No. 479

The Mouthpiece

Culham's Newsletter

September 2026



Dates for your Diary

Fri 4th Sept	7.30pm	Ladies of Culham- Decoupage (Marianne)	St Paul's Church
Wed 9th Sept	7.30pm	Parish Council Meeting	Culham Nursery & Pre-School
Sat 19th Sept	Time tbc	BBQ & bar in aid of the church tbc	St Paul's Church
Sun 20th Sept	11.00am	Harvest Festival Service	St Paul's Church

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 Team Vicar Revd Jane Willis

September: Harvest and New Beginnings

September is a month of change. Summer begins to fade, the evenings draw in, and there is a freshness in the air. Fields and gardens offer the fruits of months of careful work, while schools, colleges and universities welcome pupils and students to a new academic year. For many people, September feels more like a new beginning than January.

Harvest has long been one of the great celebrations of the Christian year. It reminds us to give thanks for the food we enjoy and for all those whose work brings it to our tables. Above all, it reminds us that every good gift comes from God. In a busy world, Harvest encourages us to pause and simply say, "Thank you."

Around the middle of the month we also experience the autumn equinox, when day and night are almost equal in length. It is a quiet turning point in the year and offers us an opportunity to pause and take stock. Like a farmer looking over the fields after harvest, we can reflect on our own lives. What have we achieved this year? What have we learned? What blessings have we received? Often, we notice what has gone wrong more easily than all the good that has quietly grown through patience, perseverance and God's grace.

September brings excitement and uncertainty for children and young people beginning a new school year. New classrooms, new teachers and new friendships can be both exciting and daunting. As a church community, we hold them, their families, teachers and support staff in our prayers, asking God to bless them with wisdom, confidence and kindness as they begin another chapter.

New beginnings, however, are not just for the young. Every stage of life offers opportunities to start afresh. We might begin a new hobby, volunteer in the community, deepen our prayer life, or reach out to someone who needs a friend. God is never finished with us, and each new season brings fresh opportunities to grow.

Harvest also reminds us that gathering the crop is not the end of the story. Farmers soon begin preparing the ground for the next planting. In the same way, we can use this season to think about the seeds we want to sow for the future—not only in our gardens but in our lives, our churches and our communities. Seeds of kindness, generosity, hope and faith often grow into blessings far greater than we expect.

As autumn begins, may we give thanks for the harvest of the earth and for the many blessings in our own lives. And may we step into this new season with hope, ready to plant new ideas, nurture new friendships and trust God with all that lies ahead.

TEAM SERVICES - Sunday 20th September- 6.30pm, The Well, St Mary & St Berin-Berinsfield

Team News

Life Groups: Exploring Faith, Growing In Faith

Across the Dorchester Team, small midweek Life Groups meet in people's homes to explore faith, read the Bible, worship, and pray together. They are lay-led, friendly, and supportive—some even began as Lent courses that continued because they were so appreciated. These groups offer companionship and a meaningful way to grow deeper in faith.

We currently have groups in Dorchester, Berinsfield, Drayton St Leonard, and the Baldons. You're welcome to join any group, regardless of which village you live in. Meetings take place weekly, fortnightly, or monthly – and at the moment we have groups who gather on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday or Sunday evenings. From September, the Dorchester groups will study the New Testament letter to the Romans, and we hope to start a new daytime group in Berinsfield on Thursdays for six weeks from October.

Everyone is welcome. If you'd like to join a group or find out more, please speak to one of our clergy and we'll help you find a good fit.



Alpha Course
Meet new people and explore the Christian faith together. Alpha is for anyone who's curious. No judgement, no pressure. Each session unpacks a big question of life, faith, and purpose, and is designed to spark conversation. Come along, see what you think. New course starting January 2027. Register your interest now: admin@dorchester-abbey.org.uk

ABBEY EVENTS

Saturday 12th September- Come & Sing Fauré Requiem, 2pm-5.45pm, Performance 5pm
Join the Royal School of Church Music in Dorchester Abbey for a wonderful Come & Sing featuring Gabriel Fauré's much-loved Requiem. We are delighted to be joined by Alastair Mucklow, the 2025 BBC Young Chorister of the Year, and Belinda Gifford-Guy, the 2023 BBC Junior Young Chorister of the Year, as our soloists. The event will be accompanied by Jeremy Boughton, supported by a group of local young musicians, and led by RSCM's Deputy Director, Dr Paul Hedley.
£15.00; Under 18s £6.50. Both fees include the RSCM edition of the score.
https://www.rscm.org.uk/events/come-sing-faure-requiem-dorchester-abbey/

Thursday 17th September- Moving Music 11.30am- 12.30pm and 2pm-3pm
Moving Music concerts are presented by the charity Sound Resource, which promotes music for health and wellbeing. Hannah Davey and Victoria Newman perform songs from stage and screen. 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 (£8 guide) Reserve places in advance for your preferred concert time: movingmusicconcerts@gmail.com
01865 251305

Saturday 19th September- Sherri Lun plays Schumann 7:00 pm – 9:30 pm
Lili Boulanger's D'un matin de printemps is a brief, nuanced piece combining joyful high spirits with poignant introspection.

Rejecting the flashy, empty virtuosity popular at the time, Schumann envisioned a new type of piano concerto – one where the piano and orchestra engage in a passionate, equal dialogue.
Composed in just five weeks in late 1850, Robert Schumann's Symphony No. 3 "Rhenish" is a joyous, five-movement masterpiece inspired by his move to Düsseldorf and a trip to the Rhineland.
Tickets £17.50 - £30 www.osj.org.uk

St Paul's Church Culham Future Service Dates 2026

20th September- Harvest Festival Service (with BBQ & Bar on 19th, in aid of the church, tbc)

1st November - All Saints & All Souls Service

8th November- Remembrance Service

20th December - Carol Service

25th December - Christmas Day Service

[Times for each Service will be provided in The Mouthpiece covering the relevant month**]**

Village News

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

Your Church Needs You - Friends of St Paul's, Culham



We have not been in touch for some time. Covid, together with a number of other factors, has meant that the activities of the Friends of St Paul's have been paused for a while.

