No. 478

The Mouthpiece

Culham's Newsletter

July/August 2026



Field between the The Burycroft and Culham Reach (Jul 2020)

Dates for your Diary

Fri 3rd July	7.30pm	Ladies of Culham - dyeing	St Paul's Church
Wed 8th July	7.30pm	Parish Council Meeting	Culham Nursery & Pre-School
Fri 7th August	7.30pm tbc	Ladies of Culham – walk/social	Starting point tbc

Culham Village Community WhatsApp Group

Please scan the QR code below to join now!

To engage with your local community, please join the **‘Culham Village Community’** WhatsApp group.
To scan the QR code above simply open up your ‘photo’ app and hover it over the QR code and join the relevant group that interests you.

Culham Village Defibrillator



The Culham Village Defibrillator is located at the Culham Village Nursery & Preschool on an external wall facing onto the Glebe.

Talking Point by Revd Vicky Burton



Back in March, I visited Ffald-y-brenin Trust, a Christian Retreat Centre in Pembrokeshire, with my friend Jenny. Twelve years earlier we had agreed that we would one day go there. On the way, we could not resist stopping at the broad sands of Newgale, where the rippling tide was out. We pulled on our wellies for a quick paddle in the shallows, but as we headed back, water suddenly rose right up to our knees and into our wellies, taking us by surprise and making us laugh.

We arrived at our rental caravan and went for an evening walk in our trainers, because the ground was dry. But, alas, part way along the coastal path, we stepped into muddy water up to our ankles. Wet again. "What is it about wet feet?! I feel like the Lord is trying to tell me something!" I said half-heartedly to Jenny. She said, "Lord, would you show Vicky if she's supposed to know something about wet feet? Amen."
The next morning, within minutes of arriving at the beautiful retreat centre, I was drawn to a leaflet about blessing and prayer. The first thing I read was, "Ezekiel 47 speaks of a river flowing from God's presence..." I opened my Bible to find the chapter. The prophet Ezekiel's vision echoed my recent "wet feet" experiences. The Word of God is living and active, sharper than any sword (Hebrews 4:12), and that's perhaps why it can mean different things at different times to different people. Since that trip in March, I've had the sense of the waters being like the presence of God, and the Ezekiel story highlighting the message of obedience to God's call. God's presence with us is sometimes like paddling in shallow waters, or like wading through knee-deep, or it's up over our heads.

On the last day of our retreat, Jenny and I went to the local beach to see the sunset and attempt to go in the sea. There was a mobile sauna on the beach (!) so we got very warm and then plunged into the very cold (I've never felt that cold!) sea. I wanted to cry, it was so painful, but the beautiful view made me smile. Once showered, and well fed, I felt on top of the world, and light as a feather.
All are invited into God's presence - all can enter through the gate (John 10:9). But I keep being reminded that, like Ezekiel's obedience to cross over the river, our willingness to respond to God's call is key. Will I 'go' where the Lord calls? Will you?

TEAM SERVICES

Sunday 19th July 6.30pm- The Well Dorchester Abbey
Sunday 30th August 10.30am- Team Service Warborough

ABBEY EVENTS

Thursday 2nd July **Moving Music** - 11am and 2pm Concerts, refreshments served from 30 minutes before each concert. Moving Music concerts are presented by the charity Sound Resource, which promotes music for health and wellbeing. Brilliant pianist Derek Paravicini performs with singer Hannah Davey, a range of music - classical, jazz, folk, popular and audience requests. The concert includes sing-along songs for the audience to join as they wish. All are welcome, particularly people living with dementia, their family, friends and carers. Pay what you can, guide price £8.
Reserve places in advance for your preferred concert time: movingmusicconcerts@gmail.com

Saturday 4th July – **Bartholomew Consort** - Polychoral Splendour 7pm A concert of music from the Renaissance and mid Baroque period, sung by the voices of the Bartholomew Consort with the instruments of the English Cornett and Sackbut Ensemble. The opulence of the period is represented by the intricate and multi-layered choral writing by composers from across Europe, culminating in Tallis's timeless Spem in Alium. www.bartholomewconsort.co.uk
Tickets £25 £20 £15

