

ARC PROUDLY PRESENTS

Astonbury



2026



27th June
2-11.30pm



ASTONS RECREATION GROUND . OX11 9DN

Live Music / Family Fun / Great Local Food
Pimms, Wine, Cider and Real Ales

£17 in advance, £20 on the gate.

£7 teens, kids free

Limited Parking Available



Astonbury bands – in order of appearance...

Ollie and Clare

Born and raised in the village, Ollie has been a familiar face at Astonbury since the festival first began. In recent years, he's been joined on stage by his partner Clare, with the pair performing an engaging mix of acoustic covers. Their set blends pop, folk, and country favourites, bringing a relaxed, feel-good atmosphere that's become a much-loved part of the festival.



The Mysteries

The Mysteries are a three-piece acoustic band who play upbeat pop and soul songs that everybody loves, but aren't often covered, with acoustic guitar, double bass, percussion, glockenspiel and lots of vocal harmony. From plan B to Elvis, Kylie to Otis.



Eggs Benedict

Eggs Benedict are a four-piece band who met at school and have spent the last year turning their shared tastes in indie, jazz, and alternative music into a laid-back sound that's a bit jazzy, a bit funky, and totally danceable.



Megacool

Ben Machin heads up this Bristol based band, bringing you pop melodic guitar-based music with some electronic aspects. Themes of love, loneliness and the complexities of all kinds of relationships...what more could you want on a sunny afternoon?!



Weekend Warriors

Spotted for their talent at the Wallingford Blues and Jazz festival, The Weekend Warriors are new to the Astonbury scene. This up and coming, young four-piece band will delight with a mixture of your favourite covers and killer originals.



From the Ashes

Back again, by popular demand, 'From the Ashes' bring you a vibrant mix of timeless classics and modern hits, offering a little something for everyone. Their set includes tracks few other cover bands would dare to attempt, including bangers from ABBA and R.E.M. With guest guitarist Dave Powell to get you on your feet and dance away to the setting sun.



Things

Expect to shake your ass uncontrollably whilst in the presence of this band, perhaps wear something comfy that doesn't chafe. Wallingford icon, Maff, brings you this group of exceptionally talented musicians playing some soul, funk and groove classics.



Cheap Suits

Homegrown talent, Cheap Suits' return to delight you once more with their own material, including singles 'Half a Heart', tracks from their EP Kiss Up and perhaps even a debut track or two. Front Row magazine wrote "If you're looking for the next breakout band to follow from the ground up, Cheap Suits should be top of your list"



The Big Cheese

The Big Cheese are a 5-piece covers band - a loud, rocky, indie covers band, playing bangers by The Cure, Pulp, Britney Spears, Bowie & Aha. They love playing live and thrive off crowd energy, so come join them! First time at Astonbury and they are delighted and honoured to be here!



Then DJ Si to keep you dancing until late...

ASTONS NEWS

Astonsenews theastons.net
The Astons Villagers Facebook Community
Astonsonline Twitter (X)

June 2026 issue 624

WHAT'S ON IN JUNE

BINS: Green & Brown: 11, 25 GREY: 4, 18

The SODC Binzone app is no longer supported due to internet security changes. Go to SODC Website

ARTICLES LIST Page 3, ADVERTISERS' INDEX Page 5

Weekly Events

Day	Time	Event	Location	Page
M to F	various	Yoga, Pilates	Village Hall	17
Tues	10-00-12.00	Astons Café	Village Hall	9
“	10.00-12.00	Post Office	“	9
“	10.00-12.00	Free Superfast Internet Access	“	9, 23
Fri	9.30-11.30am	Toddler Group (Term time only)	Centre for Reflection	20

Monthly

4th Sun	2pm-4pm	Reclaiming Picks Field with ANRG	Picks Field see back page	40
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Events in June

7	9.00am	1st Sunday after Trinity	All Saints' Church, Upthorpe	33
7	Midday-3pm	VILLAGE FAYRE & PLANT SALE	Village Hall	11
16	10.00-midday	Astons Online	Village Hall	9, 23
20	7.30pm	Benson Choral Society: 'Acis and Galatea'	Dorchester Abbey	28
20	7.30pm	A Fly On The Wall play [by Blewbury Players]	St. Michael's Blewbury	28
21	9.00am	3rd Sunday after Trinity	All Saints' Church, Upthorpe	33
27	3-11.30pm	ASTONBURY [see cover & reverse, p13,15]	RECREATION GROUND	13,15

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

SEPT 13th BOULES DAY

P

-

P

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ARTICLES

COVER: ASTONBURY -GENERAL. SEE PAGES 13 AND 15 FOR FULL DETAILS

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DEADLINE for the JULY edition is JUNE 25th

SEND COPY TO: 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

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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. Please contact Nasser, or Mark and Tino, our Bike Project volunteers at bike@asylum-welcome.org -Tessa Mayhew, tessamayhew@btinternet.com.

ASTONS NEWS Advertising Rates 2026 (Community Adverts are free)

ASTONS NEWS Advertising Rates 2026

Advert size	width	x height	10 issues	5 issues	1 issue
1/8 page	(90mm	x 65mm)	£55	£40	£15
1/4 page	(90mm	x 135mm)	£80	£50	£25
1/2 page	(185mm	x 135mm)	£145	£85	£35
A4 page	(185mm	x 270mm)	£200	£130	£45
Loose inserts (Flyers)			£25		
Community adverts & flyers			free		

Please note that there are no issues in January or August

To place an advert, or for further information please contact:

Jeremy Imbush 01235 851053 editorastonsnews@gmail.com

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Editorial:

ROLL UP, ROLL UP!

The greatest event in South Oxfordshire's Summer entertainment calendar is here on 27th June: **ASTONBURY**

SEE FRONT COVER AND REVERSE FOR DETAILS and THE ACTS APPEARING.

VOLUNTEERS

Help is *always* needed, from setting up the event on Friday and Saturday, to clearing it all away on Sunday, via many jobs necessary in between .

See pages and 13 and 15 if you would like to volunteer to help continue making Astonbury the community success that it is.

DON'T FORGET: ASTONS VILLAGE FAYRE AND PLANT SALE ON JUNE 7th [P11]

- ◆ Sunday 13th September, Save the date BOULES DAY [details next month]

Closure of the footpath between Rectory Lane and St. Michael's Church, 6th June

Removal by Arbocare of a tree in the grounds of The Old Rectory, which is pushing the wall adjacent to the footpath. SODC have confirmed approval for its removal. It will necessitate, for health and safety reasons, the closure of the footpath in this area for the day. Tim Lake

JUNE ROAD CLOSURES

Saturday 13th June: The A417 through Blewbury will be closed on for resurfacing

Thursday 18th – Tuesday 23rd June. The road through East Hagbourne, i.e. Blewbury Road (which becomes Bessels Way) and New Road (which leads to Didcot), will be closed overnight for full weekday overnight road closures between the hours of 20:00 and 06:00am to resurface the carriageway, followed by the painting of road markings. Dates and times will be subject to any bad weather conditions or unforeseen circumstances arising during construction.

Astons' Artweeks

Thank you to everyone who came along to our art exhibitions last month. Your enthusiasm and engagement meant so much to us! We loved sharing our work with you and are already looking forward to doing it all again in 2028.

From 'The Aston Artists'

Defibrillators Save Lives!

We have two defibrillators in the village:

- Village Hall, Aston Upton (hall wall far end facing car park)
- Pavilion at Rec, Aston Tirrold (pavilion wall facing basketball hoop)

In an emergency in village or surrounding area:

1. Start CPR
2. Dial 999 for an ambulance and they will give a code to open the cabinet.
3. Continue CPR and ask someone to collect the defibrillator

It is easy to use - the defibrillator will guide you through how to use it until paramedics arrive

For a useful explanation of how to perform CPR and use the defibrillators, see

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CDJbJUEJu88n>, or for more detailed instruction, see

<http://revivr.bhf.org.uk>.