The Friends was set up to help support the maintenance and preservation of our beautiful and historic church building, and that need has not gone away. Although activity has been quiet in recent years, St Paul's still requires ongoing care and attention. In particular, the roof now needs some attention, and funds will be needed to help with this and other maintenance work.

The proposed reordering of the church has also been paused, but it remains very much something that is intended to happen in due course. When the project moves forward, it will continue to need local support alongside fundraising and grant applications.

If anyone in the village, or anyone with an interest in St Paul's, would be willing to help restart the Friends and support future fundraising and activities, including helping with the reordering, that would be very warmly welcomed.

In the meantime, any donations towards the upkeep of the church would be most gratefully received. Since we are a registered charity your donation can qualify for giftaid if you are a UK tax payer. If you are able to make a gift aid donation and email me at pandj@btinternet.com letting me know.

Donations can be made online via the

JustGiving page for Friends of St Paul's Culham,

by **cheque payable to Friends of St Paul's**, please drop them off or send them to 6 The Green, Culham, OX14 4LZ

or by **bank transfer / Give As You Earn** to:

Friends of St Paul's Culham
Santander Bank
Account number: **07758579**
Sort code: **09-01-29**

Registered Charity No. **1062648**

Thank you for any support you can give.

Philip Owen and the Friends of the Church

Summary of Culham Parish Council Meeting Held on Wed 8th July 2026

A member of the public drew attention to the intended working committee for the village pavilion project and a potential conflict of interest for MRC who is also a member of the PCC.

Finance: Bank Reconciliation 30th June 2026

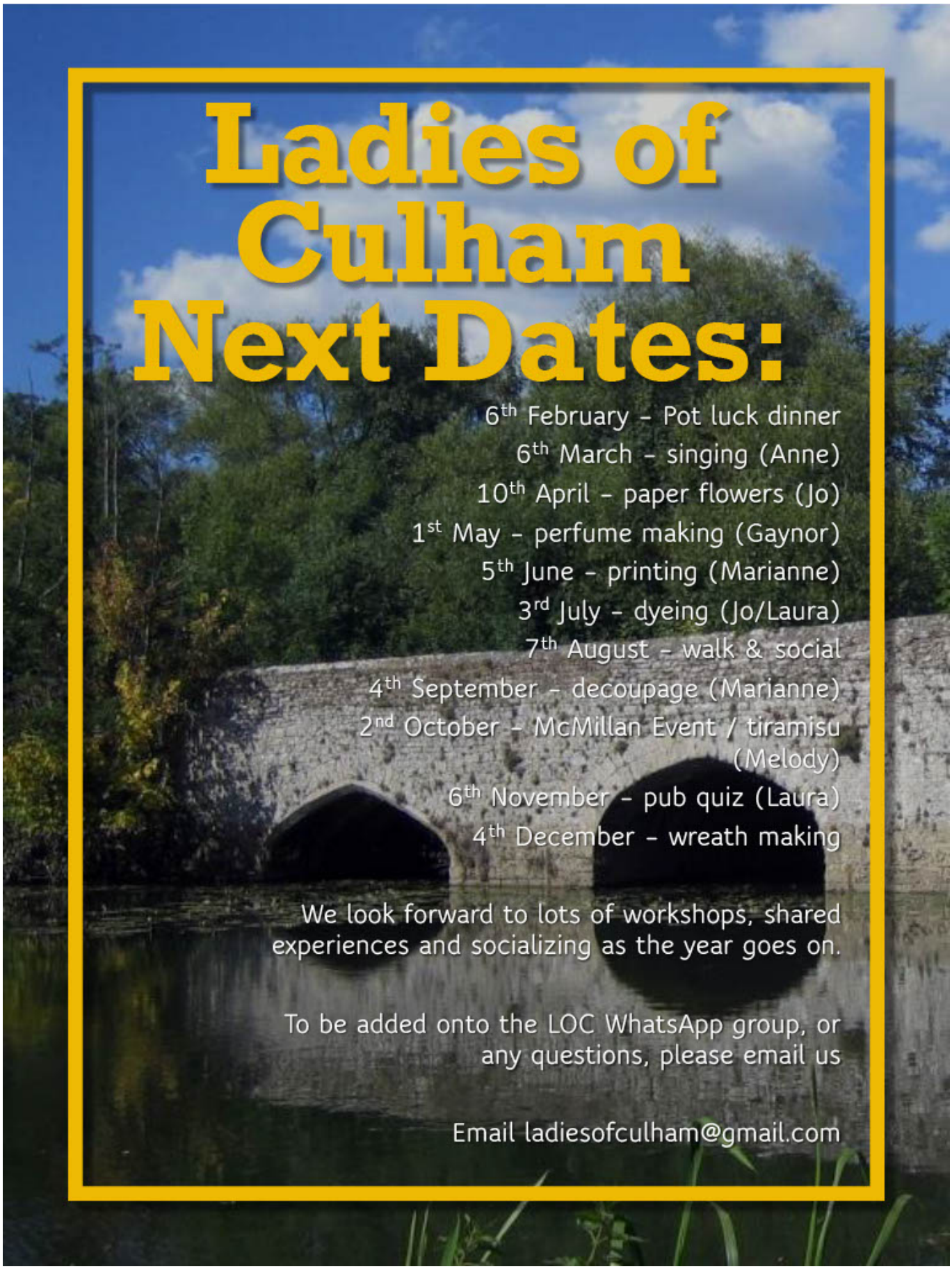
Current Account: 1545.87 £: Instant Access: 27012.02
Budget Variation – further costs for feasibility study – village pavilion

Closure of Appleford to Sutton Courtenay consultation – Graham contractors will be presenting at the September meeting with specific information to detail the proposed road closure – **NOTE – this has been postponed to the October meeting which will take place in the Church. Public encouraged to attend.**

Village Pavilion

Village pavilion – survey – MRC had drafted a survey which would be uploaded to the website with the link circulated to the village WhatsApp group.