Thursday 9th- Sunday 11th July - The St Birinus Festival Consort – Times vary
The **St Birinus Festival** brings together outstanding musicians, scholars, and communities for a celebration of sacred music in the beautiful setting of Dorchester-on-Thames. Experience concerts, liturgies, workshops, and talks that explore the rich heritage of Catholic musical tradition. Events held across multiple sites – including Dorchester Abbey.
For full details visit - www.thedaveyconsort.co.uk Prices vary from Free – to Front Tier Festival Pass £90 - Please note that the Festival will include Catholic Celebrations within Dorchester Abbey.

Saturday 15th August **-Lumos Live – A Coldplay Candlelight Experience** - A Classical Coldplay Tribute
Two Performance times: 7-8pm / 9-10pm
As part of their Lumos Experiences National Tour -enjoy a string quartet playing a classical tribute to your favourite Coldplay Hits!
First Sitting: Doors open at 6.15pm |Second Sitting: Doors open at 8.30pm.
Seating Is First Come First Served. Email any questions to customerservice@lumos-experiences.com
Tickets £20 - £45 www.lumos-experiences.com

Air Crash Memorial Service- 11am on 5th July at St Lawrence, Toot Baldon

Village News

Village website: **www.culhamvillage.org.uk**

Culham Parish Council Meeting Notes - June 2026

Attendees: Denise, Chris, Mike, Siobhan, Nacho, Robin
Apologies: Sam, Caroline
No members of the public were in attendance.
The meeting started at 19:38.
Chris opened the meeting, starting with apologies from Sam and Caroline.

Summary of County Councillor's Report – Cllr Robin Jones
Cllr Robin Jones did not provide a formal report this month but highlighted a number of local updates. Annual roadside drain clearance works are currently taking place across the area, helping to improve drainage and reduce the risk of localised flooding. Robin also noted that Oxfordshire County Council has recently appointed a new Leader of the Council, resulting in a number of changes to Cabinet responsibilities.

Clerk's Report
Denise summarised the Clerk's report. The Parish Council noted that a recent tree survey of village-owned trees has now been completed. A total of 37 trees were inspected, with two identified as requiring remedial works. The Parish Council will arrange for the necessary maintenance to be carried out in due course.

General Meeting

Pavilion Feasibility Study
The Parish Council reviewed feedback received from residents during May's Community Meeting, where the initial pavilion feasibility study options were presented. Councillors discussed the comments and suggestions received and agreed that a survey would be published on the Parish Council website to provide an opportunity for additional residents to share their views and preferences.
The Parish Council also discussed plans for the proposed **community orchard**. An application for grant funding will be submitted, with the aim of planting the orchard during the autumn planting season.

Planning Matters
The Parish Council reviewed planning applications and notifications received since the previous meeting and considered any comments required as part of the planning consultation process.

Community Meeting Feedback

The Parish Council reviewed additional feedback received during the May Community Meeting. Among the topics discussed was the provision of litter bins within the village, with concerns raised that the bin adjacent to the river path is regularly full. Councillors discussed the matter and will consider whether any changes or improvements can be made to help address the issue.

General Updates

A Parish Councillor reported a request from a member of the public regarding overgrown foliage on Thame Lane. The Parish Council confirmed that maintenance of the highway verge falls under the responsibility of Oxfordshire Highways rather than the Parish Council. Residents are encouraged to report issues such as overgrown vegetation, potholes, blocked drains and other highway-related matters directly through the Fix My Street reporting service, which enables Oxfordshire County Council to assess and prioritise works. The Parish Council will also follow up with Oxfordshire Highways to discuss the annual cut of Thame Lane.

The Parish Council also discussed grass cutting within the village. It was confirmed that Tollgate Road will be included within the village grass-cutting contract from next year. In the meantime, the Parish Council has arranged for a contractor to cut back vegetation at the northern end of Tollgate Road, where foliage had begun to encroach onto the footpath.

