal/startup.aspx>

### CRIME STOPPERS

Anonymously pass on information about crime to the Crimestoppers 24:7 hotline **0800 555 111**

*Crimestoppers is a charity and not part of the police.*

### Thames Valley Police Team for the Astons area

Your Neighbourhood Policing Team consists of Inspector Mark Harling, Sergeant Fraser Weller, PC Bob McIntyre, PC Simone O'Dell, PCSO Sue Harris, PCSO Marie Davenport, PCSO Sarah Jones, PCSO Tarran Golby & PCSO Clare Beale.

**Nuisance phone calls:** To register your number with the telephone preference service to help prevent the receipt of live unsolicited sales and marketing calls, phone **0800 398 893** or go to [www.tpsonline.org.uk](http://www.tpsonline.org.uk). It will not stop computer generated calls or calls that are not sales and marketing related.

### Fly-Tipping– How to report it:

Go to [southoxon.gov.uk](http://southoxon.gov.uk), then click on 'services and advice' and type 'fly-tipping' into the search box; click 'Fly-tipping' when it appears & fill in the 'report fly-tipping online' form, or phone **03000 610 610**

### Reporting Potholes in the Astons

Report potholes and other hazards on the roads in Aston Tirrold and Aston Upthorpe to:

[www.potholes.co.uk](http://www.potholes.co.uk) and [www.fixmystreet.com](http://www.fixmystreet.com)

### Reporting Rural Crime

If you become a victim of rural crime or suspect that a crime has taken place, you should report it to police by calling the **non-emergency number, 101**. If an incident is in progress, or there is an **immediate threat to life, you should call 999**.

**Cineworld Didcot:**-----0871 200 2000, [cineworld.co.uk/didcot](http://cineworld.co.uk/didcot),

**Cornerstone Arts Centre:** 01235 515 144, [cornerstone-arts.org](http://cornerstone-arts.org)

**The Corn Exchange:** ----01491 825 000, [Www.comexchange.org.uk/boxoffice](http://www.comexchange.org.uk/boxoffice)



## ***Village Representative Organisations & Village Information***

### **AT & AU Parish Councillors**

Jane Imbush (Chair) and H&D	07739 644064
Simon Young (Vice-chair) & Housing and Development	07934 401377
Joanna Hart (ARC)	850517
Peter Butcher (Footpaths)	07956 976159
Henry Weeks (Broadband)	07977 578479
Neil Carter (Broadband)	07932 748110
Jane Barr Knight (Roads & Traffic)	07968 300282
Nigel Hawkey (ARC)	07748 704151

### **Parochial Church Council (PCC)**

Tim Lake (Chair and Churchwarden)	850468
Amanda le Conte (Churchwarden)	851546
Christopher Hawker	850534
George Curtis (Deanery Synod Rep)	850794
Biddy Hawker (Secretary)	850534
Mike Hill (Treasurer)	851149
Joanna Hart	850517
Email	tirroldupthorpechurch@gmail.com

### **Village Hall Management Committee**

Chris Coupland (Chair)	07801 715439
Mike Hill (Treasurer)	851149
Debbie Coates (Bookings)	before 9pm 850238
or email: astons.vhbooking@gmail.com	
Margaret Morant (Astons Café)	850895
Louise Binder (Astons Outdoors)	851433
Greg Locke	850463
Nicole West	07939 265555

### **Astons Recreation Committee (ARC)**

(ARC is a sub-committee of the Parish Councils)

Gavin Wood	07932257676
Jo Walshe (Treasurer)	850502
Joanna Hart	850517
Luci D-P (Bookings)	astonspavilion@gmail.com
Nigel Hawkey	07748704151
Amberley Diamond	07771995906
Ben Prior	
Pavilion key holders: Luci, Joanna	

### **CLP Groups**

Roads and Traffic:- Jane Barr Knight	07968 300282
Housing and Development :- Simon Young:	
youngastonspc@gmail.com	07934 401377
Environment Group –	
Anna Dillon <a href="mailto:dillon.anna@gmail.com">dillon.anna@gmail.com</a>	

### **Village Clubs & Organisations**

APAC	Emma Machin	07840 862946
Astons Café	Margaret Morant	07899 748209
	Louise Binder	07713 314662 851433
Astons Outdoors	Naomi Simmonds	859218
	Louise Binder	851433
Church Cleaning	Biddy Hawker	850534
Church Flowers	Penelope Curtis	850794
Cricket Club	Ralph Smith	07340 346511
Downs Rescue		0911911
Football	Adam Griffiths	
Book Club	Sarah Dalton: dalton_family@hotmail.com	
Astons History Project	Jan Smith	850775
Community speed watch	bob_picken@hotmail.com	07787 567261
Pavilion Hire	Luci D-P	astonspavilion@gmail.com
South Moreton Pre-School		819647
Thames Valley Alert	Tirrold: Steve Morant	07561 315882
	Upthorpe: Ian Clark	850103
Toddlers' Group	Georgie	astonstoddlersgroup@gmail.com
Astons enews team: astonsenews@gmail.com		
Facebook team: Kathryn.hawkey@gmail.com or		
Luci.didricksen@hotmail.co.uk		
theAstons.net website team : webmaster@theastons.net		
Bruno Brunskill, Anna Dillon, Jan Smith, Jeremy Imbush		

### **Agencies and Emergency numbers**

Citizens Advice Bureau	0344 411 1444
Didcot Volunteer Centre	816709
NHS non-emergency number	111
Police: non urgent calls	101
Police crime stoppers	0800 555 111
Power Cuts	105
Thames Water	0800 316 9800

### **Astons Village Hall Post office**

Tuesdays 10.00-12noon

**[Pangbourne Post Office: 01189 842294]**

**Blewbury Post Office: CHANGED HOURS:**

Mondays, Wednesdays and Thursdays: 9am to 3pm

Tuesdays and Fridays ; 8.30 to noon & 2.30 to 5pm

**Cholsey Post office (inside Tesco)**

6a.m.-10.00pm

**East Hagbourne Post Office**

Mon-Fri 9am -12.30pm.