The Clerk emphasised the importance that the location of the community orchard is agreed at The Glebe, as a matter of urgency. A project plan and list of trees to be purchased to be available for review at the September meeting.


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

South Oxfordshire District Council

Fly-tipping and Dumped Waste



How to report fly-tipping and dumped waste

Fly-tipping is illegal deposit of waste on land or in water.

To report any fly-tipping please complete our **fly-tipping form**. Alternatively, you can speak to our contractor, Biffa, via the contact details below.

If you come across some fly-tipping, do not remove anything from the site as we need it for evidence in our investigation.

If you have witnessed someone dumping rubbish, please tell us:

- date and time of the event
- its location
- type and quantity of waste dumped
- description of the person(s) carrying out the fly-tipping
- vehicle description and registration
- any company details (i.e. name on the side of a company van or vehicle)
- any other information felt to be helpful for the council's investigation

If you find dumped rubbish, please tell us:

- its location
- type and quantity of waste dumped
- when you first noticed it

What happens next?

After we've received a report of fly-tipping and it is on public land, we open an investigation and arrange to remove the waste.

If waste has been dumped on private land, we can investigate but it is the responsibility of the landowner to remove it.

If someone is caught fly-tipping they could be issued a fixed penalty notice of £1,000.

Anyone convicted in court for fly-tipping could receive an unlimited fine or imprisoned.

Contact us - Biffa
01235 422123
(Text phone users add 18001 before dialling)

admin.southoxford@biffa.co.uk
c/o South Oxfordshire District Council
Abbey House
Abbey Close
Abingdon
OX14 3JE

District Councillor Report: August/September 2026

Cllr Sam Casey-Rerhaye

Local Government Reorganisation – new councils for Oxfordshire

The Minister of State's decision is that from May 2027 the new Oxfordshire and West Berkshire unitary councils will consist of three separate councils. These will be North Oxfordshire, incorporating parts of the current Cherwell, and parts of West Oxfordshire; Greater Oxford which incorporates Oxford city and most of the greenbelt area around Oxford; and Ridgeway council which incorporates some of South Oxfordshire and most of Vale of the White Horse and all of West Berkshire. All the current councils, including the County Council, will be abolished and three new councils will be 'vested' (ie created) on 1st May 2027.

Most of this current ward will be within the Greater Oxford council area, except for Long and Little Wittenham which will be in Ridgeway. New wards will be created and the shape and size of these is being proposed to the Minister at the moment.

This enormous change will take some time to adapt to, as well as a massive amount of administration. It is the biggest change since 1974. And it is not the choice I supported and the risk of being 'swallowed up' by Oxford city is something I will be working hard to prevent, and to maintain the rural character of this area. I and my fellow Green Party councillors are working as hard as we can, along with the council officials, to ensure services remain effective. But there is no doubt there will be bumps along the way.

Cash for community groups with councillor grant scheme

A total of £270,000 is available to support community projects with this year's round of the Councillor Community Grant Scheme. Each councillor is allocated £7,500 for their ward. The grant scheme launched on Monday 17 August and is open to non-profit organisations including community and voluntary groups and town and parish councils.

Previous projects that have been supported with this grant have ranged from mental health support groups for children, play and sporting equipment, memorial benches and solar panels for community buildings.

If any groups or parish councils wish to apply, get in touch with me or go to the Grants page for more details: Councillor Community Grant Scheme 2026/27 - now open - South Oxfordshire District Council

Cool spaces

The Council website has been updated with advice and guidance for community groups and managers of community buildings who want to set up Cool Spaces, as was recently discussed in full Council meetings. The advice includes what is needed and how to sign up to national map of cool (and warm) spaces. More information is on the website: Community groups can help in a heatwave - South Oxfordshire District Council

More grants! – the Performing Arts Grant is now open

Applications are now open for the latest round of the Performing Arts Grant scheme.
The scheme offers grants of £500 to £5,000 to town/parish councils, voluntary and community organisations to support performing arts projects that bring people together and benefit local communities.
If you know a group that could benefit, please encourage them to apply. Full details are available on our website. For any questions, the Community Arts team can be contacted at **performingartsgrants@southandvale.gov.uk**.

Please help share this opportunity with local organisations and community groups.

To contact me email: sam.casey-rerhaye@southoxon.gov.uk

Oxfordshire County Council Parish Report

July/August 2026

Councillor Robin Jones
(Green Party)
(Berinsfield & Garsington Division)

Email: Robin.Jones@Oxfordshire.gov.uk
Mob: +44 7916 29368

(Berinsfield, Burcot, Clifton Hampden, Culham, Drayton St. Leonard, Garsington, Nuneham Courtenay, Sandford-on-Thames, The Baldons)
Email: Robin.Jones@Oxfordshire.gov.uk
Mob: +44 7916 293681



LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION

After a lot of speculation and preparation, the government disclosed its 'minded-to' decision for the unitary authority format for Oxfordshire's local government on July 16th.

From April 1st (ahem - yes, that is the date), 2028, the County will have three unitary authorities as above. The Greater Oxford Council boundary (proposed by the current Labour controlled City Council) closely follows the line of Oxford's Green Belt. Currently, almost all of Oxford's Green Belt – which was created in 1975 – sits outside the city's administrative boundaries. Greater Oxford would cover a region with a population of about 240,000 people today, rising to about 345,000 by 2040.

The 3councils.org website says: *"The Greater Oxford proposals would give local residents control of the Green Belt for the first time. The government has been clear that some of the 'Grey Belt' – defined as "poor quality" areas of the Green Belt – in England should be developed to help deliver 1.5 million new homes over the next five years. This will be a big change for Oxfordshire.*

Rather than incrementally building around every town and village across the county, as is currently the case, Greater Oxford can ensure that high-quality, suitably dense and sustainable developments are built near to existing jobs and community facilities, with good public transport."

This includes the entirety of this Division.