The Parish Council confirmed that a new dog waste bin has been installed adjacent to the bridge at the junction of the Thames Path and Swift Ditch.

Full reports can be found on the Culham Parish Council Website www.culham-pc.gov.uk.

The meeting adjourned at 21:00.

Charlotte Storrs Stoneware
ANNUAL SALE 2026

Sunday 30 August and Monday 31 August
from 12noon to 4pm



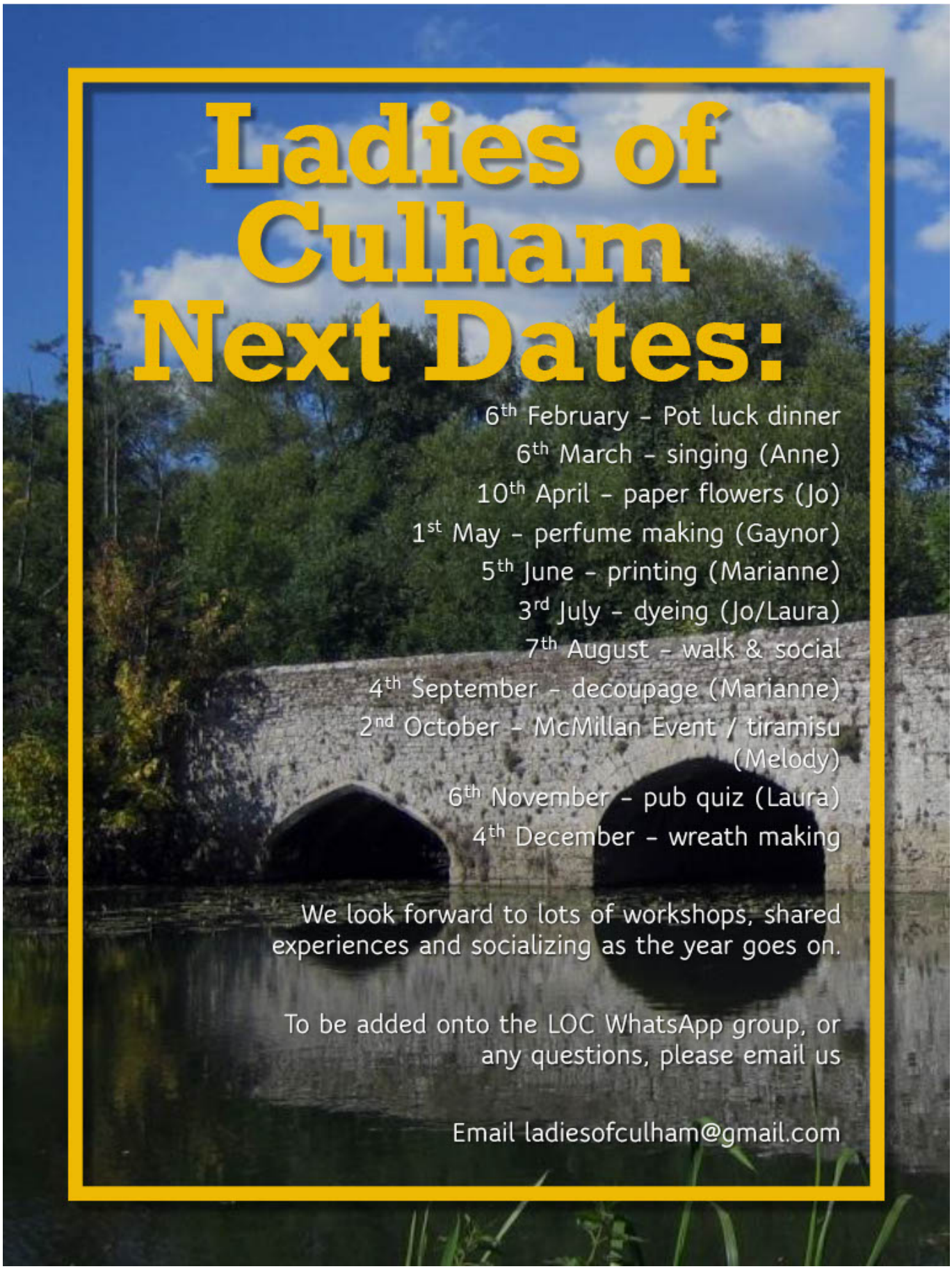
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Ladies of Culham
Next Dates:
6th February - Pot luck dinner
6th March - singing (Anne)
10th April - paper flowers (Jo)
1st May - perfume making (Gaynor)
5th June - printing (Marianne)
3rd July - dyeing (Jo/Laura)
7th August - walk & social
4th September - decoupage (Marianne)
2nd October - McMillan Event / tiramisu (Melody)
6th November - pub quiz (Laura)
4th December - wreath making
We look forward to lots of workshops, shared experiences and socializing as the year goes on.
To be added onto the LOC WhatsApp group, or any questions, please email us
Email ladiesofculham@gmail.com