## **ASTONS NEWS CHRISTMAS QUIZ. A bottle of fizz + box of chocs to the winners**

Deadline to receive entries is January 15th. See p2 to send by email or by hand. Tie break if scores are level.

### **Christmas Time Questions:**

- 1) In "Love Actually", who plays the British Prime Minister?
- 2) Which singer had a festive hit with the song "Last Christmas"?
- 3) Wallace has a particular fondness for which type of cheese, often mentioned during Christmas specials?
- 4) What is the name of the market where Del Boy and Rodney Trotter often sell their goods?
- 5) Which British actor played the role of Ebenezer Scrooge in "The Muppet Christmas Carol"?
- 6) The Pogues released a Christmas song featuring Kirsty MacColl. What's the name of the song?
- 7) "The Snowman" features a song performed when the snowman and the boy fly together. What is the title?
- 8) Which alien race, known for saying "Delete!", prominently featured in a Doctor Who Christmas special?
- 9) In "The Vicar of Dibley", who played the vicar, Geraldine Granger,
- 10) Which British actor stars in the 1951 film adaptation of "Scrooge"?
- 11) Which festive food is traditionally eaten at the end of Christmas dinner?
- 12) What is the title of the comedic Christmas song by Benny Hill that describes a festive chase scene?
- 13) Who plays the main character, Ebenezer Blackadder in "Blackadder's Christmas Carol".
- 14) In "Gavin & Stacey", who is obsessed with Christmas and often goes overboard with the festivities?
- 15) Which series, set in a department store, had an episode where the staff camped out in the store overnight?
- 16) Which British actor narrated the 1982 Christmas animation "The Snowman"?
- 17) A British animated film adaptation of Raymond Briggs' children's book, is simply named after which figure?
- 18) "It's Christmaaaaas!"? Is a line from which 1970's Christmas hit?
- 19) Which event, involving Lady Mary Crawley, in Downton Abbey, occurred in the 2012 Christmas episode?
- 20) EastEnders, 1986, which character famously served his wife divorce papers as a Christmas "gift"?
- 21) In the world of British pantomime, who often exclaims, "He's behind you!"?

### **Films**

- 1) Who played the lead role in the 2001 film "A Beautiful Mind"?
- 2) What 2002 film directed by Steven Spielberg portrays the life of Frank Abagnale Jr.?
- 3) Which 2003 film features Johnny Depp as Captain Jack Sparrow?
- 4) In the movie "Lost in Translation" (2003), where is the main setting?
- 5) Who directed the 2004 superhero film "Spider-Man 2"?
- 6) What 2005 film tells the story of a group of friends who go on a road trip to California's wine country?
- 7) In the film "The Departed" (2006), who plays the character Billy Costigan?
- 8) Who won the Academy Award for Best Director for the film "Slumdog Millionaire" (2008)?
- 9) In "Avatar" (2009), what is the name of the fictional moon inhabited by the Na'vi?
- 10) Who portrayed the character Gollum in "The Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers" (2002)?

### **4 Teens**

- 1) "What A Man Gotta Do" is a January 2020 single from which American group?
- 2) Which Justin Bieber track opens with the line "Say the word, on my way..."?
- 3) With which Cuban singer did Shawn Mendes team up with on the track "Señorita"?
- 4) For which video does Duo Lipa dance through a coloured section; red, yellow, blue, green and rainbow?
- 5) Which American sings "My last made me feel like I would never try again"?
- 6) In the video for "You Should Be Sad", which singer visits an underground Country and Western nightclub?
- 7) 'Rare' is the third album from which American star?
- 8) "Alone, Pt. II" is a track from DJ Alan Walker and which American artist?
- 9) Which singer-songwriter had a 2019 hit with 'Someone You Loved'?
- 10) Which 2019 hit contains the lyrics 'I got the horses in the back / Horse tack is attached / Hat is matte black...'

### **True or False**

- 1) True or False: The Earth has only one natural satellite, the Moon.
- 2) True or False: George Washington was the first President of the United States.
- 3) True or False: The Great Wall of China is visible from space.
- 4) True or False: The Eiffel Tower is taller in the summer.
- 5) True or False: The human body has 206 bones at birth.
- 6) True or False: The Amazon River is the longest river in the world.
- 7) True or False: The Statue of Liberty was a gift from France to the United States.
- 8) True or False: Goldfish have a three-second memory.
- 9) True or False: Pete Way was born from a dragon's egg
- 10) True or False: It is more expensive to live in Aston Upthorpe than Aston Tirrold

### **Christmas meaning: Just to remind us all why we are here...**

- 1) Which musician said that his band was "more popular than Jesus now"?
- 2) Where in the Bible do we read about the Birth of Jesus?
- 3) Who was Mary's cousin?
- 4) What gift from the Wise Men was a symbol of royalty?
- 5) Who was present at Jesus' birth?
- 6) Mary had other children after Jesus. True or False?
- 7) In the Bible, Jesus is referred to by four other names. What are they?