CPR training is also available in the village from time to time.

Katharine Verrill

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Thursday	8.30 am - 19.30 pm
Friday	8.30 am - 17.30 pm
Saturday	7.30 am - 17.00 pm

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or phone 07780 958249 to book yours



- **History table:** always something interesting to see
- **Wi-Fi:** internet & email
- **BBC/ITV iPlayer**
- **Community book scheme:** books to buy, borrow and donate
- **Children's corner**
- **Accessible & 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)

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The Astons Village Fayre & Plant Sale

Aston Tirrold Village Hall

SUNDAY 7th June 12pm – 3pm

This ever popular annual event is a great opportunity to meet/catch up with fellow villagers whilst picking up some wonderful plants, crafts and home produce. Fun to be had for all the family.

Come for lunch, stay for tea and cake

Plants, Veg & Garden Accessories

All new games with prizes for children and adults

Refreshments: Tea / Coffee / Cakes / Biscuits

BBQ (Olivier's homemade Burgers) & Sausages

Preserves, Home Produce & Cake Stall

Craft Stalls Raffle Bottle Tombola

We need your support to make this a success, so are looking for volunteers to help on the day and donations for the following stalls: -

Plants, Raffle prizes, Bottles for the Tombola, Cakes, Preserves and other Home produce

Please contact:

Naomi (contactnaomi@icloud.com), Louise (louise.binder@live.co.uk),

Emma (emma.machin2018@gmail.com)

Please note that for safety reasons there will be no parking in the village hall car park on the day. Dropping off or collecting plants, will be managed by pulling up to the gates.

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ARC PROUDLY PRESENTS

Astonbury

2026

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≡ PLEASE BUY TICKETS EARLY! ≡

It costs around £9,000 to put Astonbury on every two years. Advance ticket sales help us cover rising costs and make the event a success.

BUY TICKETS ONLINE:
www.astonbury.org
or scan the QR code



- ♥ Adults: £17 in advance £20 on the gate
- ♥ Teens (13-17): £7
- ♥ Children 12 & under: FREE

≡ *Let's make Astonbury 2026 another amazing day!* ♡ ≡

♡ WE NEED YOU! ♡

Astonbury is entirely run by volunteers and simply could not happen without YOU! We need at least 48 volunteers to make Astonbury happen, so please give an hour or two of your time – it makes a huge difference.

HOW TO SIGN UP

General volunteering (parking, gate, bar, etc.) is managed via Sign Up Genius.

- 1 Go to www.signupgenius.com
- 2 Click "Find a Sign Up"
- 3 Enter Dave's email address (davemachin@hotmail.com)
- 4 Astonbury will pop up – click to view the sign up sheets and choose where you can help!



SCAN TO SIGN UP
(DIRECT LINK TO SIGN UP GENIUS)

FRIDAY / SATURDAY / SUNDAY – WE NEED YOU!



FRIDAY 26 JUNE – SET UP

6:00 PM

We need a big team on Friday evening to get everything ready.

- Erect marquees and fencing
- Set up infrastructure (stalls, power, lighting, etc.)
- Help where needed

We usually have a small team working during the day, with everyone joining from 6pm for the big push!

If you can help during the day, please either let Amberley know (amberleyjones@hotmail.com) or just turn up to the rec at 2pm!



SATURDAY 27 JUNE – EVENT DAY

(from 10:00 AM)

We need help on the morning of the event to get the site sparkling and ready.

- Final preparations
- Stalls and signage
- Last minute jobs

Event opens to the public at 2:00 PM and runs until 11:30 PM.



SUNDAY 28 JUNE – CLEAR UP

(from 10:00 AM)

Many hands make light work! Help us put the park back to normal.

- Dismantle marquees and fencing
- Clear up and take down stalls
- Load and tidy

Please come along from 10:00 AM (or earlier if you like to Wobble Around!).



CHILDREN'S STALLS

If you can help on children's stalls (face painting, crafts, games, etc.) please contact:

✉ kirstie@fleetwell.co.uk



THANK YOU!

We are hugely grateful to everyone who volunteers, sponsors, donates and supports Astonbury. The full list of supporters will be published in next month's VN and thanked on the day by our fab MC.



PARKING

Managed by our brilliant volunteers. Please follow signage and marshal's instructions.



BAR

Licensed bar on site. Please drink responsibly.



GATES

Help at the gates is vital – greeting everyone and keeping entry running smoothly.

♡ TOGETHER WE MAKE ASTONBURY HAPPEN! ♡

HAVE TROUBLE WITH YOUR TREES?

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...and many other generous villagers!



annicka.carter@hotmail.com

If you would like to make a donation or help support the event, we'd absolutely love to hear from you.



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Tuesday	Astons Café	10am-12
	Post Office	10am-12
Thursday	Pilates	8:30-11:30am
	Yoga	8-9pm

Monthly

3 rd Wednesday	Parish Council	8pm
3 rd Tuesday	Tea & Tech (Astons Online)	10am-12

Friends of the Village Hall

For more information: villagehall@theastons.net

All Village Hall booking enquiries
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CONTACT AMANDA OR CHARLOTTE
ASTONSTODDLERSGROUP@GMAIL.COM

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Update from Olly Glover MP

I attended two e-petition debates that a significant number of constituents had signed to represent their views and concerns on maternity services and animal testing.

At Prime Minister's Questions I challenged Keir Starmer on social and affordable housing, as new developments in the constituency continue to price out local people and young first-time buyers. The Government needs to support local councils to deliver truly affordable homes, alongside vital infrastructure. In addition, I spoke about the many cases of delayed licence renewal and medical assessments, calling for improvements to the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA).

I was proud to represent the Wantage-based charity SUDEP Action in my debate on sudden and unexpected death in epilepsy (SUDEP) prevention. Founded by five women, the charity works tirelessly to support bereaved families and raise awareness. The minister responded by promising to meet with me, and I look forward to discussing the next steps the Government needs to take.

At a Wantage Chamber of Commerce event, local Wantage businesses raised the impact of changes to business rates, soaring energy costs and changes to employment legislation and their viability. Two weeks later, I made their voices heard to the treasury minister in parliament and will continue to push for a fairer deal for our local businesses.

I also had the pleasure of visiting RAW Workshop, a social enterprise manufacturing high-quality furniture. The organisation channels their profits into their youth training schemes, supporting young people facing mental health and educational barriers, and adults re-entering the workforce.

On a sunny day in Wallingford, I attended KatieFest, an inclusive rugby tournament for children and adults with special educational needs and disabilities, chatting with wonderful charities and parents.

At the Didcot Powerhouse Fund Impact event, we celebrated the fantastic work of local groups and organisations for Didcot and the surrounding areas.

This month, my hardworking team and I passed the milestone of 15,000 individual cases handled since I was elected.

As always, if there is anything you feel I can help with, please do not hesitate to contact me and my team at olly.glover.mp@parliament.uk or by leaving a voice message on **0207 219 7657**.

Olly Glover, MP for Didcot and Wantage

Matthew Barber, Police and Crime Commissioner

Barber shops with no customers. Car washes turning over hundreds of thousands of pounds. Nail bars that only take cash. These can be signs of criminal businesses acting in plain sight.

I have long been working on a change in the law to increase police powers to issue closure notices. Closure notices are an important tool in disrupting criminal activity on our high streets, but current powers do not go far enough.

A closure notice is a legal instrument issued by the police or local authorities prohibiting access to premises for up to 48 hours to cease nuisance or illegal activity. It mandates immediate closure, the breaching of which is a criminal offence.