District Councillor, Sam Casey-Rerhaye Report June/July 2026

Housing and Employment Development Plan

As many of you know, one of the District Council's responsibilities is to draw up a development plan every five years for new housing and employment and where they should be sited in the district. The council has completed a new development plan jointly with the Vale district (the Joint Local Plan or JLP) and this was scheduled to be adopted by the end of 2025. Because of shilly-shallying from government ministers and the interpretation of the government inspectors, this has been severely delayed and we have just been informed this JLP is not expected to be adopted until mid-2027. This is extremely disappointing because, as I have been said many times before, this plan is one of the most advanced in the country in terms of energy efficient homes and businesses, carbon savings, renewable energy and nature recovery in new developments, while not adding any more to the high numbers of houses already committed.

Furthermore, we have just been informed by the government that we must start ANOTHER new development plan, even as the draft one is going through a further inspection process. This must start immediately and be completed in 30 months, a much faster timetable than previously. It is not clear whether policies in the draft JLP waiting to be adopted will be transferred into any new plan, but it IS clear that the required housing numbers will increase substantially. The upshot is that the delayed JLP with its exemplary policies will only be applied to new planning permissions for around two years. Considering this plan took over five years to develop with a considerable financial investment, I feel that government policy and direction is a complete waste of resources in the pursuit of ever-increasing housing numbers that have not shown to solve the housing affordability crisis at all.

Because of this waste I didn't feel I was able to vote in favour of starting a new plan at the last council meeting and in fact abstained as the council has not been offered a real choice in this. I just hope that the draft JLP can be adopted as soon as possible and some of the policies and there's in that plan can be transferred into any new policies.

Foundation Strategic Authority

Meanwhile, the council received a letter from the government proposing a Foundation Strategic Authority for the area covered by Oxfordshire, Berkshire and Swindon.

This is a regional government body that oversees things like strategic transport infrastructure, economic development and regeneration. An FSA is overseen by representatives of all the constituent councils rather than by a mayor. It is a new layer of local government, brought in alongside the proposed change to unitary councils replacing the current District/County set up.

The government has moved from a consultative approach, locally led, to a top-down instruction it seems. What with a new development plan and housing numbers being forced upon us, the Oxford Growth Commission and now a Foundation Strategic Authority, it is very difficult to understand who will be doing what and what democratic oversight there will be.

Waste Collections Rounds will change

Small changes to waste and recycling rounds from **Monday 29 June 2026** will take place to improve service reliability.

While every household’s scheduled collection day will **remain the same,** the **time** that crews arrive on each street may change.

Vehicles may arrive earlier than usual, so residents should **put their bins out by 6am** on their scheduled collection day to avoid missing a collection. If possible, people are encouraged to put their bins out the evening before after 6pm, provided they do not block pavements, footpaths or cycle ways.

