

DRAYTON CHRONICLE



Chronicle Information



The next Drayton Chronicle will be the March issue, edited by Bridget Pyne, 07454 778211
Key dates for next Chronicles:

Issue:	Deadline for Contributions:		Printed Chronicles available on:
	Adverts	Editor	
March	14 th Feb	17 th Feb	28 th Feb
April	14 th March	17 th March	28 th March

Notes for Contributors

Contributions to and advertisements in the Chronicle are **very welcome**. Please send us your letters, reports from village clubs and societies, articles, tips and advice, photos, suggestions etc. Please be sure always to include your name, address, and (in case clarification is needed) your phone number. Without names we will usually not print an item at all. The editor reserves the right to place, edit, shorten or even reject contributions as required.

Please send your contributions by email to: editor@draytonchronicle.net

Advertisement requests should be sent to: advertising@draytonchronicle.net

If email is not possible, please place your contribution, either typed or handwritten, in the Chronicle box outside Vickery's Hardware Store on Drayton Green, or post to Vickery's, 5 The Green, Drayton, Abingdon, Oxon. OX14 4JA.

After the deadlines, only urgent items will be considered for inclusion and then only if emailed, or delivered directly to the editor's house, by the Wednesday following the deadline.

Advertising charges: for single Block Advert (approx. 9cm x 4.5 cm):-

Advertiser Category	1 insert	3 inserts	6 inserts	12 inserts
Drayton Resident	£6	£16	£31	£60
Non-Drayton Resident	£7	£19	£37	£72

Double-sized adverts (approx. 9cm X 9cm) are charged at twice the above rates. All advertising MUST be paid for in advance, either electronically, in cash or by cheque made payable to 'The Drayton Chronicle' and placed in the box at, or sent to, Vickery's. Requests for advertisements should (preferably) be emailed to Stephen Fearnley, the Chronicle advertising manager (advertising@draytonchronicle.net), or placed in the box at Vickery's. If you wish to discuss your requirements, please phone Stephen on 01235 531347. Note: deadline for ads is the Friday before the deadline for contributions (see top of page).

DISCLAIMER: This Journal is published in good faith and great care is taken in its completion. The organisers of the DRAYTON CHRONICLE, and its Agents, therefore accept no responsibility for OPINIONS EXPRESSED, nor for the validity of any ADVERTISEMENT, nor for any EFFECTS ARISING WHATSOEVER.

Advertising Price Rise

Drayton Chronicle prices to advertisers have remained the same for at least 10 years, however, we are now having to announce a small increase of approximately 15% in the price we charge for all advertisements, due to an increase in our costs (all staff time is free of charge, as ever). We believe this still represents great value for money, with the price of a single (1/12 page) advert rising from £6 to £7 from April 2025.

Please contact our Advertising Manager, Stephen Fearnley, (advertising@draytonchronicle.net) for further information, if required.

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High Street, Milton
Sunday Service: 10.30 am
Local contacts: Geoff or Jean Caudle, 531409

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Church Secretary: Mrs Jayne Henderson.....Tel. 522161

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Administrator	Alison Bampton	admin@damascusparish.org 01235 847179

The church is open daily, **Sun-Sat 10.00 am- 3.00 pm**

REGULAR SERVICES:

Sunday 8.00 am Holy Communion (BCP) on 3rd Sunday of the month only.

Sunday 9.30 am Regular Sunday Service

Thursday 9.45 am Holy Communion (1st and 3rd Thursdays), Celtic Morning Prayer (2nd and 4th Thursdays)

Everyone is welcome



Every Fourth Sunday of the month, we have our Morning Praise Service! With sung worship led by our worship band. Do come along and join us!



Follow us on Facebook for online updates about services and events!

Search:

St Peter's Church, Drayton, Abingdon
or scan the QR code below:



REGULAR ACTIVITIES:

Knit and Natter - All are welcome for our Knit and Natter on the **first Monday** of the month, 2 – 4 pm. No need to be a knitter if you'd just like a natter!

Bellringing Practice

Every Monday evening 7:30pm

Tuesday Connect - We have started having tea, coffee and biscuit afternoons on the **first Tuesday** of the month, still from 2.30 – 4.00 pm. We look forward to welcoming as many of you as possible.

Pebbles Baby and Toddler Group

Wednesday mornings 10.00 am – 11.30 am (term-time only)
If you have a baby or toddler, you would be so welcome to join us. We meet in Church. For more information, please contact Katy or Cheryl draytonpebbles@hotmail.com

ST PETER'S LETTER

From the DAMASCUS Ministry Team...