With the support of the Shadow Policing Minister and Members of the House of Lords, I drafted an amendment to the Crime and Policing Bill which would have strengthened the powers of the Police, local councils and the courts to shut down criminal businesses. This would have seen the time limit attached to closure notices extended to 7 days and give the courts the power to shut businesses participating in criminal activity indefinitely.

Disappointingly, this amendment was blocked by the Government despite cross-party support. The Crime and Policing Bill has now received Royal Assent and become law, but without this change it is a real missed opportunity.

There is a ray of hope however. Although not enough MPs backed my amendment, the Government has agreed to consult on implementing similar changes in the future.

I have written to the Policing Minister to urge her to act swiftly to put more power in the hands of the police to tackle illegal activity and stand up for law-abiding businesses. This is about delivering more than temporary disruption. By increasing police powers, we can more effectively tackle criminality; clearing up our high streets and ensuring local communities are protected.

Matthew Barber

Astons eNews

Over the past few months Astons eNews has changed. Until this year, eNews emails were sent out to the Astons community from a personal Gmail address. This has been replaced by a web mail app made available by Web Boutiques who host our community website.

There are now 7 editors taking turns distributing Astons eNews emails. Astons eNews has become a resilient service instead of relying on one or two people if or when they were available.

Astons eNews Protocol

All Astons residents are welcome to sign up to the Astons eNews - the Astons community email service. About 250 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 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 to preserve privacy.
- There is an unsubscribe facility on every email.
- No commercials, no jokes, no opinions etc - just succinct information about events/activities.
- eNews are normally sent out at the request of the Parish Council, community clubs/groups or individual residents. Occasionally editors may send one out if, for example, they have spotted an unadvertised road closure.
- eNews emails are not sent to highlight individual community events; these are included in the monthly round-up eNews emails sent out a week before each Parish Council meeting.
- eNews requests received within 36 hours of, for example, road or post office closures, power outages etc will be processed if editorial resources are available.
- Email addresses supplied to Astons eNews are not used for any other purpose nor are they passed on to other groups, clubs or organisations.

Please email enews@theastons.net to receive eNews or to provide information for a future eNews email.

Astons Online CIC

Astons Online community interest company (CIC) has been providing support to computer users since 2011. We started as a community group with a BT grant resulting from the Race to Infinity, won by Blewbury exchange area, which included the Astons. We also had generous support from our Oxfordshire County Councillor, Astons Parish Council and Astons News.

Astons Online has provided support to over 600 computer users, free of charge. People have contacted us from all over South Oxfordshire. Astons Online CIC has recently been highlighted on the Oxfordshire County Council website and in a survey of digital inclusion in the county. We mainly support older people who are uncertain or apprehensive at the rollout of digital services replacing their face-to-face, telephone and postal services. We do this by reaching out to community groups that focus on older people, offering our support to their members.

The Astons Villagers Facebook Community (AVFC)

The Astons Villagers Facebook Community is an Fb group for residents of the Astons only (plus a small number of approved non-villagers). It is a closed group, so posts cannot be seen by anyone outside the membership. It is a valuable channel for all types of local information and knowledge-sharing in real time.

TO JOIN: If you already use Facebook, please search for Astons Villagers Facebook **Community**; For any questions about the group, please contact Kathryn Hawkey at kathryn.hawkey@gmail.com who is the administrator for our Facebook group,.

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Astons Online supports people who want to be digitally confident on the Internet, with smartphone apps and online services like health and banking.

Astons Online events and support are free of charge and open to everyone.

Astons Online is available for Zoom, Facetime, WhatsApp or telephone one-to-one sessions most Tuesday mornings between 10:00 and 12:00.



THE ASTONS HISTORY PROJECT

Not ONE but TWO obituaries relating to Sir William Piggott-Brown, Astons Bad Boy of the 1960s and 70s - and they appeared on TWO CONSECUTIVE DAYS in the Guardian newspaper last month!

In 1962 Piggott-Brown had inherited a fortune of reportedly £750,000 - which would equate to about £16m today - and opened Mayfair disco Sibylla in partnership with Beatle George Harrison. Part of his inheritance went towards buying his country estate in Aston Upthorpe, centred on Orchard House in Thorpe Street and which included a stud farm (now Upthorpe Stud) and 1,000 acres of farmland on the Berkshire Downs. There are several Aston residents with memories of the goings on at Orchard House! For more information see his Notable Residents entry on the village website History section: www.theastons.net.

The first obituary, of Joan Burstein - who has died recently aged 100 - was only a passing connection, in that she bought his Mayfair town house for her new fashion emporium, and using his last name called it 'Browns of South Moulton Street'. Browns was instrumental in launching brands such as Alexander McQueen, John Galliano, Ralph Lauren, and Calvin Klein into the UK market. She is pictured below with Anna Wintour at her glitzy 90th birthday celebration .

The second obituary was of Dave Mason - singer, composer, guitarist, and co-founder of rock group Traffic. It said that 'the quartet had retired to a cottage in Berkshire to knock their music into shape' - which reminded me that we had several articles and photos etc of that visit in our archive - other visitors to the cottage at that time included Eric Clapton, Pete Townshend, the Small Faces and Eric Burdon.

The article quoted below records that the cover photo for the Traffic album Mr. Fantasy was taken inside the cottage's living room.

In 1967 the four members of Traffic (Stevie Winwood, Jim Capaldi, Dave Mason and Chris Wood) were given the keys to Sheepcote Farm, a cottage in the parish of Aston Tirrold. It was a desolate, two-storey house at the end of a long mud track on the Berkshire estate of Sir William Pigott-Brown, a 26-year-old part time jockey, full-time stud owner and leading member of the Swinging 60s aristocratic elite.

Winwood recalls. There was a gamekeeper called Dave Dick who walked round with a shotgun and didn't like us at all. 'You're disturbing my pheasant and partridge with your ruddy racket!'. Pigott-Brown loved having a rock group on his spread. Max Bell in Classic Rock. Issue 147. 2010.





Above left, Stevie Winwood outside the cottage. Above right one of Piggott-Brown's parties at Orchard House - Jerry Hall and Bryan Ferry participating! Below, a 1984 article listing his financial woes.

horses . . .

Sir William seized all available opportunities with all available funds and, if he had done or what he did best, all would have been very well.

Unfortunately, as one friend put it: "William was a brilliant rider and judge of horseflesh but everyone kept telling him that he should get a proper job. And that was his downfall. He should never have gone to work."

But Piggott-Brown did go to work. Worst of all, he went to work as the director of a property company called London Hedge Securities.

In 1973, things looked rosy. 1.88 shares were worth £1.33 each and Sir William owned over 500,000 of them. By 1978, there was much less optimism in the air. The shares were down to 5p and falling in their own right.

This was not surprising, since the Official Receiver concluded that 1.88 had a net deficiency of 15.3 million. The company, he wrote, had engaged in "speculative, ill-considered, speculative ventures."

Things got so bad that Sir William went to St Tropez with his wife Wendy Stark to get away from it all and then went to Paradise Island in the Bahamas with Barbara Firth Tyson to get away from St Tropez.

In 1978, Sir William had moved on to Playman of the Year Martin Cole.

"William is very understanding," she told one reporter. "His favourite meal is pork sausage, so that is what I cook him."

Sir William was tired of champagne, along with Eric Clapton, Mick Jagger and Adam Sandler, and in 1979, with great regret, he sold Aston Upthorpe Stud to Sheikh Mohammed.

This time Sir William sought solace with Dodo Gifford in the Kingdom of Bhutan, in the Himalayas. While they were there, they discovered heretics and, when they got back, Sir William flew to South Africa with model Anne Healy.

In Cape Town, he was promptly arrested, along with a quantity of cocaine and a portfolio of nude photographs.

Sir William and his latest companion, Clair van Lingen, told the court that the king of Bhutan's uncle had given William the cocaine to sell his toothache.

