No. 480

The Mouthpiece

Culham's Newsletter

October 2026



Dates for your Diary

Fri 2nd Oct	7.30pm	Ladies of Culham- Macmillan event/Tiramisu! (led by Melody)	St Paul's Church
Sat 3rd Oct	Time to be confirmed	Clearing overgrown vegetation and Litter-picking	Throughout village
Wed 14th Oct	7.30pm	Parish Council Meeting	Culham Nursery & Pre-School
Sun 1st November	11.00am	All Saints & All Souls Service	St Paul's Church

AUTUMN IS HERE



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

Word list:

ACORN
AUTUMN
CRISP
FALL
HARVEST
JACKET
LEAVES
NUT
RAKE
SWEATER



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 Claire Wren



If you were asked to choose your favourite thing about Autumn, I wonder what it would be? It is a feast for the senses: taste the soup, smell the bonfires, hear the wind (and the rain), feel the embrace of your favourite jumper and allow the swirling palette of the falling leaves to lift your mood with mustard yellows, berry reds and pumpkin oranges vying for your attention.

It is a marvel that in dying, leaves turn from green and pass through all shades before becoming a crunchy brown carpet only to be slowly subsumed back into the soil. It is an extravagant, and seemingly wholly unnecessary, display of beauty. Like a confetti cannon announcing the finale, the curtain comes down on summer in a blaze of glory.

As the season shifts, we move into a time of more darkness than daylight. There is a sense of creation furling in on itself to conserve heat, putting itself to bed in preparation for winter, allowing itself to rest, recharge and rehearse for the show of Spring.

Resting is part of the process. It is neither fruitless nor wasteful. The trees are wise in their resting. They shed their extraneous leaves; short days and weaker light make photosynthesis inefficient. Hanging onto leaves would prove disastrous as breezes stiffen to gales. Studies have shown, however, that the roots continue to grow. While the rest of the tree is dormant, roots are storing up carbohydrates and nitrogen-rich substances. And so, when the tree reawakens, it has nourishment for leaves to bud and new shoots to grow.

There is much wisdom to be gained from trees. Aside from God and humans, they are the most frequently mentioned living things in the Bible. Trees are the pinnacle of the plant world, perfectly in step with the seasons. Anchored to the earth, and reaching to the sky. Providing shelter and food for countless other species.

I invite each of us to consider this wisdom. What are we going to shed this Autumn? What are we going to focus our energies on? This season is one of preparation, for ourselves and for the earth. Leaning into what is important, letting go of what is not. In short, ‘Be more tree’
But blessed is the one who trusts in the Lord…They will be like a tree planted by the water that sends out its roots by the stream. It does not fear when heat comes; its leaves are always green. It has no worries in a year of drought and never fails to bear fruit.
Jeremiah 17:7-8



ABBEY EVENTS

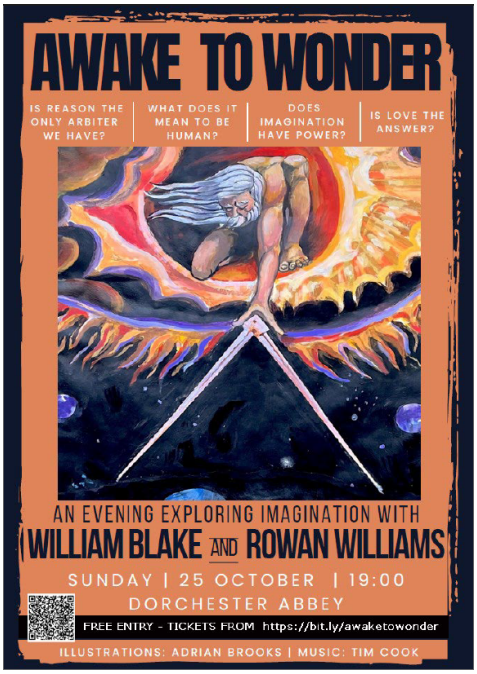
Saturday 3rd October- OSJ, Kodaly, Brahms and Beethoven 7.00pm-9.00pm
A spirited homage to Zoltán Kodály's childhood memories, Dances of Galánta (1933) is a vibrant orchestral showpiece based on 18th-century Hungarian folk music.
The Brahms Double Concerto for Violin and Cello in A minor of 1887, was an olive branch offered to his estranged friend, the great violinist Joseph Joachim, with the cello part written for Joachim's quartet cellist, Robert Hausmann.
Beethoven's Eroica Symphony, originally dedicated to Napoleon Bonaparte, whom Beethoven admired as a champion of freedom, the "Heroic" Symphony was renamed in fury when Napoleon crowned himself Emperor in 1804.
https://www.osj.org.uk/osj-concerts-at-dorchester-abbey/