It amounts to a huge land grab by the City Council in order to build. Currently, we have been told that there will be no challenge possible to this structure. If so, the government proceeds to an SCO (Structural Change Order) in the Autumn of this year when this will become official. Elections for councillors for the three bodies will take place in May 2027 when they become shadow authorities which will take over services in April 2028.

Tim Bearder (the new Leader of the Lib Dem controlled County Council) has written to Andrew Burnham firmly stating that he does not think this plan a good one. It is worth pointing out that small Unitaries are known to fail financially and with Oxfordshire being split into three, each of the Unitaries is under the governmentally desired level of 500,000 residents – Northern Oxfordshire (265,000) and Greater Oxford (240,000k) substantially so. The Ridgeway unitary will be larger with 430,000 residents but Berinsfield and Garsington Division will no longer be part of that.
List of South Oxfordshire parishes that would become part of Greater Oxford under the reorganisation:

- Beckley and Stowood
- Berinsfield
- Clifton Hampden
- Cuddesdon and Denton
- Culham
- Dorchester
- Drayton St. Leonard
- Elsfield
- Forest Hill with Shotover
- Garsington
- Great Milton
- Holton
- Horspath
- Little Milton
- Marsh Baldon
- Nuneham Courtenay
- Sandford-on-Thames
- Stadhampton
- Stanton St. John
- Toot Baldon
- Warborough
- Waterperry with Thomley
- Waterstock
- Wheatley
- Woodeaton

COUNCILLOR NUMBERS

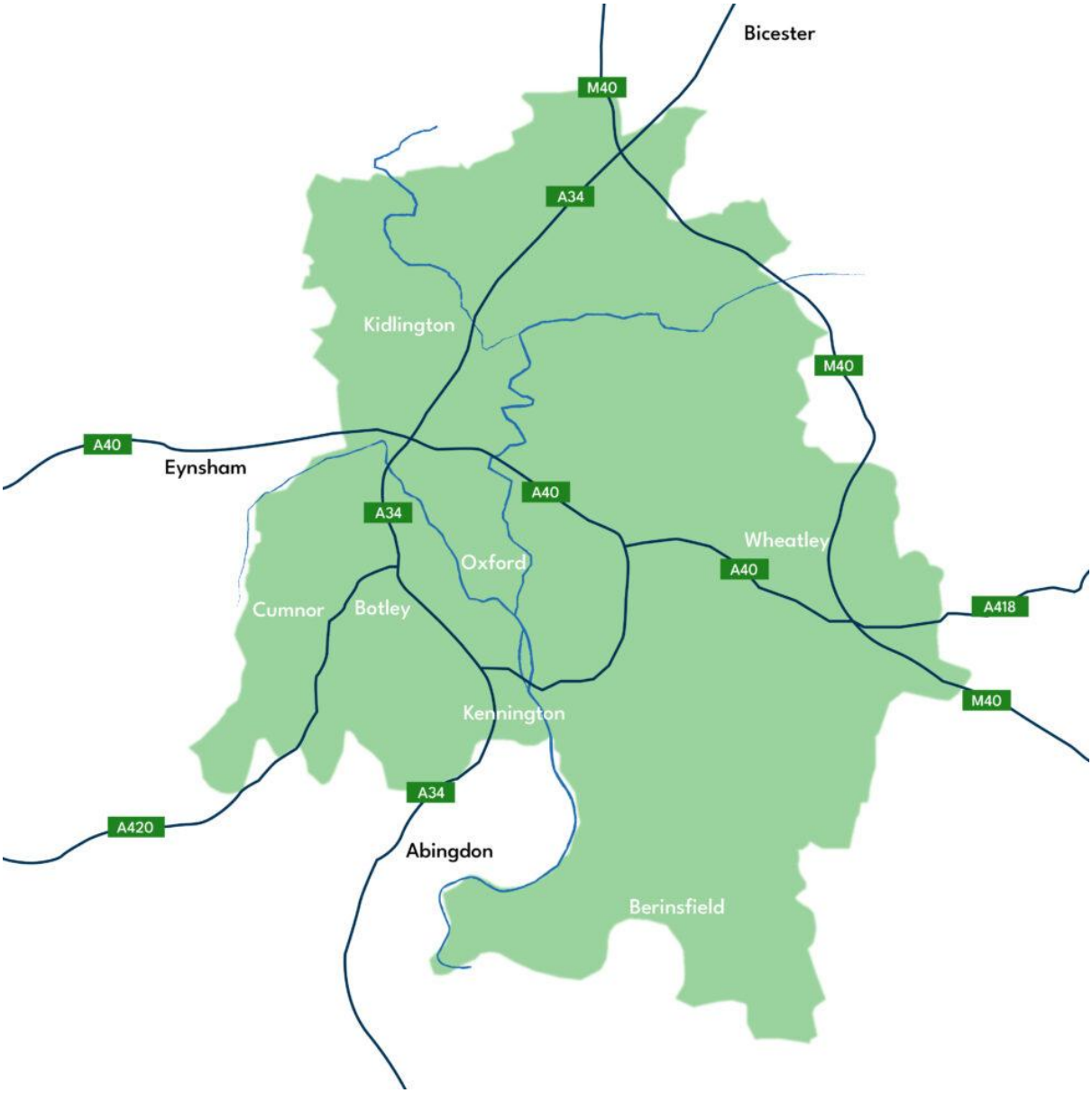
The numbers of Councillors planned to represent residents under this arrangement is currently under review by LGBCE (Local Government Boundary Commission for England) in order to create ‘electoral equality’. The ward boundaries are also under review to the same end. Estimates based on standard unitary ratios of one councillor per 4 to 5,000 residents are currently:

72 for Ridgeway Council

60-65 for Northern Oxford Council

54-60 for Greater Oxford Council

MAP OF GREATER OXFORD (BELOW)



OTHER NEWS

Water Safety: Guidance has been issued by OCC on staying safe during hot weather (can be found here). Thames Water have announced a hosepipe ban effective Thursday 23rd July.

National Highways and Transport survey: The NHT Network is the UK's leading benchmarking and service improvement partnership for Local Highway Authorities. The survey can be found here This is a national survey which helps guide councils and is based on residents' responses.