Luckily for Sir William, and for his teeth, the magistrate

decided that the story was "probably true."

In 1980, the "inspiring husband" was reported to have been offered £100,000 to write his memoirs, but it was difficult to write and at the same time entertain American business Rakes Brown and Catherine Hammet-Lewis.

Four years later, Sir William was all set to settle down with Teren Kelly Caraway.

"It's extremely hot," he said. "This is the future Lady Piggott-Brown."

I asked Sir William whether he had ever got round to turning someone into Lady Piggott-Brown. "No, I haven't married yet," he said.

And the stories about the two-way mirrors and the leather accessories? Were they true? Sir William didn't want to discuss mirrors or leather. Only horses.

And the horses? Well, he's been rather lucky in South Africa. Last year he had a share in the winner of the Derby, although he didn't want to discuss that either.

"Will you be back for Chesham?"

"No," said Sir William, "but I'll be thinking about it. That race was very special to me."

PIGGOTT-BROWN and Superfine put in a spectacular leap on their way to victory in the National Hunt Chase in 1961 and right the "bounding baronet" today

Would you like to view the Astons History Project archive in the Whitwell Page Archive Room?
 Contacts: Jancis Smith 07734 44414 and Anna Dillon 07786 876411.

Our database is on the village website (www.theastons.net) on the 'Introduction to Astons history' page. If you fancy a guide to village history road by road you'll find the Astons' Walkabout pdf link there as well .

Remember you can see photos in **colour and zoomable** detail on the village website copy of the Astons News.

Astonathlon 2026

May 3rd saw Astonathlon return for the third consecutive year in it's new incarnation. Blessed by an improving weather forecast as event day approached, the rain held off and the 44 participants had near perfect conditions for their run and cycle. Many familiar faces returned to take part but there were also a number of first timers and some notable absentees.



In particular, we were delighted to see an extended Hawkey clan on the start line making up nearly 10% of the total entries. Incredibly no-one who registered failed to make it on the day so well done to all for looking after yourselves sufficiently well over what will, I'm sure, have been a rigorous training regime leading up to the event!



As always, a massive thank you to all the participants and to everyone who turned out to support for providing the platform for a hugely enjoyable community get together in the Chequers for the evening. A huge thank you to Steph and Olivier for agreeing again to host us all on what should be a weekend off for them and their team. Overall, Astonathlon this year raised close to £900 but the value of getting so many of our community



together for the afterparty is far in excess of this.

Many thanks also to the marshals on the day for their efforts to keep runners and cyclists safe and on the right course. The marshal team this year included Tim Wakefield again who kept up a steady stream of wit and humour on the marshals Whatsapp group to keep morale high (perhaps though for the last time as he threatens to dust off the lycra running shorts and trainers for next year – this years winners be warned).

We hope to be back with Astonathlon in 2027 with a tweak or two to the format. As with previous years this time around we had a good range of ages taking part from 14 to nearly 70 years old. But there was under-representation from the female half of the Astons community. Let us know what we can do to get a better balance and diversity to the event as the 'committee' get together in the coming months to start planning for 2027. On that note, a big thank you also to the organising team for their time and energy to bring things together. Hopefully see you all and many more again next year!

Picks Field Update: The Meadow Maker

If you've been walking through Pick's Field recently, you may have noticed some small seedlings appearing in the scrapes on the hillside. We're pleased to report that the majority of places where Yellow Rattle (*Rhinanthus minor*) was sown last autumn are now beginning to germinate - a promising sign for the future!

Yellow rattle is often known as the "meadow maker," and for good reason. This native annual wildflower is semi-parasitic, meaning it attaches its roots to nearby grasses and takes some of their nutrients. By doing this, it helps to weaken vigorous grasses that might otherwise dominate a grassland.

This is particularly useful for controlling rank grasses such as Cock's-foot, which one of our volunteers identified during our last session. If left unchecked, tussocky grasses like Cock's-foot can easily crowd out the more delicate wildflowers we want to encourage. Yellow rattle helps reduce this competition naturally, creating more space, light, and nutrients for a greater variety of plants to establish.

Later in spring and throughout summer, from May to September, yellow rattle produces its bright yellow flowers, followed by dry seed pods that create the distinctive "rattle" sound that gives the plant its name. In addition to helping control grasses, it is also valuable for wildlife, attracting pollinators and supporting species such as the Grass Rivulet, a rare moth whose larvae feed on the developing seeds.



At our recent volunteer session, we were learning how to identify plants within a 1m² quadrat so that, later on, we can use Common Standards Monitoring to assess the condition of the site and track whether our management actions - such as privet clearance - are having the positive effect we hope for. Privet removal works in a similar way to yellow rattle: opening up the habitat and reducing competition so that more delicate and desirable wildflowers have the chance to thrive.

Thanks to our volunteers - who I think rather enjoyed the chance to sit and identify everything in sight -, we recorded a wonderful range of wildflowers during that session, including bird's-foot trefoil, field scabious, greater knapweed, mouse-ear hawkweed, lady's

bedstraw, self-heal, common agrimony, ribwort plantain, black medic, daisies, buttercups, speedwells, cranesbills, and ragwort - exactly the kind of diversity we hope to support and expand.

Every 4th Sunday of the month we have a working party in the field from 14:00 – 16:00. If you'd like to join in then please register at www.pfr.tidyhq.com, contact an Astons Nature Recovery Group committee member (listed below), or just turn up!

Anna Dillon - dillon.anna@gmail.com; Chloe Cooper - cooperchloe959@gmail.com;

Nick Isaac - njbisaac@gmail.com; Bob Picken – bob_picken@hotmail.com; Jolyon Tidmarsh - oxtid2@hotmail.com

Serian Sumner - seirian.sumner@gmail.com;

Wild Oxfordshire: Insect Week: Tiny Creatures, Big Impact

From 22 June to 28 June, the Royal Entomological Society's spotlight week is all things insect. The study of insects has long been central to conservation, food production, medicine, and ecology. There are more than 24,000 species in the UK alone, and they can be found in almost every habitat. Their roles span pollinators, predators, pests, parasites, and prey. Insects are essential to our Yellow Wagtail Partnership project. Established in 2020 by patron Dr Robin Buxton, the Partnership works with the [Earth Trust](#) Church Farm Partnership and Lower Farm, to learn and communicate as much as possible about the impact of different land management techniques both on this species and the wider environment. Recent changes in farming practice and other human impacts on the landscape have led to habitat and insect declines, and Yellow Wagtails are now on the conservation red list.

Volunteer.

We occasionally ask for volunteers to carry out small projects to help with the Yellow Wagtail Partnership; this can range from helping out with fieldwork and managing data to creating visual aids for our work. Our partner, Earth Trust, regularly recruits volunteers. Whether you are out counting insects or sitting at a desk, [volunteering your time \(with the Earth Trust\)](#) will help them carry out the vital work they do for the Yellow Wagtail Partnership, as well as their other projects. Have an idea for a research project? We are keen to hear research ideas and scuss the possibility of using our site to support your research. [Please get in touch to discuss what might be possible.](#)



Online box office for all events @ our website www.blewburyplayers.co.uk or using QR codes below. We keen to share our anniversary events with the Astons' residents as our roots came from your very own Stockwell Players...

A FLY ON THE WALL, By Catherine Flye

20 June, St Michael's Church, Blewbury.

7.30pm. Our online box office will open on 29 May.



Tickets: £15 (to include a glass of wine).

We are delighted that Catie and her friends are returning to help us celebrate our anniversary. They have performed so many enjoyable revues in Blewbury over the years. This will be based on the beloved tradition of the British Music Hall, the cast includes a company of old friends - Catie Flye and her cousin Ian Clarke tapping the ivories with gusto: Actor Garth Bardsley hot foot from the West End: Soprano Rosa Lamoreaux all the way from Washington DC and our very own local thespian, Chris Mousley Jones. The show also includes musical favourites together with audience participation.