Sunday 25th October 2026- The Blake Event - 7.00pm
'Awake to Wonder' – an evening of lively conversation with William Blake and +Rowan Williams.

Artist, Adrian Brooks, will be projecting his latest artwork on the walls of Dorchester Abbey. The six canvases based on the work of William Blake, along with words from Blake and music composed by Tim Cook, each provoke profound questions for today. The questions we will explore include:

- Is reason the only arbiter we have?
- What does it mean to be human?
- Does imagination have power?
- Is love the answer?

The event is free – but we will be inviting generous donations for +Rowan's chosen charity Christian Aid. Please help us with our planning by booking here: https://www.ticketsource.com/dorchesterabbey/t-kdyvvdl



St Paul's Church Culham Future Service Dates 2026

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 9 September 2026

The Parish Council met on 9 September at Culham Nursery & Pre-school, with nine members of the public attending.

Proposed Oxfordshire Reservoir

The meeting began with a presentation from Deborah Bennett, Secretary of GARD, on the proposed reservoir and its potential impact on Culham. Particular concerns included construction traffic, environmental impacts and the consequences of a potential emergency drawdown.
A public consultation concerning traffic and construction impacts was announced on 9 September. Residents are encouraged to register with the Planning Inspectorate for project updates. Later in the Development Consent Order process, residents will also be able to register as Interested Parties, make representations and potentially participate in hearings. Further information is available from GARD.

Issues Raised by Residents

A number of local matters were raised during public participation.
After many years maintaining **culhamvillage.org.uk**, its current administrator is looking for someone to take over the website. Several residents expressed an interest in helping preserve this valuable record of Culham and its history.
Overgrown vegetation along **Tollgate Road and parts of the A415** was also raised. A volunteer clearing and litter-picking morning will take place on **Saturday 3 October**. Further details will be shared through *The Mouthpiece* and Village Chat.

Residents raised concerns about **HGV traffic using Sutton Courtenay Bridge**, including speeding and several HGVs crossing together. The Parish Council will raise these concerns with Highways and investigate whether HGV traffic can be restricted, particularly given concerns about the impact on the bridge structure.

The Council also agreed in principle to make previous **village speed survey results** publicly available.

Community Orchard

The Parish Council agreed to proceed with purchasing trees and implementing the planting plan for the Community Orchard this autumn.

Village Pavilion

There continues to be support within the village for the proposed **new pavilion/community facility**. The Parish Council will now consider the feedback received, although the final location and details of the project remain to be determined.

Recreation Ground & Trees

The Council agreed to prioritise tree maintenance identified in the recent **Tree Survey**. Councillors will also review the Recreation Ground lease.

High Lodge Farm

The Parish Council discussed the recent planning application for **a dog walking field at High Lodge Farm**. Following the discussion, the Parish Council will be submitting a formal response to the planning application.

Local Government Reorganisation

County Councillor Robin Jones provided an update from Oxfordshire County Council. Of particular note was the **pause in the reorganisation of local government**.

The next Parish Council meeting will be held on **Wednesday 14 October 2026 at Culham Nursery & Pre-school**.

Oxfordshire County Council Parish Report
August/September 2026

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

Hot on the heels of the 16th July parliament announcement that Oxfordshire and West Berkshire's seven existing councils will be replaced by three unitary councils from 1 April 2028 as part of its plans for local government reorganisation (LGR), Angela Rayner said on Monday 7th September that the process will now be put on pause as she seeks legal advice around procedure. The govt is still minded to proceed with LGR but there is currently no indication as to timeline. Elections that are normally expected will continue according to current boundaries. For now!