Dear Friends,

As I write this, the church is in the season of Epiphany. Sandwiched between Christmas and Easter, it would be easy to overlook this part of the church calendar. However, Epiphany includes the celebration of two significant events from the Bible: the baptism of Christ and Jesus' first miracle.

The baptism symbolises the start of the ministry of Jesus, a point at which 'heaven was opened' with the Holy Spirit descending and the voice of God proclaiming Jesus to be God's son. Soon after that the first miracle happened. It took place at a wedding in Cana in Galilee where Jesus turned water into wine. Other than showing Jesus to be a great party guest, these two events represent the start of a journey for Jesus. It is a journey of faith that so many people across the world continue to experience.

This faith journey continues throughout our lives whatever our faith looks like. It is a journey of learning, of acceptance and, most importantly, of knowing the presence of God in our world as demonstrated by the events remembered in Epiphany. It is a journey that the Church in its various forms helps us to face. This is despite the mistakes that are made which further emphasize the need for the presence of God. This need for God and for the companionship of those also on a faith journey is part of the reason we meet on a Sunday; to spend time together and to reflect and recharge spiritually within the busyness of life.

If the thought of such a pit-stop appeals to you, please do come and visit whether on a Sunday morning or at another time. Our church is a place where over the centuries people on a similar journey have found peace and rest. I cannot promise any wine-related miracles, but I can guarantee a reminder of how God is with us wherever our journey takes us.

With prayers and best wishes,

Reverend Dov Whittle

PARISH REGISTER

Funeral

19th December 2024 Philip Alan Hunt

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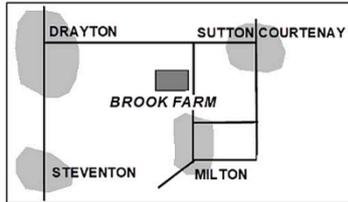


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GARD News Update for February 2025

JOIN GARD! GARD is going from strength to strength. Membership is growing as people respond to our publicity. The GARD &

CPRE petition has (19th January) over **5065 signatures** – let's take it to 6000 next month!

Thames Water continues to attend Parish Council meetings in the area, most recently Hanney on January 9th. At this meeting residents and Parish Council (notably Stephen McKechnie, the PC Chairman) and Jim Stagg, editor of the Hanney News, asked Thames Water some difficult questions about water levels, bund breaches and make-believe plans.

Not yet a member? Please join GARD. We need support for GARD to be stated as clearly and publicly as possible. Please join and be counted with us. You do not have to find time to assist; we welcome offers of help but that is a bonus for us.

Current legal actions: after the claim submitted on 19th November by CPRE and SAFERWaterS, GARD is still waiting to hear from the Judge about the claim for a Judicial Review (see the January News for full details about SAFERWaterS and the legal submission).

All GARD members may join the sister company SAFERWaterS - email for an application form gard.secretary@gmail.com. There is no charge but some paperwork.

Clear actions for us all now:

- Join GARD if you are not yet a member. Email gard.secretary@gmail.com
- Sign the petition if you have not yet done so here's the link [Stop Thames Water's costly mega-reservoir – fix the leaks! | 38 Degrees](#)
- Email the secretary for a bright poster to display in a home or car window, or to give to friends. gard.secretary@gmail.com
- Write to your MP:
Olly Glover MP (Didcot and Wantage) olly.glover.mp@parliament.uk
Layla Moran MP (Oxford West and Abingdon) layla.moran.mp@parliament.uk
Charlie Maynard MP (West Oxfordshire) charlie.maynard.mp@parliament.uk
- Write to your Councillors (see GARD website for details) and Parish Council Chair. Please copy GARD into your letters email: gard.secretary@gmail.com

While we're waiting for the courts, let's make a noise!

Numbers matter: any politician considering this will want to know our membership numbers and our petition signatures – please tell your friends about GARD and make your opposition plain.

LETTER FROM WESTMINSTER



Dear all

My warmest wishes for the new year. It was wonderful to join in local social and festive occasions such as the switching on of Christmas lights.

Before parliament ended, I was able to address ministers about important matters. These included: how local communities can benefit from clean energy schemes, the need for improvements in services provided by coroners following the sudden deaths of those with epilepsy, and the need to address electoral reform. Some responses were more helpful than others! I was able to speak in debates about the problems faced by those with disabilities, shared concerns raised by poor estate management, and championed the BBC (which I am sure many of us watched and listened to over Christmas).

The Transport Select committee meet to hold the Department of Transport to account. Two key areas discussed have been rail services and infrastructure, and the backlog of driving tests, which so many constituents have aired concerns about.