THE WIND IN THE WILLOWS, By Kenneth Grahame, Adapted by Alan Bennett.

15th -18th July 2026, Orchard Dene Garden Theatre, Blewbury. Our online box office opens 5 June. Tickets: Adult £17. Child £9.

Come and enjoy the exploits and adventures of Toad and his friends Ratty, Mole and Badger. Will his friends be able to steer the motor-car-obsessed Toad away from his reckless behaviour? Can they help him mount a courageous mission to reclaim Toad Hall from the weasels? Alan Bennett's adaptation is a satirical tale of nature, fun, friendship and loyalty. It's an adventure which appeals to young and old alike, and Blewbury's open air garden theatre is the ideal setting.

Director Ed White chose this play because "it feels like Blewbury's story". He reflects that the noises, sounds and images, described in the book by Kenneth Grahame, all feel like they could be in this village. He also observes that "The script is wonderfully adapted by Bennett, the characters are immediately recognizable from the book, and we are going to have a lot of fun meeting them and creating their world. When the cast read the script the characters popped off the page. It's going to be joyous". There are lots of worlds to be created by a large cast of talented actors of all ages; the river bank, the Wild Wood, the open road, Toad Hall and many more. AND we have live musicians and the original songs from the National Theatre production. It's all going to be a marvellous way of celebrating our 50th anniversary. Do join us...



Benson Choral Society

Handel's gem of a mini-opera or masque, **Acis and Galatea**, will form Benson Choral Society's Summer Concert. It is a simple tale of Acis, a shepherd, and Galatea, a sea nymph, whose happy romance is broken by the jealous monster Polyphemus who kills Acis, but Galatea uses her magical powers to turn Acis into a fountain in whose waters she can bathe forever. It has a fine libretto by John Gay and Alexander Pope.

After a successful première in 1718 it was revived in the 1730s and was Handel's most popular stage work in his lifetime. To realise this lovely work we have as soloists Anastasia Bevan, Dominic Bevan, (both from the celebrated Bevan family) William Searle (well-known Welsh tenor) and Ben Davies (who has sung with the Sixteen) and as our authentic baroque orchestra a return of the Instruments of Time and Truth, all under the watchful baton of Tom Neal.

This will be at **7.30pm on Saturday 20 June in Dorchester Abbey**. Tickets @£20 or £17 can be booked on our website <http://www.bensonchoralsociety.org.uk> Book now, first come, first served!

A Miracle in Amber. A mystery poem by Chloe Cooper

Can you guess what this poem is about? ...the answer will be published in the next Aston's News!

Preserved in Baltic amber, I am a rarity,
A planidium of the family Acroceridae –
Catalogued by scientists looking for verity
With my companion, a mite of the Anystidae.

I remember the moment I became encased.
Scientists trace me to the Eocene,
But even trapped, I rolled, I moved, I became displaced,
So much so that my age lies uncertain somewhere in the rocks between.

My trap lacks datable elements.
They cannot use radiometry,
So the humans try stratigraphy, palynology, and the sediments –
Indirect methods that compound age uncertainty

There is no chronological precision
Offered by the resin's chemistry.
Instead it was reworked, redeposited, and the time-averaging of the deposition
Results in conflicts in its history.

I am a member of the spider flies,
Whose family is known from fossils and amber too.
Though relatives from the Mesozoic did not survive,
My ancestors' Jurassic roots are ancient and true.

I wonder if my descendants will recognise
Since I am from a modern line,
And I am preserved as if I were still alive,
With intact soft tissues and morphological features so fine.

A Konservat²Lagerstätte where lost diversity is shown,
And rarely seen behaviours are observed.
A planidium with a mite is a record almost unknown
And it's rare my larval searching strategy is preserved.

Although my ecology is relatively clear,
My resin trap lacks isotopes for radiometry.
So whether my time was far or near,
Morphology alone cannot date the phylogeny.

My behaviour too is not a clock
As Baltic amber is not a single evolutionary phase.
Besides, scientists aren't sure if my company is coincidence or indeed if I dock
To feed upon my companion during a long-lost age.

As higher resolution palynology and geochemical fingerprints together align
With future tools to calculate the eons amber has crossed.
And improved stratigraphic frameworks could refine my place in time
So that the ability to date me may not be lost.

Since larvae are rarely trapped in sap
And planidia almost never fossilised,
It's a miracle I'm here to fill this knowledge gap
And for my history to be recognised.

Glossary: **Eocene** = Geological period 57–34mya; **Geochemical fingerprinting** = the use of chemistry to identify the location of the origin of a material; **Isotope** = versions of the same chemical element with different numbers of neutrons;

Jurassic = Geological period 208-146mya, **Konservat²Lagerstätte** = areas (or individual fossils) with exceptionally well-preserved fossils, sometimes including soft tissues. Not to be confused with **Konzentrat²Lagerstätten** which are areas with exceptional volumes of fossils but not necessarily well-preserved.

Mesozoic = Geological period 245-65mya; **Palynology** = study of pollen and spores; **Phylogeny** = the “development of taxonomic groupings through evolutionary studies”; **Planidium** = The first instar larvae of some parasitic insects – specifically Hymenoptera and Diptera. The larvae migrate to find hosts.

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”

More volunteers always welcome



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.

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!



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 slow down those following us.

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_picken@hotmail.com

The Woolpack



The Woolpack meets every Tuesday at the Astons Café in the village hall from 10am to 12 noon. We hope to see you there and we'd love to see all types of crafts represented, so if sewing is your thing or you're bonkers about beading, come on in! Margaret Morant 07899 748209



ASTON TIRROLD AND ASTON UPTHORPE PARISH COUNCIL

Annual Parish Meeting May 20 2026

Chair's Report for 2025-2026

Aston Tirrold and Aston Upthorpe Parish Council (PC) met on the third Wednesday of each month (with the exception of December where the meeting was in the second week) for eleven meetings during the year. There was no meeting in August.

COUNCILLORS

There have been 2 new councillors appointed in 2025/26. I'd like to formally welcome Sarah Munro and Tom Mooney to the Parish Council. The current compliment of Parish councillors are: Jane Imbush (chair) and councillors, Simon Young (vice chair), Joanna Hart, Jane Knight, Peter Butcher, Mary Severin, Neil Carter, Tom Mooney and Sarah Munro

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank Charlotte Ray our Parish Clerk for her support over the last 12 months and on the arrival of her second child. She is a huge asset to our team and her timely monitoring of the email account, attending to all correspondence and reporting requirements and managing the finances.

PLANNING

The PC considered 10 Planning applications during the year recommending that SODC support 9 and unable to support 1.

THE ASTONS' RECREATION COMMITTEE (ARC)

There is a separate written report from ARC for their AGM in May. The PC would like to thank ARC for its continued excellent maintenance of the recreation ground and pavilion. It was wonderful to see the Astons Bonfire Night so well attended with record numbers and an over flowing car park! There was no Astonbury in 2025, but the plans for its reappearance in 2026 are well underway. The future looks bright for ARC with new members and chair to support the ongoing activities and fundraising. With so many new people in the village, maintaining and enhancing that sense of community and activity needs new support. Their work and scheduled events would not be possible without assistance from villagers all of whom are volunteers.