Oxford congestion charge

From 28th Sept 2026, six new traffic filters will replace Oxford's temporary congestion charge. This will follow the planned reopening of Botley Road on 20 September. Any Oxfordshire resident can apply for a permit allowing up to 25 free day passes through the new traffic filters. If you already have a congestion charge permit it will automatically transfer to the traffic filters. Additional permits are available for many groups, including Blue Badge holders, unpaid carers, community health and care workers, mobile traders and patients who need frequent hospital appointments in the Oxford area.
https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/transport-and-travel/oxfords-temporary-congestion-charge-cars/exemptions-and-permits

Public Footpath Map and Reporting

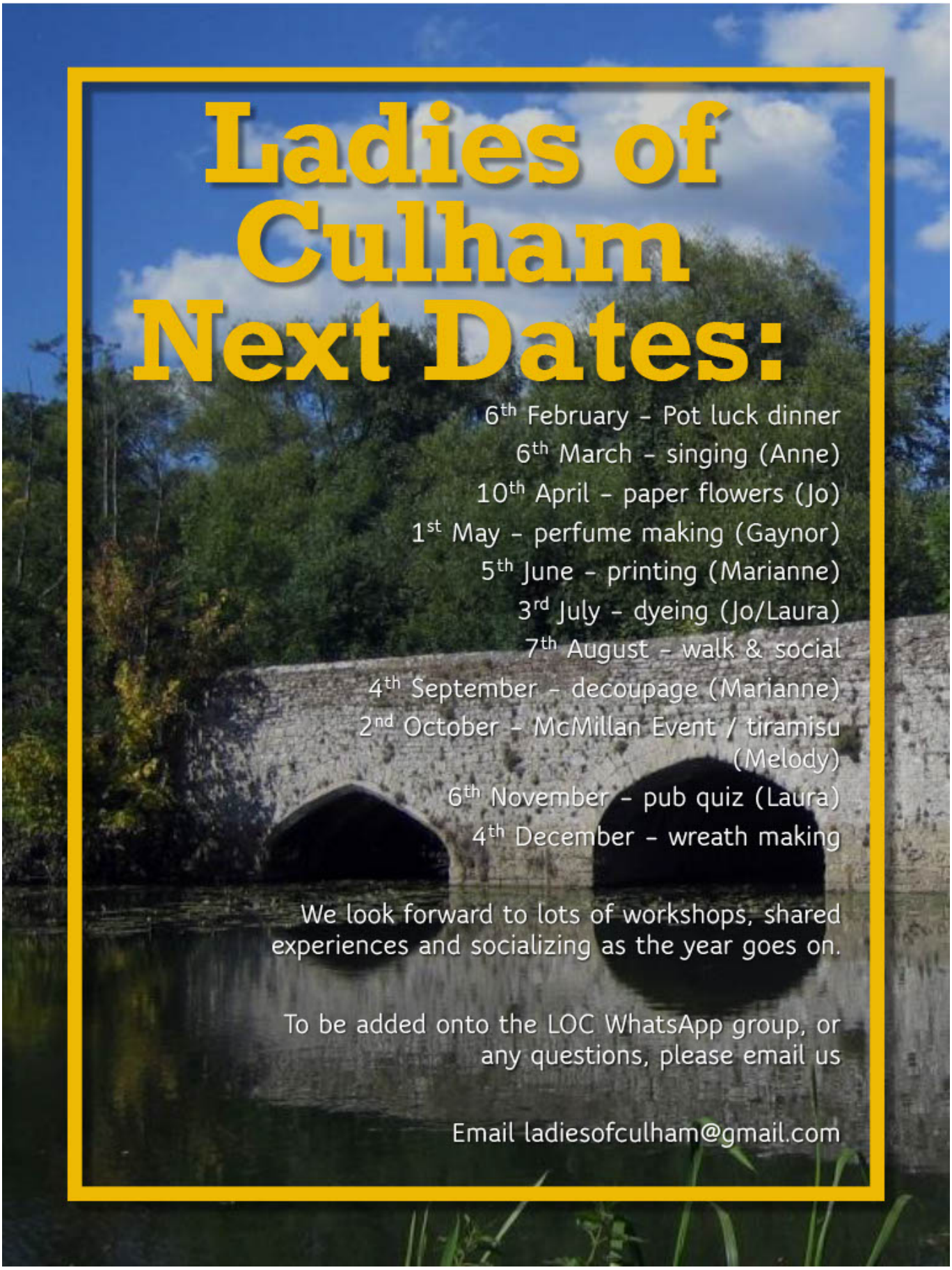
There is a new website to report problems on public footpaths in Oxfordshire instead of FixMyStreet. You will need to login / create an account before you can see the options to report a footpath for repair.
https://publicrightsofway.oxfordshire.gov.uk/StandardMap.aspx