Flooding remains a significant concern. I chaired a meeting with Thames Water and the local councils to facilitate working together. I will continue to provide updates about this vital piece of work as we need to see real improvements.

Over the winter months, I have been updated about the FCC site just down the road from Milton. I continue to monitor the situation, and I'm grateful for the work Peter Stevens continues to do. I'm sure many of you now know this, but if there are further odour issues, please report them to the Environment Agency's hotline via 0800 80 70 60.

My team provides support for all our constituents. Please contact me if I can help, or if you would like me to attend a local event or meet with a local organisation. My parliamentary email address is olly.glover.mp@parliament.uk

If you use social media, you can follow me for more regular updates on Facebook:
<https://www.facebook.com/OllyGloverLD/> and Bluesky - as I have moved away from X/Twitter: [@ollyglover.bsky.social](https://bsky.app/profile/ollyglover.bsky.social)

I look forward to meeting as many as of you as possible in 2025.

Best wishes
Olly
Olly Glover MP



Is 2025 the year for you to do something Special?

Are you looking for a new challenge in 2025?

Maybe you're looking for an opportunity to give something back to the community, or make a positive impact for someone who might be experiencing the worst day of their life. Maybe you'd like to push yourself and develop new skills and confidence.

You could find all of this, and more, by volunteering as a special constable with Thames Valley Police.

Special constables are volunteer police officers. As a Special, you wear the same uniform, carry the same equipment and hold the same power of arrest as your regular police officer colleagues.

In this unique role you will learn more about life and human nature than most people will ever see. You will need to contribute at least 18 hours per month, at times which fit around your life – whether that's child care, education, work or other commitments – we make your shifts work.

Discover more about how you can play a vital role in helping to protect our communities, and learn about some of our current Specials in their own words by visiting our website >

<https://tvpcareers.co.uk/roles/special-constables/>





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COUNTY COUNCIL REPORT



Dear Readers

Pot Holes

We are now in the midst of winter and freeze-thaw is giving our roads a beating again. I saw the County's special pothole filling machine past my home last week – if you see it, it is an excellent invention, as it allows highways to fill potholes on the go, literally taking minutes per pothole, avoiding the need for road closures, and enabling the team to do whole roads in a day. I watched as they did some terrible holes close to my home and talked to them. A mobile arm in front of the truck is positioned over the hole, then a machine blasts fire at the hole first to heat up and melt the surrounding tarmac, the truck moves forward and drops fresh hot tarmac mix in the hole, then the roller at the back of the truck compounds the tarmac, binding it to the heated surrounding tarmac and levels it off. Two men control traffic around the truck for the 2-3 minutes this takes, then the truck moves on to the next hole up the road. I don't think the repairs are any more climate resilient than the old method, so holes may open up again as is often seen, but at least this repairs the roads much more quickly - a pleasure to see in action.

HIF1 Road and New Bridge

On other news, the HIF1 road and new bridge over the Thames between Sutton Courtenay and Appleford, enabling traffic to travel more easily and quickly from the A415 to the A34, has been given planning permission after several years of deliberation by the Secretary of State. The project now moves to detailed design, with more consultation locally to mitigate remaining concerns as much as possible, before starting work in 2026 with a planned completion date of early 2028. I know opinion is divided on the road, depending on where you live and travel, however, the road does provide an opportunity to improve routes for cycling and walking locally, as well as diverting HGVs and heavy traffic away from smaller roads, and it will accommodate extra traffic from new and planned developments around Didcot. It is well intended.

Reservoir

Closer to Drayton, Thames Water have been developing a trial site for the disputed SESRO reservoir. They have created a temporary access road from Hanney Road, removed the topsoil, and created a borrow pit to extract clay to test its suitability for the reservoir. In March, they plan to build a 3-metre-high embankment to test the strength and sealing capabilities of the clay for holding water in the reservoir. I plan to visit the site in the spring to report on their work and plans. I still believe the strategic plan should be to manage our current water supplies and flood resilience better across the Thames basin before building new reservoirs which raise risks rather than reduce them, and I will work with Andy Cooke and others locally to further better alternatives.

Lastly

Lastly, the government is engaging with local councils on plans to devolve power from Westminster locally. Both County and Vale of White Horse District councils have expressed support, as in theory locally devolved decisions means they are more likely to suit local communities. However, it is not yet clear what this means or how this will work, so I will report back in due course as it becomes clearer.

In the meantime, wrap up warm, check your homes and pipes are insulated, and good luck weathering out the winter months. The council publishes a [Snow Guide](#) (search: Oxfordshire Snow Guide) which may be helpful.