FINANCE

The PC finances remain healthy and has made the following grants and donations in year:

The PC has also received monies through the Community Infrastructure Levy related to the houses built by Sweetcroft Homes at Lower Ham yard. The Village Hall has benefited from £8,775.00 in support of the library room refurbishment where work replacing the windows, flooring and insulating the room to make it more energy efficient. ARC benefited from £1,313.00 CIL monies in 2025 pitches allowing for significant refurbishment work of the Boules pitches leading to the hosting of a very successful Boules Tournament in September 2025. A donation of £1,100 was also given to St Michael's Church for an update to the bells in the church tower. A grant of £500.00 has been paid to the Village hall to host the weekly post office, which coincides with the Astons Café. The PCC have received a grant of £1,000.00 toward maintenance of the burial ground and the Toddler Group have received a grant of £649.00

THANKS

The PC would like to express their sincere thanks to everyone that has volunteered in some way over the last 12 months to the villages. The events hosted by the village and the facilities that are maintained, would not be possible without their continued support and contribution. The sense of community value engendered by supporting the villages is immense and ensures that Aston Tirrold and Aston Upthorpe remain wonderful and vibrant places to live.

Continued on next page

THANKS

continued from previous page

There are a few people that deserve particular mention for their efforts during the year:

- All those involved in CLP Groups taking forward the proposals from the Astons Community Led Plan, including the Environment, Roads and Traffic and Housing and Development Groups. The PC looks forward to supporting any further proposals from these groups in the coming year.
- Peter Butcher for his assistance and willingness on all matters footpaths with his support with clearance of fallen trees.
- Neil Carter who has written a comprehensive verge and hedgerow management plan which has been submitted to OCC for their consideration
- Tom Coates of Rustic Management for clearing the footpaths and assisting with tree planting and clearing
- Astons Outdoors especially Naomi Simmonds and Louise Binder for the wonderful contribution over the last 12 months for the planting on verges and around the war memorial
- Our community speed watch volunteers helping to keep our villages safe led by Bob Picken
- Jeremy Imbush continues to contribute to the maintenance of the recreation ground and his enduring role as Editor-in-Chief of the Astons News, is essential reading for all villagers.
- The Online Team, led by Bruno Brunskill, for the website and the Aston's Facebook page led by Kathy Hawkey
- Emily Richards for all her support over many years checking and maintaining the defibrillators in the village. She has handed over responsibility to Kathryn Verrill
- Astons Café. Many are involved in supporting this, but particular thanks to Margaret Morant and Louise Binder and it is good to see the café open on a weekly basis.

Jane Imbush

Chair, Aston Tirrold and Aston Upton Parish Council

May 2026

Parish Council Business

Parish Council meeting 20th May 2026 was held face to face in the village hall.

Planning

[P26/S1034/HH](#) – For development work at the following location: 1 Aston Street, Aston Tirrold, Didcot, OX11 9DJ

The application is for: Proposed garden room/shed. **The PC supports this application**

Roads and Traffic

Concern was expressed regarding the risk to children and spectators at Astonathlon given the speed of cyclists and possible risk of collision. This will be addressed before next years event. PB and TM to action

Environment group

Disappointment expressed at the lack of a response from SODC on the verge and hedgerow management plan. Cllr Simpson agreed to investigate the issue.

SODC/OCC

See link for SODC report

[Aston Tirrold Aston Upton Parish Council DC Report 200526.docx](#)

See link for OCC report

[County Councillor Parish Report May 2026.docx](#)

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be on Wednesday 17th June 2026 and will be held in the Village Hall at 7.30pm.

Churn Church News and Services April 2026

date	Event/time	Prayer Focus
+Sunday 7th June	1ST SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY 9.00am All Saints' Aston Upthorpe:	Sidesmen, those who help with hospitality & catering. Flower arrangers
+Sunday 21st June	3RD SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY 9.00am All Saints' Aston Upthorpe:	Families, children's outreach, family services & Mothers' Union

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

You can contact the clergy & staff on: -

Father Jason St. John Nicolle	01235 850267	office@churnchurches.co.uk
Revd Louise Butler	07837 009730	revlouiseb@aol.com
Revd John Clarke	01235 510073	jphclarke@gmail.com
Revd Dr Mark Rhodes-Smith	01235 850267	mark.rhodes-smith@churnchurches.co.uk
Elaine de Ridder	01235 850267	office@churnchurches.co.uk

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 if you wish to find out information locally.



The Astons PCC has 2 vacancies for anyone who would like to be part of the church community.

Please contact Amanda or Tim if you are interested.



St Michael's church gives a very warm welcome to the following families whose babies have been baptised in May:

10th May at St Michael's Aston Tirrold: *Toby Frederick Timmis*

24th May at St Michael's Aston Tirrold: *George James Peter Furness-Smith*

May God's blessing of peace and joy be with them and protect them all of their days.

Free Organ recitals

Every first Sunday of the month

St Andrew's Church

East Hagbourne OX11 9LP

Next recital 7th June at 5pm

Andrew Walker will play works by Jehan Alain, Percy Whitlock, J.S.Bach and Frederic Descamps

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 Elaine in the Office or Revd Louise Butler on [07837 009730](tel:07837009730)

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 permanent link for the Sunday service is

<https://meet.goto.com/ChurnBenefice/sundayservice>

Weekday evenings Compline at 8.00pm for 10 minutes via <https://meet.goto.com/312446493>

Ada Lovelace and her Institute



You may well be asking yourself: who was Ada Lovelace? Why am I choosing to write about her?

Ada Lovelace is considered to be the world's first computer programmer. She was born in 1815, the daughter of Lord Byron, the famous poet. Her parents separated two months after she was born, and Ada herself, like many women from her social class, was never sent to school. However, she received private tutoring, and in due course she became a highly talented mathematician. She was introduced to Charles Babbage, and produced a programme for Babbage's "Analytical Engine", the prototype of the modern computer. In 1835, Ada married William King, the 8th Baron King; a few years later, her husband was created Earl of Lovelace, and so Ada became the Countess of Lovelace. Ada herself died in 1852.

Ada was a remarkable woman, and the Ada Lovelace Institute was established in her honour in 2018. What does this Institute do? It focusses its work on trying to ensure that Artificial Intelligence benefits everyone in society. In its own words, the Institute aims "through research, policy and practice...to ensure that the transformative power of data and AI is used and harnessed in ways that maximize social wellbeing and put technology at the service of humanity".



Do look at the Institute's website – the Institute does excellent work, and its work deserves to be better known.

See <https://www.adalovelaceinstitute.org/>

Here in the Churn Benefice, we are holding a series of talks to help us all engage with the impact of AI in our lives. These talks are on the Second Sunday of every month, and are part of an informal 6pm service at St Andrew's Hagbourne. They are designed for everyone, and everyone is very welcome.

Like any technology, AI can be used for good, but it can also be used for bad. It is up to us to determine whether AI will prove to be a blessing, or a curse. The UK Government is eager to push out the adoption of AI as rapidly as possible. But what sort of safeguards should be in place? At the end of the day, AI isn't about technology – it's about people. How will AI contribute to human flourishing? Do come along to our talks, and share your thoughts. It will be great to hear your views.

- Father Jason

Mothers' Union: 150 years

CAMPAIGNING is an important action that Mothers' Union takes to improve the conditions of family life. This happens nationally, through government and local councils and globally across the world. It is not very well known, but MU has a voice in the United Nations and is particularly involved in committee discussions for the Commission on the Status of Women. Here is a small selection of MU political campaigning over the years:

In the early part of the twentieth century, MU campaigned to raise the minimum age of marriage to 16 years.

In 1945, MU lobbied with the National Council of Women and the WI for the introduction of family allowances to be paid directly to mothers.

In 2010 MU launched a report "Bye Buy Childhood" calling on the Government to prohibit sexualised media and marketing to children under 16 years of age. We have now been called to take part in a government survey: "Growing up in the Online World"

As you see MU is a forward-looking Christian organisation, grounded in prayer and always with a focus to support loving family relationships. Our branch continues to meet monthly for a Holy Communion service followed by refreshments. This month the service is at 10am at St. Michael's Church, Blewbury on Thursday 25th June.

All are very welcome. Join us, and Join in.