For access to all consultations visit: https://letstalk.oxfordshire.gov.uk

Update from Olly Glover MP



Newsletter July/August

Whilst more change is afoot in Westminster, with yet another new Prime Minister, representing the constituency and working with local groups to improve our communities has been my focus.

Just before recess began, I spoke to LBC Radio about Andy Burnham's first week as Prime Minister. Since then, he has made several policy announcements, so there will be lots to debate when parliament returns. I look forward to hearing the issues on people's minds during my summer surgeries and at visits over August so that I can continue to raise the concerns local people have at Westminster.

While Parliament was sitting in July, I met with Jane Hanna OBE of Wantage based SUDEP Action following my Adjournment Debate on Sudden Unexpected Death in Epilepsy (SUDEP). Together, we secured a commitment from the Minister to hold a ministerial roundtable when Parliament returns after the summer recess.

In the Chamber I highlighted the importance of embedding climate resilience across all areas of government decision-making, helping to deliver long-term solutions that better protect communities. This was a key issue raised during visits to Uffington Primary School and St Aureus Secondary School, where students spoke about the effect increasingly hot school buildings are having on their education.

I met with Ofwat to discuss residents' concerns about the proposed SESRO reservoir and Thames Water's consultation. I also challenged the government over proposed cuts to the Science and

Technology Facilities Council (STFC), which are likely to affect Harwell Campus, home to the UK's largest concentration of space and science organisations. In addition, I raised the reduction in Post Office services in Didcot with the Business and Trade Minister and joined the new All-Party Parliamentary Group for Chalk Streams, as it is vital we cherish our very own Letcombe Brook.

With Parliament now in summer recess, I have been spending as much time as possible with people and organisations across the constituency. I recently met with the Horticultural Trade Association and Tony, the store manager of Chilton Garden Centre, to discuss support for local garden centres and the importance of maintaining green spaces. During a visit to the Mill Brook Restoration Group in Wallingford, I learned more about the causes of local water pollution and the dedicated work volunteers are doing to restore this precious chalk stream.

While significant challenges remain in securing upgrades to the Wantage Sewage Treatment Works to reduce sewage spills, it was encouraging to meet local students at the first Sustainable Wantage Schools Climate Conference and hear their passion for protecting the environment.

Community celebrations have also been a highlight of the summer. It was wonderful to attend both the first-ever Didcot Pride event and the Didcot Festival of Cultures, which showcased the diversity and strength of our local community.

As always, if there is anything I can help with, please contact my team at olly.glover.mp@parliament.uk or leave a voicemail on **0207 219 7657**.

Olly Glover
Member of Parliament for Didcot and Wantage Constituency

Other News



Following a very successful event last year, The Friends of Abingdon are organising another Heritage Weekend on 19-20 September. This year's theme is "The history of everyday working life" and we will have pictures and real-life stories of the changes Abingdon people have seen over the past 200 years. With several exhibitions and around 10 "Open Doors" properties this promises to be a great event - and it will be free for all the family. The full programme, which will be updated as new events are included, can be seen at https://www.abingdonheritage.org.uk/



If you're looking to do something different this autumn, Home-Start Southern Oxfordshire would love you to join their team of home-visiting volunteers! Volunteers are matched to a local family with young children and support them by visiting once a week to provide peer support. They'll be holding their next Volunteer Preparation Course from Friday 25th September in their Didcot office. If you'd like to find out more about what volunteering in this role involves and can spare a couple of hours each week to help a local family, please email Home-Start Southern Oxfordshire at admin@homestartso.org, have a look at their website www.homestart-southernoxfordshire.org.uk/volunteer or call them on 01235 511152.

Farmer Clusters: What Happens When Farmers Team Up to Create a Healthier Landscape?



Farmer Cluster, Sophie Cunnington

Wild Oxfordshire

Wild Oxfordshire is a charity seeking to create a more natural, resilient, and biodiverse Oxfordshire for the benefit of all.

Farmer clusters

Many of us probably don't think about our local farmers on a regular basis (except when we're stuck behind a tractor on a country road!), but they are the heart of our rural landscape, growing food, managing hedgerows, as well as supporting wildlife across the countryside. Agricultural land accounts for 71% of land nationally and 74% in Oxfordshire. And so, inevitably, the way farmland is managed will have a huge impact on the biodiversity that land can support. Farmers are now joining forces in the form of farmer clusters (or farmer-led groups) to care for the landscape, creating space for wildlife and healthier soils, wetlands, and habitats.

These groups facilitate collaborations between farmers and landowners to deliver landscape-scale conservation projects. They also act as support systems by giving guidance and enabling the sharing of experiences and knowledge. Vitally, farmer clusters are designed to be farmer-led,

meaning that members play a key role in the decision-making as well as giving them a sense of ownership.

The Clumps and Ridgeway Farmer Clusters

At Wild Oxfordshire, we are proud to facilitate two Farmer Clusters: The Clumps Farmer Cluster, a group of 14 farms located around the Wittenham Clumps, and the Ridgeway Farmer Cluster, a membership of 15 farms. Wild Oxfordshire is supporting these clusters to deliver workshops and events that meet the specific needs of local farmers. Workshops have covered a broad range of topics from soil health and hedgerow management to understanding changes in government grants and farm diversification. The clusters are also delivering on-the-ground projects, including the Ridgeway Dew Pond Project, restoring dew ponds on the Chalk Downland. Clumps Farmer Cluster has also installed signs to help walkers understand what they can do to look after the countryside. Both clusters are collaborating with neighbouring clusters to further our impact. Ridgeway Farmer Cluster is one of five clusters working together to support farmland birds and manage deer populations across the North Wessex Downs. In addition, we have been awarded funding from the Rothschild Foundation, which will support long-term development and project delivery.



Sophie Cunnington

How you can help

A farmer yourself? For more information visit farmerclusters.com.

But you don’t have to be a farmer to support the countryside and your local farmers:

Follow the countryside code - leave gates and property as you find them, follow local signs and keep to marked paths.