Please email me with any District-related issues that I might be able to help with:
sam.casey-rerhaye@southoxon.gov.uk

Oxfordshire County Council News June/July 2026

Cllr Robin Jones

(Green Party) (Berinsfield & Garsington Division)

Email: Robin.Jones@Oxfordshire.gov.uk Mob: +44 7916 293681

Robin's report should be available on the Parish Council website after the end of June

Other News

Nature-Friendly Summer Activities for Kids

As summer kicks off, it's the perfect time for all ages to get outdoors and help out your local wildlife (even on those not-so-sunny days).

1. Make a mammal footprint tunnel



Image credit: Gardener's World

What you'll need:
Sand or flour
Ruler
A small, shallow tray
Wet cat food (meat not fish)

1. Fill your tray
Fill the tray with lots of flour or sand and use the ruler to smooth the surface

2. Check the trap
Lightly press your finger into the flour or sand – it should leave an indent. If it doesn't, smooth over again.

3. Add bait – optional
Place a dish with pet food in the middle of the tray.

4. Place the tunnel outside
Put the tunnel in a quiet, sheltered spot such as along a hedge or wall. Leave it out for up to a week, checking the tray daily for tracks.
5. Identify the footprints
Take photos of the prints with a ruler for scale. Use ID guides to identify your guests.

2. Make seed bombs

Rewilding in the palm of your hand!
What you'll need:
1 cup natural powdered clay
1 cup peat-free compost
1–2 packets of native wildflower seeds (pollinator-friendly is best)
Water (a little at a time)
Bowl for mixing
Tray or cardboard for drying

1. Mix the Dry Ingredients
In a bowl, mix:
1-part powdered clay
1-part compost
Seeds
2. Add Water Slowly
Add a little water at a time and mix with your hands until the mixture sticks together. It should not be too wet or crumbly.
3. Roll Into Balls
Roll the mix into small balls.
4. Dry Them Out
Place the seed bombs on a tray or cardboard and leave them to dry for 24–48 hours in a warm place.
5. Throw and grow!
Once dry, the seed bombs are ready to be tossed into bare soil areas in gardens or school grounds. Try and plant before rain is forecast or water them lightly and watch as pollinator habitats increases on your grounds.

3. Go Fungi spotting

Neither animal nor plant, fungi play a vital role in keeping our local habitats healthy. They help break down old leaves, wood, and other natural materials, turning them into rich soil that supports new life. Some species of fungi even form relationships with plant roots through the root-like mycelium. These 'mycorrhizal networks' help plants absorb water and nutrients while providing the fungi carbohydrate – a win-win!
You can find fungi almost anywhere: on logs, in soil, under trees, even on walls and woodchips!

Fungi are best found:
Nearby woodlands
Around fallen trees or logs
On leafy ground and tree stumps
In damp, shady spots after rain

What you'll need:
A notebook or spotting sheet
Fungi ID app (like *iNaturalist* or *Shroomify UK*)
A magnifying glass (optional)
Gloves

The most common fungi in the UK this summer are:

Waxcaps – Known for their shiny caps, Waxcaps can be red, violet, yellow, green, or pink. They are commonly found in grasslands, meadows, and urban lawns and parks.
Parasol mushrooms – Tall fungi with a wide, round cap, a brown-to-black scaly top, white gills, and a white or off-white stem. Often found in woods, meadows, and fields.

Puffballs – Round fungi with a stem, no cap, and no gills. They release clouds of spores when touched. Puffballs are often found in open meadows, fields, and well fertilised lawns, as well as forest undergrowth. They never grow on logs or trees, only on the ground.
Chicken of the Woods – Easy to spot thanks to its bright sulphur-yellow colour. It forms thick, soft, fan shaped shelves and grows high up on the trunks of mature trees such as oak.
Elf Cups – Cup shaped and bright red, scarlet elf cups grow on decaying sticks and branches in damp spots and leaf litter.

Safety tips!

Never pick or eat mushrooms.
Take photos, not samples.
Wash your hands afterwards.
Stick to public footpaths and avoid damaging habitats.