Rev'd Louise Butler 07837 009730, leader, Churn MU branch

Want to help garden birds?

Don't feed them in warmer months.

Putting up bird feeders in your garden could be putting some species at risk disease. Stop filling bird feeders with seeds and peanuts from 1 May to 31 October; this prevents too many birds gathering in one place. Instead, still put out small amounts of mealworms, fat balls or suet all year round.

Let the grass grow: June is peak time for insects like butterflies, bees, and beetles. Leaving even a small patch of lawn uncut creates shelter and food for the likes of Meadow Browns, Large Blue butterflies, and Thick-legged flower beetles.

Go chemical-free Gardening organically is a good way to ensure that the food and plants you grow are free of pesticides or chemicals, and the wildlife will thank you for it too.

ASTON TIRROLD UNITED REFORMED CHURCH & CENTRE FOR REFLECTION

Spring Lane, Aston Tirrold OX11 9EJ

Minister: Rev Glyn Millington

JUNE SERVICES

For a Zoom invitation please contact by email: JULIAN GALLOP – jgallop@freeuk.com

Sunday 7 June 11am	Morning Worship with communion led by Rev Philip Mader-Grayson..
Sunday 14 June 11am	Morning Worship led by Rev Dr Colin Thompson.
Sunday 21 June 11am	Morning Worship led by Rev Robert Jordan. NB This is a Zoom only service.
Sunday 28 June 11am	Morning Worship led by Tony Brett.

Refreshments in the Centre for Reflection after the service. All are welcome.

Our Centre will have been rededicated by the time this issue of Astons News has been circulated. If you are interested in hiring it, please contact Julian Gallop.

The Toddler Group are now happily rehomed in the Centre and are very grateful to the village hall for accommodating them during our refurb. Friday mornings 9.30-11.30am.

The next Quiet Garden Day will take place in the Centre on Saturday 6 June 10 – 4pm. Please bring your own lunch. Suggested donation of £10. To book please contact atquietgardendays@gmail.com.

The Meditation Group meet twice monthly on the first and third Wednesdays of the month at 11.45am. We are at present meeting at an attendee's home but hope to be back using the Centre soon. Enquiries should be made through Julian Gallop as above.

The Writing Group meet on the first Thursday of the month at 1.30pm in the Centre. Please contact Julian as above for further information.

ASTONS CRICKET CLUB

Looking for a relaxed way to enjoy the summer and meet new people in the village? ACC is always happy to welcome new faces!



We're a friendly, mixed-ability side that plays purely social matches, so whether you're an experienced cricketer or haven't picked up a bat in years, you'll fit right in. There's no pressure, just good company, a bit of healthy competition, and plenty of laughs along the way.

Matches are played locally throughout the season, on Sundays, with a focus on enjoying the game and bringing the community together. If you fancy giving it a go, we'd love to hear from you. Or, just come along and watch your village team in action

Ralph on 07340 346 511 or at astonscricketclub@hotmail.co.uk

ACC HOME FIXTURES 2026			
All Start at 1.30pm			
Month	Date	Month	Date
JUNE	7, 21	AUGUST	16, 23
JULY	5, 26	SEPTEMBER	6

Recommended Tradespersons

If you have a personal recommendation, send it to 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
Builders, Decorators, Property Maintenance, Handyman		
Luke Porter porterluke9873@gmail.com 07714788423	Luke Porter is a local tradesman living in the village whom I have used on many occasions to replace fascias / gutters; repairs to flat roof ; drive refurbish etc etc Luke is conscientious; hard working and cost effective ----- Highly recommended	Tim Millin 01235 850207 0770 666 36 31 middlefell@ic24.net (2024)
Ben Whitehead BPW Painting & Decorating, 24 Blake Crescent, Swindon SN3 4LR Email: bpwpainting@hotmail.com Tel: 07532262077	We have used him for four years for different jobs, recommended to us by Greg Locke, and he has been in the VN as a recommended supplier. Ben is young, very hardworking and produces great results every time. He works with a number of people in the Astons.	Peter Le Conte peterleconte20@gmail.com (2024)
Jamie Weatherley. Mobile: 07951 852690 Landline: 01189 615234	We use Jamie regularly for internal and external painting and decorating. He has recently repainted our windows and doors externally, all to his (and my!) usual high standards. Recommended unreservedly.	Mike Hill 851149 (2024)
Ridgeway Carpentry Ryan Quinlan info@ridgewaycarpentry.co.uk 07881 361595	Ryan has done a really good job refurbishing the washrooms at the Village Hall. He is a bit of a perfectionist, reliable, brought in any extra trades when needed and always returned my calls. I can recommend him for large or small jobs/projects. You can find more reviews on Checkatrade.	Margaret Morant margmorant@gmail.com (2024)
Computers + electronics etc		
Steve Wicks, PC Technician 01491 825449 , 07513 297 547 www.thepctechnicians.co.uk , 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 c.hawker433@btinternet.com (2023)
Domestic: Cleaners, Ironing etc		
Carpet, Rug & Upholstery Cleaner Garlands - Colin Garland 0118 950 0365. 0797 475 4056 www.garlandsclean.co.uk	We had Colin Garland clean our 35 year old Persian rug. He took great care and the rug is looking much brighter and cleaner as a result.	Mike Hill 851149 (2024)
Carpet cleaning J F Kleen 07961511903 josh@jfkleen.co.uk Crisp Road Henley-on-Thames RG9	We've had our sitting room and bedroom carpets cleaned by Joshua Fahey of JFKleen. He is such a professional and thorough person and his prices are really good value. I would recommend him to anyone.	Peter leConte ajlecontel@gmail.com (2025)
House Cleaning Gabriella 07845 782906	Gabriella 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 (2023)
House cleaning Magda 07805375872	Magda has worked for several villagers over the years and has been cleaning our house since we moved to the village in 2022. I look forward to her visit every week where she leaves our house looking spotless. She is very hard working, reliable and I wholeheartedly recommend her services.	Lucy Cantwell 6 Lower Ham Yard Lucycantwell@gmail.com (2025)
Aimee Greenaway 07947 349539	The quality of her work is excellent and her customer service is outstanding. She picks up when she says she will and turns round ironing in 48 to 72 hours. away. I can't recommend her highly enough.	Mary Robertson 0788 757 4127 (2026)

Recommended Tradespersons Continued

Plumbing and Heating Engineers

<p>Adam AAD Plumbing Services, 0776 3221 257 www.aadplumbing.co.uk aadplumbing@gmail.com</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.</p> <p>Adam came replace the thermostat in our immersion heater. Excellent service!</p>	<p>Penelope Curtis 01235 850794 (2023)</p>
<p>E&W Plumbing and Heating eandwplumbingandheating.com 01491 839675</p>	<p>They did a fantastic emergency job for my Gran, They were also used to repair the pavilion central heating. Efficient and professional service.</p>	<p>Joanna Hart 01235 850517 (2026)</p>
<p>Seamstress</p>		
<p>Sophie Morris Mobile:07765 355217 Landline 01235 815316.</p>	<p>Sophie has altered dresses, jackets and a coat beautifully for me. 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 kmvrrll@gmail.com (2023)</p>
<p>TV & Aerials</p>		
<p>Oxford Aerials (Shaun Guard) SHAUN@OXFORDAERIALS.CO.UK</p>	<p>came out v quick , helpful and reasonable priced</p>	<p>Tim Lake 07887 987 900 tim.lake@stepienlake.co.uk (2024)</p>
<p>Window Cleaner</p>		
<p>LB Windows Mobile 07936 493556 www.windowcleanerdidcot.co.uk</p>	<p>Liam Barson does a good and thorough job. He offers both traditional and waterfed pole window cleaning, gutter, solar panel and patio cleaning.</p>	<p>Lizzie Thornton-Allan 01235 851732 lizziethorntonallan@gmail.com (2025)</p>

U3A

With warmer days just around the corner and being 'time rich' for any newly retired or semi retired individuals, lazy days can be achieving days; 'Learn, Laugh, Live', why not learn a new language, or delve into your family history, enjoy walking with friends, learn to play an instrument by joining the Didcot & District U3A and with over 30 Interest Groups (full details can be found on Didcot.u3a.site.uk) there must be something for You.