Take your litter home, bag up dog poo, do not light fires and only have BBQs where signs allow them. Always keep dogs in sight and on leads around livestock and during the bird breeding season.

Visit your local farm shop and submit any wildlife sightings to Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre.

Buy local food where possible at farm shops and local markets.

Message from Matthew Barber, Police and Crime Commissioner

Why early prison release matters beyond the headlines



Last month we heard the news that under the new Sentencing Act the killers of PC Andrew Harper would be eligible for early release next year. Andrew was killed in the line of duty just seven years ago. Along with many others I was hopeful when the story prompted the new Prime Minister to review the policy, but the news this month is that his killers will still be released as planned early in 2027.

There are some welcome changes to the Sentencing Act that will see rapists and child sex offenders remain in prison for longer. This is good news considering just a few months ago the Government rejected moves to do exactly that.

I am the first to accept there is a real problem with prison capacity, frankly more prisons need to be built, along with other changes to our courts, sentencing and more. Nevertheless the solution cannot be to let dangerous people back out on the streets.

The problem with the Sentencing Act goes far beyond the case of PC Andrew Harper, because it fails to look at the risk individual prisoners might pose, and instead is a blanket approach based on the type of offence.. Where previous early release schemes have been risk based, this new law means that whether someone has a violent past or is a persistent domestic abuser, they will still be released. Rehabilitation matters, but it takes time and punishment and public protection remain important reasons for keeping people in prison.

The current plan will put huge strain on the Probation Service and the police, who will be dealing with more criminals out in the community. The National Police Chief's Council has forecast an overall increase in crime of 6% as a result of the changes. These aren't just statistics, that means more victims of crime.

Andrew Harper's killers have shown no remorse for their awful crime. The potential early release of these two individuals has highlighted the failings in the Sentencing Act. It is important that some of the worst problems created by the Government's plans are fixed as a result of this case, but it would be a huge disservice to Andrew and his family if despite a change in the law two of his killers were released early. This cannot be allowed to happen. I am working with colleagues in Parliament and with civil servants behind the scenes to try to get this position changed for when Parliament returns in September. The Thames Valley Police Federation have launched a petition at Change.org/PCHarper.

What's On at Soldiers of Oxfordshire Museum August - September

Exhibitions

Lee Miller: A Woman at War

Tue – Sat 11am – 5pm, Sun 2pm – 5pm | Ends 13 September 2026

There's still time to catch this summer's headline exhibition featuring 33 wartime photographs by Vogue model, surrealist photographer and photojournalist, Lee Miller. See stunning images from the 1940s, from her first snaps for British Vogue - taken at Oxford's Churchill Hospital - to following US troops into the war in Europe.

Now open alongside the Lee Miller exhibition is a mini-exhibition by museum volunteers, *Capturing Conflict* which looks at the tools of war correspondents like Lee, from the Crimean War to the Falklands. Admissions apply – see www.sofo.org.uk/visit-us for prices (admissions include 12 months entry).

Events

All events can be booked during your visit to the museum, or via www.sofo.org.uk/whats-on

An Evening with Ami Bouhassane – Lee Miller: A Woman at War

7pm Thursday 3 September 2026

Author and co-director of Farleys House & Gallery, Ami Bouhassane, joins us to discuss the life and legacy of her grandmother – Lee Miller. Tickets: £15.

Woodstock's 'Last Night of the Proms' at St Mary Magdalene Church

7pm, Saturday 26 September 2026

This year's concert with the Waterloo Band & Bugles of The Rifles at St Mary Magdalene Church aims to bring a taste of The Last Night of the Proms to Woodstock.

Tickets: £12

Alongside Lee Miller exhibition, Soldiers of Oxfordshire Trust welcomes her granddaughter, Ami Bouhassane, and historian Kate Vigurs, to speak at the museum

- **Exhibition of 33 war photographs by renowned photojournalist, photographer and surrealist, Lee Miller from 23 May – 13 September 2026.**
- **Ami Bouhassane, Lee Miller's granddaughter, speaking about her life and legacy on 3 September 2026.**
- **Includes photos taken of nurses at Churchill Hospital Oxford, her first wartime assignment for *Vogue.***
- **Alongside many iconic photographs taken in wartime Britain, Miller accompanied US troops into Europe, a correspondent on battles and the liberation of concentration camps.**

Soldiers of Oxfordshire Museum, the county's military museum based in Woodstock, opens a new exhibition of Vogue model, surrealist photographer and war correspondent Lee Miller's wartime work in *Lee Miller: A Woman at War*, from 23 May to 13 September 2026.
During the Second World War Lee worked as a combat photographer with the US Army, creating a unique historical record.
The new exhibition will showcase her experiences of the time, covering her war correspondence work for *Vogue* from 1942 where she highlighted women's roles in the war effort, as well as the reality of life for women caught up in conflict across Europe. Her first wartime assignment for *Vogue* captured nurses at work at a then-US Army hospital in Oxford – Headington's Churchill Hospital. A number of these photos will feature in the exhibition, returning to the county in which they were taken, a look back at the earliest days of her war photojournalism.

Miller would become one of the few female photojournalists on the front line covering the Normandy invasion and the liberation of Paris. Her work in the newly-liberated concentration camps of Buchenwald and Dachau was sent to *Vogue* in 1945, accompanied by the caption 'I IMPLORE YOU TO BELIEVE THIS IS TRUE.'

Her background in surrealism often came to the fore especially with her photographs of the Blitz, and the iconic photograph of her bathing in Hitler's bathtub in Munich on the same day he died was heavy in symbolism, she wrote 'I washed off the dirt of Dachau in his tub'.

Her 60,000+ negatives and documents were discovered in her attic by her son, Antony Penrose, after her death, leading to her recognition as a pivotal 20th-century artist and photographer.

Soldiers of Oxfordshire Museum is thrilled to be exhibiting her groundbreaking work and are grateful to the Lee Miller Archives and Farleys House & Gallery Ltd for allowing us to bring you this exhibition.