Kind regards, Peter

Councillor Peter Stevens, Sutton Courtenay & Marcham Division

Hedgerow Highways

Hedges are a vital part of our local nature, providing shelter and resources for many species of mammals, insects, and birds (from hibernating hedgehogs to the smallest of beetles). They're crucial wildlife corridors that allow safe travel between isolated habitats. The benefits that hedgerows provide for biodiversity are endless. In a heavily fragmented landscape, hedgerows link up valuable habitats for wildlife such as woodland, grassland and ponds. This connects populations that would otherwise be isolated and vulnerable and allows relocation to better habitat. Over 100 priority species utilise hedgerows for a variety of reasons such as for shelter, food, or navigation. Birds and small mammals nest in hedges, bats use hedgerows as foraging grounds and navigational markers, and reptiles hide in the long tussocky margins associated with hedgerows.

November through to March is the best time of year to plant new hedges.

The first step is to acquire your roots. In Oxfordshire we recommend planting Blackthorn, Spindle, Buckthorn, Guelder Rose, Hawthorn, Wild Privet, Cherry Plum, or Hazel. Plant 4 or 5 plants per metre, about 25cm apart using the slit planting method, ensuring all fibrous roots are completely buried in the soil. To see a detailed tutorial of this planting method, head to our website where you can watch a demonstration from expert Nigel Adams.

<https://www.wildoxfordshire.org.uk/guidance/hedgerows-guidance>

Aftercare for hedgerows is crucial. Keep weeds and grass away from the hedge plants for the first 2-3 years to give them plenty of space to absorb moisture and light. Thoroughly water the plants during dry spells. Compost can be very helpful to maintain vigour due to the competition for nutrients between such closely situated plants. Try to trim your hedge annually in the first three to five years to encourage bushy growth. Once your hedgerow is fully established (approximately 5 years) you can trim every year or every two or three years but make sure you don't trim your hedge to the same place every cut. More detailed aftercare information is also available on our website. Good luck with your new hedges!

New Year – New Nature!

Why not make some **green-themed resolutions** this new year! Perhaps yours is to cultivate new hedge life. Maybe you're going to reduce your meat intake, find eco-friendly cleaning products, or make your garden more wildlife friendly using native plants. There are endless ways to make a difference!

Why not sign up to our monthly email Bulletin, visit our website, and follow us on social media for the latest nature news and ways you can join others in helping nature in Oxfordshire

<https://www.wildoxfordshire.org.uk/news>

Jess Bower – Wild Oxfordshire Hedgerows & Partnerships Officer

Wild Oxfordshire – what do we do?

We help catalyse change by identifying conservation needs and supporting nature recovery action across the County. We collaborate with numerous individuals, communities and organisations; offering expertly curated and inspiring information, bespoke advice, and nature-based solutions.



Matthew Barber
Your voice in
Thames Valley

Matthew Barber is Police & Crime Commissioner for Thames Valley, working with the police to help drive down crime locally.

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Cutting Rural Crime

Rural crime - specifically defined as things like the theft of farm machinery, equipment, damage to crops and offences such as hare coursing - can have a huge impact on farming businesses, not to mention the real issues of safety for individuals. Thankfully rural crime is falling locally. Across Thames Valley it is down 24% over the last 12 months and in southern Oxfordshire it's down 33% but that's not by accident.

Last year I secured additional funding from the Home Office for work focussed specifically in Oxfordshire. Thames Valley Police have teamed up with local District Councils, forming a Rural Crime Partnership and delivering the following:

- Using undercover cameras and off-road bikes, officers can now better monitor remote areas and track down offenders who think they can't be reached.
- Farmers have received free security reviews and DNA marking kits for their equipment, making it much harder for thieves to get away and easier to return stolen items if something happens.
- Rural Crime Advisor: A dedicated advisor was recruited, to be out in the community, offering helpful advice, meeting with local farmers and businesses, and keeping rural industries safer.
- Tackling Fly-Tipping: New surveillance tools are helping councils catch and prosecute those who dump waste, keeping rural areas cleaner and more beautiful.

More officers have been recruited to the Rural Crime Taskforce, making it one of the largest and certainly one of the most effective in the country. They recognise that many of these offences are part of organised crime. The taskforce are identifying and focussing on the most dangerous and prolific offenders. In fact, they have been so successful that whilst there has been a reduction in crime here, other police areas have seen increases as criminals target other places. None of us are safe, unless we're all safe; so, we've now established a Southeast Partnership Against Rural Crime - joining together neighbouring police forces so that we can target criminals all the way from the farms they target to the ports where they try to export stolen goods.

With these measures, our rural areas are becoming safer places thanks to the hard work and dedication of Thames Valley Police officers.