New members are always warmly welcomed to join (first visit is 'free to see') and chat over tea and biscuits at the monthly meetings are held on the third Tuesday of every month for this nationwide self-help teaching and learning organisation in the Didcot Civic Hall, meetings start 2:30 pm.

For further U3A details or information for those wishing to 'Learn, Laugh, Live!' head over to Didcot.u3a.site.uk
Brian and Lynn Burscough - PR Didcot & District U3a

PLEASE NOTE:

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

Claire Belcher (39)

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

Mia Diamond (17)

Available for baby sitting

Lives in the Astons

07769 182367

Sam Ferguson (19) Phone 07555549201

Available for babysitting or pet sitting weekends, evenings and school holidays.

Lives in the Astons

Katie Ferguson (17) Phone : 07523178076

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

Eliza Haigh (16)

Available for babysitting/petsitting weekends, evenings and holidays

Lives in the Astons

Has a recent first aid certificate

Mobile: 07884960386

James Hart (17)

Available for babysitting weekends and school holidays.

Home 01235850517

Mobile 07485284784

Lottie Hart (17)

Available for babysitting weekends and school holidays.

Home 01235850517

Mobile 07484295323

Eve Lancaster (17)

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

Mobile: 07962 182844

Roselle Isaac (17)

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

Lives in the Astons

Please contact: 07751195432

Alex McCarthy (17)

Available for babysitting
Saturday nights and during school holidays

Mobile number 07599 209177

Olivia McCarthy (20)

Available during school holiday

Lives in Aston Tirrold

07544 109 504

Billy Vallings (16)

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

07510 495937

01235 850659

Lucy Vallings (17)

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.

Thames Valley Police Team for the Astons area

Police Community Support Officers and Non Urgent Polices Calls: 101; For Emergency calls: dial 999.

Inspector Neil Byrne: He is the overall responsible officer for the neighbourhood policing team.

Dan Howard: A Sergeant who **supervises** the constables and PCSOs.

Alex Glover: A Police Constable.

Beverley Kaur: A Police Constable.

Christopher Druce: A Police Constable.

Curtis Emery: A Police Constable.

Dan Mellor: A Police Constable.

Beth Saunders: A Police Community Support Officer (PCSO).

Emily Collins: A Police Community Support Officer (PCSO)

Police and Crime Commissioner to the Thames Valley matthew@matthewbarber.co.uk

Reporting Rural Crime: 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.**

Other agencies:

SODC Councillor: Ben Manning 07946 476733

SODC Councillor: Anne-Marie Simpson 07770 781 233

Citizens Advice Line: 08444 111 444

Waste collection information: southoxon.gov.uk/wastecalendar (or call Biffa on 03000 610 610)

Fly-Tipping– How to report it:

Go to 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 and www.fixmystreet.com

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. It will not stop computer generated calls or calls that are not sales and marketing related.

Didcot Volunteer Drivers

DVD volunteer drivers provide transport in their own cars for local people who are unable to use public transport, or for those living in rural areas where it is not available, to hospitals, health centres, clinics and other activities. They take telephone requests and make bookings for transport each weekday from 10.00 am to 12 noon (except Bank/Public Holidays). There is an answering machine on at all other times. Tel: 01235 816709

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

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

Cineworld Didcot:-----0871 200 2000, cineworld.co.uk/didcot,

Cornerstone Arts Centre: 01235 515 144, 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)	01235 850517
Peter Butcher (Footpaths)	07956 976159
Jane Barr Knight (Roads & Traffic)	07968 300282
Neil Carter	
Mary Severin (Village Hall)	
Tom Mooney	
Sarah Munro (ARC)	

Parochial Church Council (PCC)

Tim Lake (Chair and Churchwarden)	01235 850468
Amanda le Conte (Churchwarden)	“ 851546
George Curtis (Deanery Synod Rep +treasurer)	“ 850794
Penelope Curtis	“ 850794
Joanna Hart	“ 850517
Email	tirroldupthorpechurch@gmail.com

Village Hall Management Committee (CIO 1216788)

To book the Village Hall, e-mail Charlotte Kerr at **astons.vhbooking@gmail.com**

Nicole West (Chair)	07939 265555
Andrew Blakeman (Treasurer)	
Maria Martin (Secretary and History Group)	
Louise Binder (Astons Outdoors)	
Rachael Peterson (Sustainability)	
Mary Severin (Parish Council)	
Tracy Briggs (Events)	

Astons Recreation Committee (ARC)

Gillian Golding (Co-Chair)	07308 736799
Joanna Hart	01235 850517
Amberley Diamond	07771 995906
Liz Pattison (Bookings/ Co-Chair)	astonspavilion@gmail.com
Susan Pallett	
Jo Walshe	
Sarah Munroe	

CLP Groups

Roads and Traffic:- Jane Barr Knight	07968 300282
Housing and Development :- Simon Young:	
youngastonspc@gmail.com	07934 401377
Environment Group Anna Dillon:	
	<u>dillon.anna@gmail.com</u>
Astons Nature Recovery Group	
Jolyon Tidmarsh	oxtid2@hotmail.com

Village Clubs & Organisations

APAC	Emma Machin	07840 862946
	Emma.machin2018@gmail.com	
Astons Artists:	astonsvillages@gmail.com	
Astons Café	Margaret Morant	07899 748209
Louise Binder		07713 314662
Astons History Project	Jan Smith	07714 734441
Astons Outdoors	Naomi Simmonds	01235 859218
	Louise Binder	01235 851433
Bell Ringing	Rachael Marffy	07780 814257
Book Club	Sarah Dalton: dalton_family@hotmail.com	
Church Cleaning	Katharine Verrill	07866 435377
Church Flowers	Lizzie T-A	lizziethorntonallan@gmail.com
Astons Cricket Club: Tom Swainston		07595 695668
	Tom.swainston@hotmail.com	
Community speed watch	Bob Picken	07787 567261
	bob_picken@hotmail.com	
Football: Adam Griffiths		07815 105760
Pavilion Hire: Liz Pattison	astonspavilion@gmail.com	
South Moreton Pre-School		01235 819647
Thames Valley Alert	Tirrold: Steve Morant	07561 315882
	Upthorpe: Ian Clark	01235 850103
Toddlers' Group	astonstoddlersgroup@gmail.com	

Astons Comms team

Astons Enews & website team:	
Bruno Brunskill, Anna Dillon, Jeremy Imbush, Charlotte Kerr, Rachel Marffy, Anne & Steve White.	
Astons News:	editorastonsnews@gmail.com
Astons enews team:	enews@theastons.net
Astons Website team:	webmaster@theastons.net
Astons Facebook:	Kathryn.hawkey@gmail.com

Agencies and Emergency numbers

Citizens Advice Bureau	0344 411 1444
Didcot Volunteer Drivers	01235 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 10.00am-12noon
[Pangbourne Post Office: 01189 842294]
Blewbury Post Office: Mon/Tues/Thurs/Friday 9-3pm;
Wed 9-12noon. Closed Sat & Sun
Cholsey Post office (inside Tesco) 6a.m.-10.00pm
East Hagbourne Post Office Mon-Fri 9am -12.30pm.

Bus: 94A The Astons To Didcot [Orchard Centre & Station]
 Mon to Sat: 08.08, 10.44, 12.44, 1444, 16.19, 18.54
 Sunday: no service
 Stops at N & S Moreton only. Runs Anticlockwise only