Lee Miller: A Woman at War continues the development of the museum's ongoing work to highlight creative responses to conflict alongside more traditional narratives, examine the role of popular culture in how we see conflict, as well as the role of women as not just witnesses of war but in shaping the course and history of it too.

Author and co-director of Farleys House & Gallery, Ami Bouhassane, joins us to discuss the life and legacy of her grandmother, Lee Miller, at 7pm, 3 September 2026. Ami has authored many books on her grandmother, most recently *Lee Miller: A life with Food Friends & Recipes,* a look at her perhaps lesser known skill as a gourmet cook, adding surrealist flair to recipes.

Check the museum's website for further details and tickets for these events, available now.

Lee Miller: A Woman at War is open on the Cloister Gallery at Soldiers of Oxfordshire Museum, Woodstock until 13 September 2026. Admission prices apply, please see www.sofo.org.uk for up-to-date admissions and visitor information, including prices, offers and opening times.

Please note: Our free entry offer for Blenheim Annual Pass holders does not include entry to the Lee Miller exhibition, but all other galleries are included. Blenheim Pass holders can purchase a discounted ticket for entry to *Lee Miller: A Woman at War.*



Music At The Unicorn at their new home **St Helen's Church,** are proud to welcome the beautiful and "spine tingling" voice of **Sarah Yeo** on Thursday the 1st October. She is really excited to bring her new album, "The Circles Of The Grain" to an appreciative Abingdon audience.

She made a fantastic impression when she opened for Roswell Road at the Unicorn Theatre in Abingdon last year, so we had to invite her back as a headliner. Some of you may also remember her from her appearance in Harwell Village Hall, where she opened for Sam Kelly. We're delighted to welcome her back!

Sarah has been making an impression on the live music scene performing in venues both large and small, throughout the UK. In recent years she has won fans in the USA with shows in New York City and California. She has shared stages with many celebrated performers and songwriters such as Ward Thomas and The Wandering Hearts.

Devon based, Sarah was a finalist in the 2019 and 2020 International Blues and Roots songwriting competition and a semi-finalist in the prestigious 2024 UK Songwriting Competition with her 'glorious' recent single, 'Leap Of Faith" from the "Wisdom Of The Wind" album.

Sarah has always had her roots in the Country, Folk and Americana genres, drawing influence from artists such as Linda Ronstadt, Gretchen Peters and Show of Hands. This is reflected in her insightful, versatile songwriting, accessing a broad musical vocabulary that audiences find moving and relatable.

Her "Beautiful Voice" (BBC Introducing) "soaring, soulful and rich" is the perfect vehicle to express her engaging songs that captivate listeners across the globe. During her music career she has released five EPs & albums and several singles including a cover of Constant Craving which received KD Lang's approval. Sarah's early works were produced by Richard Digby Smith of Island Records who also produced Led Zeppelin and Bob Marley.

Always looking to grow and develop as an artist, Sarah has recently collaborated with world renowned pedal steel player Sarah Jory. Together they have developed a distinctive and electric sound which they have brought to venues throughout the south.

Sarah has achieved so much so far with a recent notable appearance at the Birmingham Symphony Hall. In addition to her own career Sarah has worked tirelessly to bring awareness of other artists and the vibrant South West music scene to a wider audience. Her reputation as an accomplished singer songwriter is growing.

The next few years of Sarah's career are set to be the most exciting yet with the continuation of her latest album tour – "The Wisdom Of The Wind" and the following planned studio album for 2026.

Be sure to catch her while you can!

Future Music At The Unicorn concerts at St Helen's Church include:

15th October	Chris While & Julie Matthews
5th November	Gilmore & Roberts
3rd December	Janice Burns & John Doran

Details and tickets – musicattheunicorn.org.uk

Tickets – Frend & Co 29 Broad Street Abingdon OX14 3LH

Doors 7pm Music 7.15pm



Music At The Unicorn's new home, St Helen's Church is an amazing success! Stunning and iconic building, great acoustics…..and a lot bigger!

"Whilst the Abbey Buildings are undergoing renovations,
Music At The Unicorn (MATU) are proud to continue our concerts at the iconic St Helen's Church", says **Mike Ward, MATU's Chairman**, "It's wonderful to see our brilliant song writers and performers in another beautiful historic building. In short it's the same but different!"

They continue their 2026 programme at the historic and atmospheric St Helen's Church, with the "Absolutely fantastic and wonderful" The Lost Notes on Thursday the 3rd September.

The Lost Notes, a UK folk/Americana band, are always hugely popular with their audience. Although now based in Birmingham, the band originally hail from Abingdon, meaning many family members and friends are always on hand to create a fantastic atmosphere.

Formed in 2014, they have been "taking the folk world by storm!" (**Folk for Folk's Sake Radio**) with their energetic and entertaining live shows. They have recently straddled the divide, surprising Americana and Blues audiences and all the genres in

between with their eclectic self-penned songs. Songs that explore tales of the weary, the hopeful, the loved and the lovable, the wild and the lost, the unhinged and the crossed. The Lost Notes are renowned for their energetic and joyous live songs rooted in *"three-part vocal harmonies that would make even a Beach Boy sit up and take notice…*" (**At The Barrier**).

The band recently released their third critically acclaimed studio album: **"*GOOD LUCK SHOES*"** which they are currently touring at venues and festivals around the UK, Spain and Portugal. It was selected as Editor's Choice by the British Country Music Association and was album of the week on British Country Music Radio. The Lost Notes' status as rising stars was confirmed in early 2025 when they won the prestigious **FATEA "*Band of the Year*" Award.**

Their songs cover the plight of bankers, greaseballs, snakes, Greco-Roman health and safety failings, mules, mermaids and the downright miserable.