Green Motion at Council Passed Unanimously

OCC Green Councillors brought a motion on Housing development road and infrastructure adoption to the Full County Council meeting on Tues 8th Sept which received cross-party support and was carried unanimously. It recommended stricter requirements for timelines for road, drainage, pavement and verge adoption to prevent residents being left without recourse with deteriorating roads.

Tree Planting

New tree planting due for Autumn 2026, maps of potential sites can be found here: TreePlotter - Oxfordshire County Council


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

Other News



AOS are proud to have the opportunity to perform the Olivier Award-winning musical Come From Away this October at the Amey Theatre, and we can't wait to Welcome you to the Rock!

Come From Away tells the remarkable true story of 7,000 air passengers who were stranded in the wake of 9/11. Grounded in the tiny town of Gander, Newfoundland, when US airspace closed, the community grew to double its original size overnight.

The musical details the extraordinary charity, kindness and open-hearted hospitality of the local townspeople, who provided shelter, food and comfort to completely unknown travellers during a global crisis.

https://www.ticketsource.com/abingdonoperatic
Alternatively, call 0333 666 3366

Kidlington Amateur Operatic Society presents

Sister Act

Broadway stage version

Wed 21st Oct - Sat 24th Oct 2026 7:30 pm

Gosford Hill School, Kidlington

Tickets £15, under-17 £10

VIP tickets £20, under-17 £15



CREDITS SHEET

Music by ALAN MENKEN
Lyrics by GLENN SLATER
Book by CHERI STEINKELLNER and BILL STEINKELLNER
Additional book material DOUGLAS CARTER BEANE
Based on the Touchstone Picture Motion Picture 'Sister Act'
Written by Joseph Howard
This amateur production is presented by arrangement with Music Theatre International All authorised performance material are also supplied by MTI www.mtishows.co.uk
Orchestrations by Doug Besterman
Vocal and Incidental Music Arrangement by Michael Kosarin
Produced on Broadway by Whoopi Goldberg and Stage Entertainment in association with the Shubert Organisation and Disney Theatrical Productions.
Original Production Developed in Association with Peter Schneider and Michael Reno and Produced by Stage Entertainment

World Premier Produced by Pasadena Playhouse, Pasadena CA and Alliance Theatre, Atlanta GA
Sheldon Epps, Artistic Director,
Susan V. Booth, Artistic Director,
Lyla White, Executive Director,
Tom Pechar, Managing Director,
Tom Ware, Producing Director

Tickets online at www.ticketsource.com/kidlingtonkaos
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and Anemone Florist Kidlington Centre
www.kaos.news

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Soldiers of Oxfordshire Museum

Smoking Apples Theatre presents award-winning show Kinder at Soldiers of Oxfordshire Museum, Woodstock



- A Smoking Apples production aimed at ages 9 - 18 years
- Tells the story of a Czech-Jewish girl escaping on a 'Kindertransport' train in the 1930s
- Multi-award-winning show uses inventive table-top puppetry and shadow play
- Four shows at Soldiers of Oxfordshire Museum, 1pm and 7pm Tuesday 20 October and again at 10am and 1pm on Wednesday 21 October 2026

You can watch the trailer
here: https://smokingapplestheatre.com/show/kinder/



Music At The Unicorn At St Helen's are proud and privileged to welcome the acclaimed duo **Chris While & Julie Matthews** to the stage on the 15th October, with support from local singer-songwriter Adam Matthews.