Laetiporus sulphureus, Chicken of the Woods, Ann Berkeley

Gardening tips for July

1. Nectar is wildlife's friend

You can help attract bees, butterflies, and other nectar-loving insects to your patch by planting nectar-rich plants.
Add climbers that may also produce berries and hips, such as Honeysuckle and Dog Rose. And go a step further and attract moths with night-scented plants like Evening Primrose and Night-Scented Stock.

2. Cut back on the cutting back!

After a beautiful bloom, avoid deadheading roses this time of year. This way, some will develop hips (the fruit of the species of rose plant), which will feed birds and small mammals come winter.



Rosehips, Rhiannon Young

3. Big Butterfly Count

Here's another one for your diary: July marks the Big Butterfly Count. Don't just take part, give our fluttering friends a helping hand by leaving an area of grass to grow long until the end of summer. Species such as the Meadow Brown will use these patches to breed.

Soldiers of Oxfordshire Museum

- Woodstock military museum's first ever flower show, *From Battlefields to Blooms,* opens 9 – 12 July 2026
- Presented by Bladon & Woodstock Flower Club, Oxford Flower Club and Abingdon Flower Club
- An opportunity for visitors to memorialise loved ones and ancestors who served in the armed forces
- Utilises the museum galleries and responds to its collections in new ways

Soldiers of Oxfordshire Museum, the county's military history museum based in Woodstock, will be unveiling a flower show this summer for the very first time. The show, entitled *From Battlefields to Blooms,* will run from Thursday 9 July to Sunday 12 July 2026, featuring arrangements by Bladon & Woodstock, Oxford, and Abingdon flower clubs.

Members of the three local clubs have spent time planning in the museum galleries, utilising the spaces in new and creative ways while responding to the stories featured in SOFO's permanent exhibitions.
The stunning work of the featured flower clubs has previously been seen in displays at Dorchester Abbey and Abingdon's 2019 *Fashion in Flowers* show. The arrangements on display in the Soldiers of Oxfordshire Museum galleries will follow themes such as *Dig for Victory*, *Botanical Remedies* and *Lives Lost in the Trenches*

The museum will also be running a campaign across its social media channels and in house during the show, allowing people to donate in memory of their military loved ones or armed forces ancestors and have their name featured in a special *In Memoriam* flower display.

Those who wish to have an individual remembered in the flower show can submit names and details now by going to the museum website, **www.sofo.org.uk/battlefieldstoblooms**

Visitors will get the opportunity to experience the flower show, the museum's Lee Miller exhibition and live performances by The Waterloo Band and Bugles of The Rifles during the Bubbles & Blooms garden party, a collaborative fundraiser for SSAFA, the Armed Forces charity, and Soldiers of Oxfordshire Trust. The event takes place from 6.30pm to 8pm, Thursday 9 July 2026, with tickets available from the museum website now, **bit.ly/bubblesandblooms**

Message from Matthew Barber, Police and Crime Commissioner

Free tool marking as part of efforts to reduce vehicle crime



Last month, in collaboration with Thames Valley Police, I launched a new Vehicle Crime Strategy which aims to reduce cut crime - particularly theft of, and theft from vehicles.

Having your vehicle stolen, or something stolen from it, isn't a trivial crime – it can result in substantial financial loss, emotional stress and, depending on where the theft took place, security and community safety concerns.

Whilst we have seen a reduction in vehicle crime across Thames Valley, with almost 2,000 less incidents of theft from or theft of a motor vehicle in 2025 compared with 2024, there is more to do.

We launched the plan at the latest of a series of free tool marking events.

Tradespeople are significantly more likely to experience vehicle crime because their tools are seen as high-reward, low-risk targets for thieves. According to statistics from Wickes, 4 in 10 tradespeople have experienced tool theft across the UK.

Tool marking is one of the simplest ways tradespeople can protect themselves from tool theft.

Since March, my office has distributed over 500 SelectaDNA tool marking kits to electricians, plumbers, carpenters and other traders across the Thames Valley, increasing the number of tools marked, making them less desirable to thieves and protecting more tradespeople's tools and livelihoods.