"Coming across as a blend of Crosby Stills and Nash and the better acoustic elements of contemporary country, this Birmingham quintet have managed to pull in some jazz influences as well ... worthy to sit with the best of Laurel Canyon circa 1974." **FATEA Magazine**

"A live show by The Lost Notes is something marvellous to behold. Some bands have the ability to take hold of a room, turn it upside-down and inside-out and send everyone on their way feeling revitalised and elated. The Lost Notes have that ability… don't miss them!" **At The Barrier**

Maverick Country Music Magazine: *"4/5 stars - Sublime…fearless and entertaining... wonderful.*"

Music At The Unicorn (MATU) is a not-for-profit community organisation who stage concerts to bring the best music to Abingdon. We bring brilliant musicians, singers and songwriters to local upcoming musicians. We give them a stage and let them play to an appreciative and knowledgeable audience. A dedicated team of volunteers run all the events.

Our brief for the future is, "If it is good music, we want it at the Unicorn"

This is the third concert in our new and iconic venue, the wonderful and atmospheric St Helen's Church.

www.thelostnotes.co.uk

Doors: 7pm | Support 7.15pm Main Act 8pm

Tickets: Frend & Co 29 Broad Street OX14 3LH or www.musicattheunicorn.org.uk or on the door.

Music At The Unicorn at St Helen's Church

West St Helen's Street Abingdon OX14 5EH

The Mouthpiece

Please note that any opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the contributors and not necessarily those of the editors. We accept contributions and advertisements in good faith and cannot be responsible for errors therein.

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

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We are pleased to receive contributions and to have any published you must provide your name & contact details to the editors.

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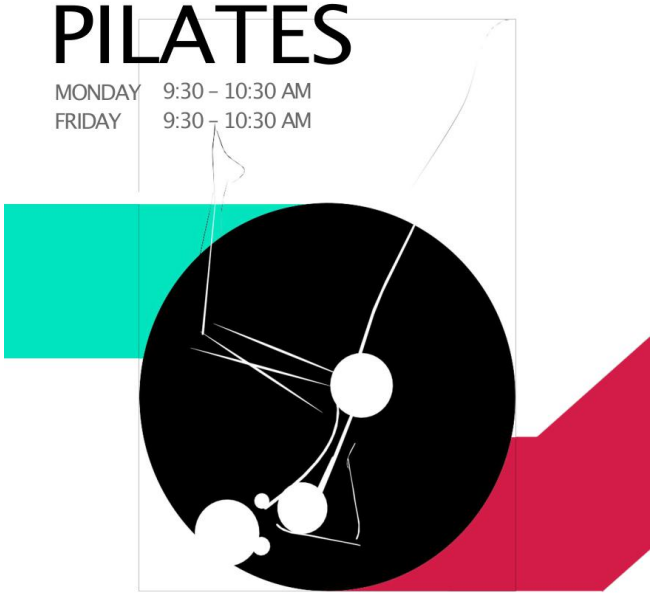
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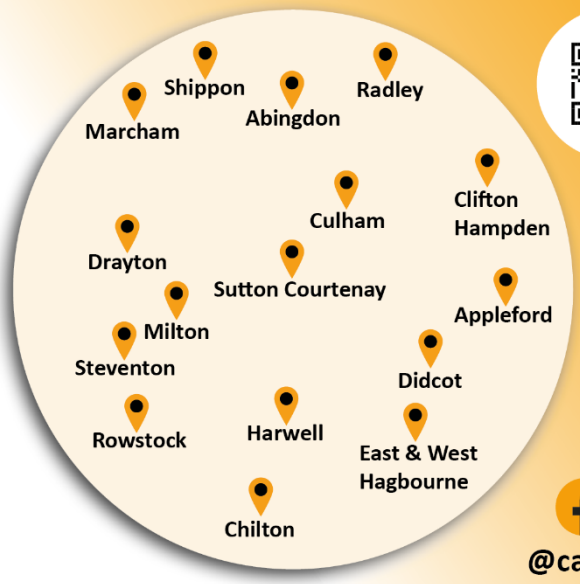
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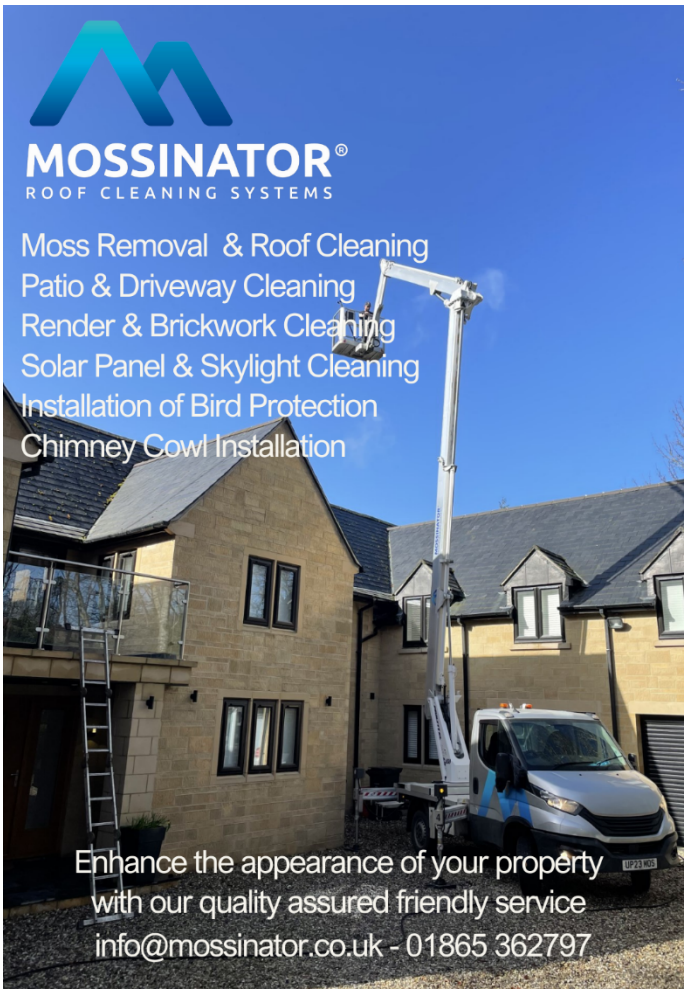
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