Widely known as Britain's longest running female folk duo, Chris and Julie have performed more than 3,000 concerts worldwide, appeared on over 100 albums, written hundreds of original songs and built a devoted following over three decades. Now celebrating 30 years since their debut, they continue to sound as fresh, engaging and inspiring as ever.

Chris & Julie are generally regarded as folk/singer-songwriters but their outlook is more akin to the DIY philosophy of punk. Their story is remarkable - two empowered women doing it their way, without compromise. They run their own label and publishing company; record and produce their albums from their own studio; perform all their own material, and have always valued their complete autonomy and creative freedom. And all from a small village near Sheffield, nearly 200 miles north of the London-centric UK music industry.

Details and tickets – musicattheunicorn.org.uk
Tickets – Frend & Co 29 Broad Street Abingdon OX14 3LH
Doors Open at 7pm, Music at 7.15pm



White Horse Reservoir

A space for nature, a place for people

Summer 2026 was officially declared the hottest on record according to official Met Office reports. Gardens turned brown, rivers came under pressure, and water demand across the Thames Valley reached record levels.

While recent rain has been welcome, rivers, groundwater, and water supplies take time to recover after prolonged dry weather. As our climate changes, we need to be able to store more water when it's plentiful so there is enough when it's needed most.

That's why White Horse Reservoir is such an important project: helping to secure water supplies across the South East while reducing pressure on rivers, chalk streams and groundwater sources.

Plans continue to be developed with input from local communities, and a planning application is due to be submitted later this year.

Stay up to date with White Horse Reservoir news by joining our mailing list at thames-sro.co.uk/subscribe or scanning the QR code below

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Message from Matthew Barber, Police and Crime Commissioner

Waste crime knows no boundaries



We have seen the huge impact of large-scale waste crime here on our doorstep with the massive illegal dump near Kidlington which has cost the Environment Agency millions of pounds to clear up. More arrests have already been made in this case and the investigation into others continues.

It is not just these huge waste sites that are the problem though. Each year across the country there are over a million incidents of fly-tipping and many of these have serious consequences for victims. Often landowners, large and small, are left with the clean-up costs and the problem of disposing of someone else's waste.

In Oxfordshire the problem has only been exacerbated by the changes made to our local tips. The County Council's new policy for our local household waste recycling centres is making it harder for many residents to legitimately get rid of their waste, and that can play into the hand of organised criminals.

Thames Valley Police regularly work with local authorities and with the Environment Agency on joint operations to tackle waste criminals. Sometimes operating as seemingly legitimate businesses - some even have waste carrier licenses - these criminals are not just responsible for fly-tipping but are often linked to other forms of organised crime.

They operate across borders, and so must the enforcement. Thames Valley Police's Rural Crime Taskforce frequently operates in London and neighbouring counties to identify and apprehend those responsible for fly-tipping, rural crime and other offending locally across Oxfordshire.

The impact of fly-tipping can be significant. It is not just an inconvenience but can land the victim with a bill for thousands of pounds to safely remove someone else's waste. In the coming months I hope to be able to announce a pilot project across Vale of White Horse and South Oxfordshire that will allow victims to claim support to deal with some of the costs of the clear up.

This will help victims financially as well as helping to protect our local environment. The intention of the scheme is to increase reporting of fly-tipping incidents and increase the change of catching those responsible.

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 November 2026 issue of The Mouthpiece by **October 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.
Cover photo: courtesy of Mark Unwin