There is more information about future vehicle marking sessions and how to get hold of a kit directly if you can't attend one of the sessions on my website: thamesvalley-pcc.gov.uk/vehiclecrime.

MOONHAWK THEATRE



Oxford Playhouse Burton Taylor Studio

20th July 2026 7.30pm. 21st July 2026 2.30pm and 7.30pm.
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Tickets https://www.oxfordplayhouse.com/events/moonhawk-macbeth

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The Mouthpiece

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Please send contributions for the September 2026 issue of The Mouthpiece by **August 15th** to:
generalmouthpiece@gmail.com

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We always welcome new volunteers to join the team whether you enjoy editing, marketing or distribution – please contact Anne or Gordon directly if you are interested in joining us



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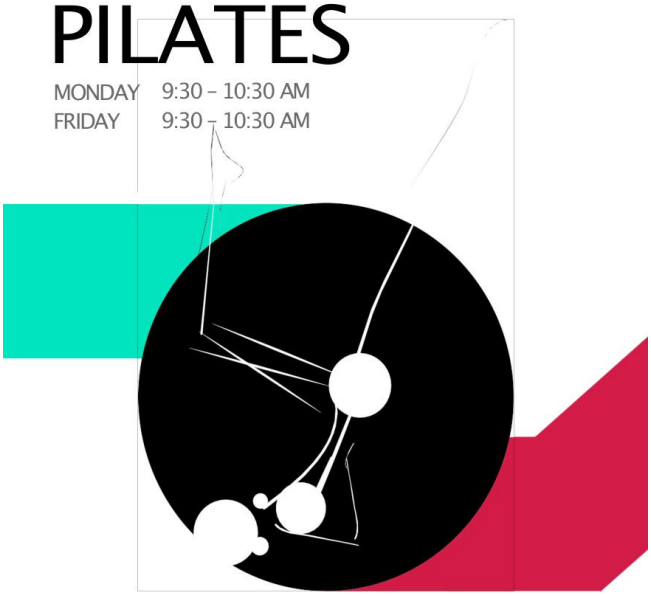
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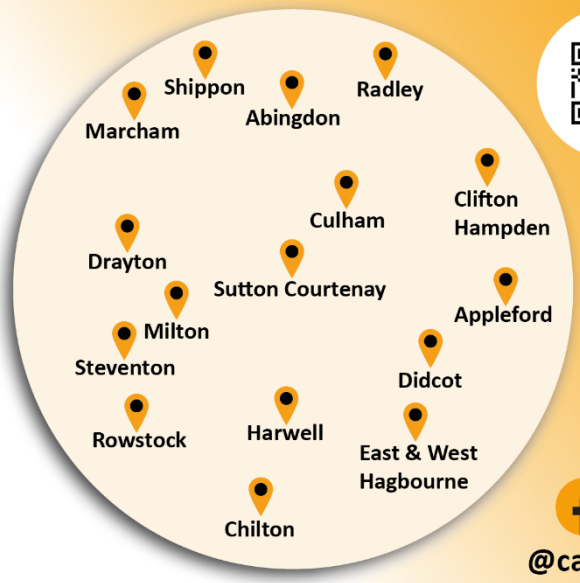
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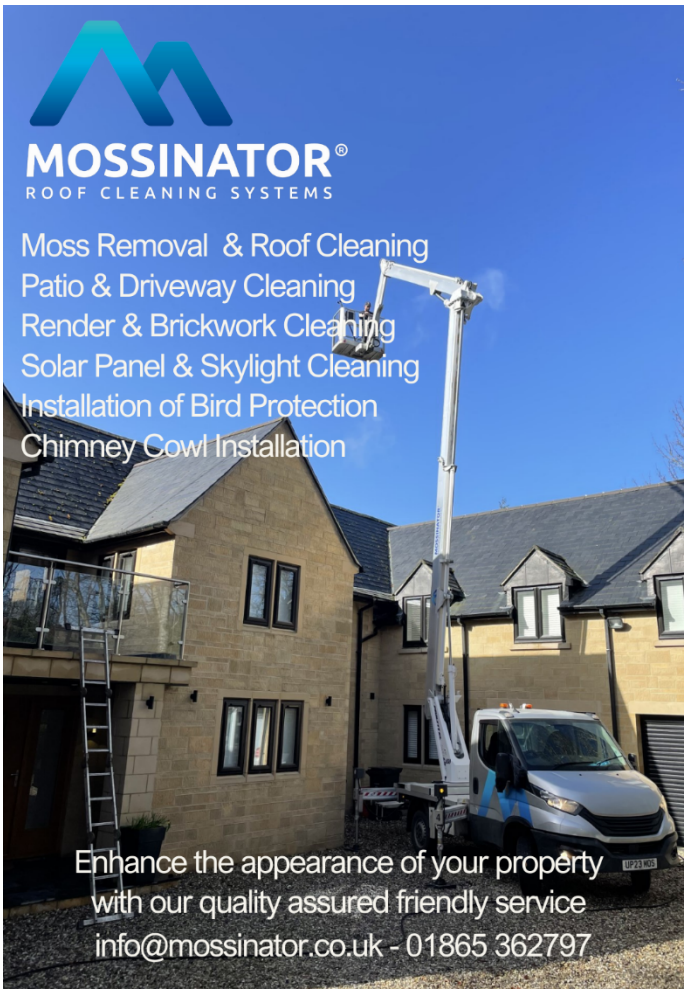


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WHO IS WHO IN CULHAM

CULHAM PARISH COUNCIL			
Chris Pritchard (Chair)	c.pritchard@culham-pc.gov.uk		
Caroline Baird	c.baird@culham-pc.gov.uk		
Sam Casey-Rerhaye	s.caseyrerhaye@culham-pc.gov.uk	3 The Burycroft, Culham	01235 635566
Nacho Gimenez	n.gimenez@culham-pc.gov.uk		
Mike Richmond-Cooper	m.richmondcooper@culham-pc.gov.uk		
Siobhan Sargeant	s.sargeant@culham-pc.gov.uk		
CLERK TO PARISH COUNCIL			
Denise Corney	clerk@culham-pc.gov.uk		
DISTRICT COUNCILLOR			
Sam Casey-Rerhaye	Sam.Casey-Rerhaye@southoxon.gov.uk	3 The Burycroft, Culham	01235 635566
COUNTY COUNCILLOR			
Robin Jones	robin.jones@oxfordshire.gov.uk		+44 7916 93681
ST PAUL'S CHURCH			
Associate Team Vicar:	Revd. Joanne Allen	revjoallen@gmail.com Dorchester Office: 01865 340007	
Ordained Local Minister	Revd. David Haylett	familyhaylett@yahoo.com	01865 407382
Hon. Treasurer:	Andrew Churchill Stone	21 High Street, Culham	01235 533011
Churchwarden:	vacancy		
Hon. Secretary:	vacancy		
FRIENDS OF ST PAUL'S CHURCH			
Chairman:	Philip Owen	6 The Green, Culham	01235 555223
ST PAUL'S & CULHAM VILLAGE RE-ORDERING COMMTTEE			
Philip Owen	stpaulsandculhamvillage@gmail.com	6 The Green, Culham	01235 555223
LADIES OF CULHAM (LOC)			
Laura Cooper	ladiesofculham@gmail.com	Also Jenny Williams, Jo Oughtred	
CULHAM POORS ALLOTMENT CHARITY			
Hon Secretary	Gordon Gibbs	32 High Street, Culham	01235 523679
POLICE			
Neighbourhood Policing Team		Non-emergency Phone Number	101
THE MOUTHPIECE	generalmouthpiece@gmail.com		
Editors:	Anne Churchill Stone	21 High Street, Culham	01235 533011
	Gordon & Joan Gibbs	32 High Street, Culham	01235 523679
Advertising Manager:	vacancy		
	advertmouthpiece@gmail.com		
Distribution:	Laura & Mike Cooper	9 Tollgate Road, Culham	