The Mouthpiece Team

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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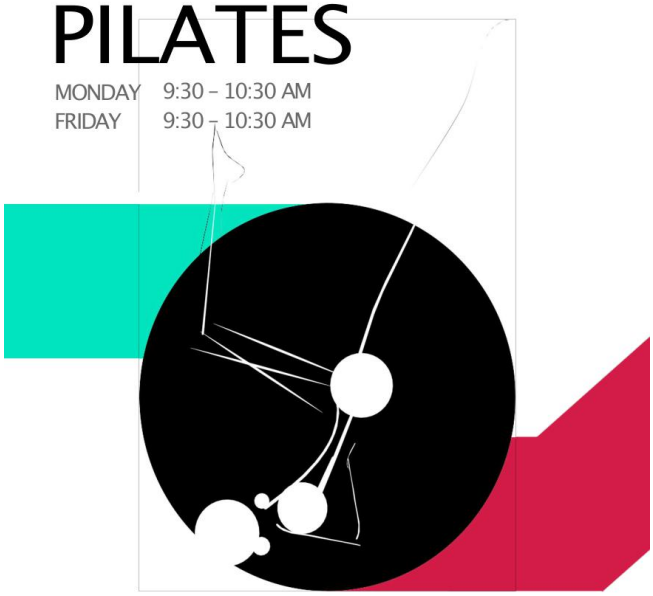
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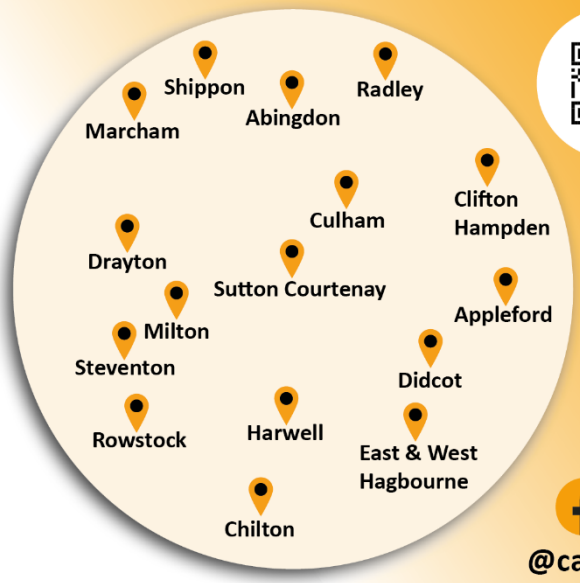
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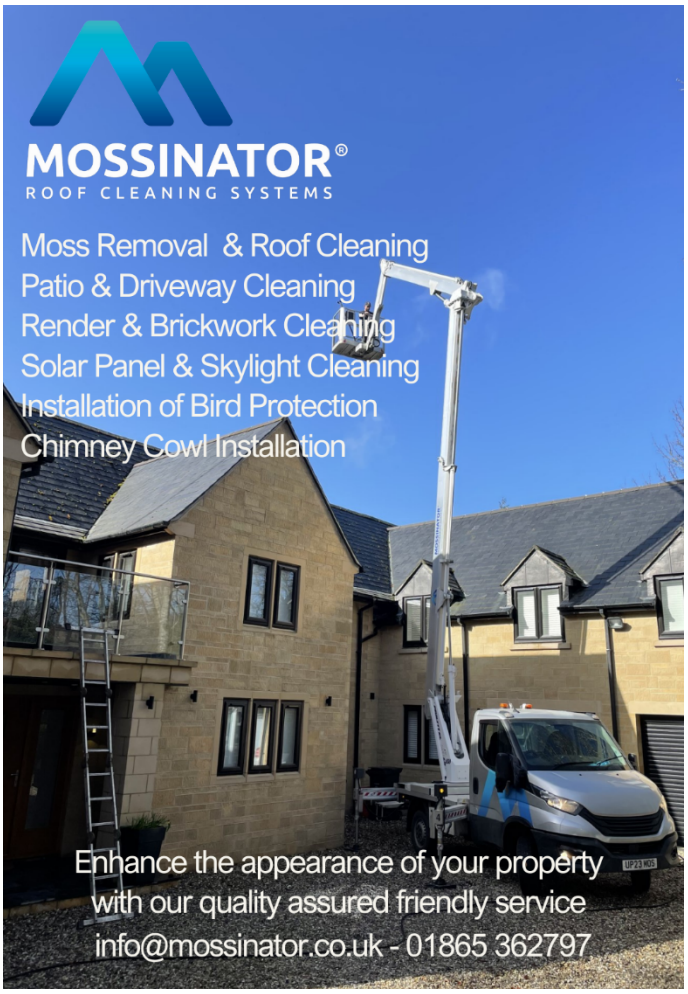
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