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Deborah

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Unfortunately, I had to get rid of my cook but better things to come in the near future watch this space 😊



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DISTRICT COUNCIL REPORT



Dear all, and I hope you all had a great Christmas and a Happy New Year.

The End of the District Council

Local Government reorganisation suddenly came out of nowhere and dominated our agenda due to the announcement from Government abolishing District Councils in future and requiring rapid "Unitarisation" (and then clumping these new Unitary Councils into Combined Authorities to have a single regional Mayor).

Becoming a Unitary means abolishing the District Councils and County Council in favour of a single layer of government – responsible for everything that the two separate layers did before. On the one hand, it places responsibility for everything in one body, so it's easier to find who to poke to find things out and get things done, and stops things falling between the gaps. On the other hand, it can cause overload at one level and, if the Unitary in question is too large, it can make it too remote from the residents. In the interests of retaining as much control over our destiny as possible, we've asked to move forwards quickly (in the hope that doing so will allow us to make decisions over it – if we're dragged along, the decisions will get made for us). This could mean delaying the County Council elections, due this May. In the letter sent, the assembled leaders stated that they have significant concerns over that, but would accept a postponement only if Government can commit to the ambitious timescale of elections to the replacement Unitaries in May of next year by the latest, even if these would be "Shadow Councils" until the existing District Councils are wound up.

As it stands, I suspect that timescale would be too rapid for Government to commit to. The last time I spoke to my colleagues at County, they expected that County elections would occur on schedule this year and were planning based on that.

Previously, we at VoWHDC have already been working towards Unitarization with South Oxfordshire, as our combined size (300,000 residents and climbing) was pretty much bang on the approved size for Unitaries – a good balance between being large enough for efficiency savings and small enough to be close to the people electing us (Oxfordshire, as a unitary of 750,000 residents, would have more population than no fewer than three US states, which can lead to concerns about weakening the link between the people and their representatives should this be the lowest level of principal local government).

Accordingly, the VoWHDC councillors' overall preference would be NOT to form a single huge unitary by simply merging all District Councils into the County Council (albeit with some disagreement), but Government have now changed the lower limit to, "around 500,000 people." We're therefore exploring the feasibility of a Vale/South Oxfordshire/West Berkshire unitary authority of 465,000 people - essentially recreating historic Berkshire from before the 1973 reorganisation.

Above that, as mentioned, we have the intent for Combined Mayoral Authorities. It looks like the two most likely possibilities are a Thames Valley one (following the TVP boundaries) or a BOB (Berkshire/Oxfordshire/Buckinghamshire) one, following the NHS boundaries. There's no further information yet. I'll update you when I hear more about either proposal.

The Local Plan, and housing numbers.

Regardless of all of the reorganisation upheaval, our Joint Local Plan is going through its official independent examination (<https://www.southandvale.gov.uk/joint-local-plan-2041-examination/>). All looks encouraging. The new and higher housing numbers the Government are mandating for each authority have now been released and can be seen here (<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c8i9j04l7mo>); our figures are already higher than the new ones issued, so it shouldn't be too much of an issue (touch wood). Checking with the Planning Department, we do indeed look to be fine with land supply at the moment).

Flooding

Flooding continues to be a significant issue, and it was very disappointing that the Environment Agency (EA) have decided NOT to go forward with the Thames Valley Flood Scheme on the grounds that it is "not considered cost effective." We passed a motion in the December Council to write to the Secretary of State to review the level of resources spent on flood prevention and mitigation and to the EA to urgently identify what CAN be done to reduce the growing issue of flooding (ironically, the EA published a report just before our Council meeting stating that the problem of flooding was greater than they'd understood and growing, which makes their earlier decision seem even dafter).

Reservoir vs Transfers

We've noticed (thanks to GARD being on the case) that OfWat have published their own costing of Severn-Thames-Transfer (STT) versus the SESRO megareservoir, and STT comes in at about half the price (and that's with SESRO costing being "optimistic," with the estimated price being a fraction of the price of either of the Anglian reservoirs that are further down the path of planning and scoping, despite them each having only a third of the capacity of SESRO).

Dividing the capital cost of construction over the number of households in Thames Water's area, SESRO (if it miraculously came in on Thames Water's budget) would cost each household £666 to construct (before running costs). If we use the more realistic Anglian reservoir prices as a scale (and, say, double their cost – which would be pretty fair for a reservoir of triple the size), it'd cost each of our households £1,750.

The Severn Thames Transfer – far more effective, providing more water, built far more quickly and at much less disruption (but less commercially attractive) would cost only £384 per household instead.

I've noticed that Anglian Water are looking at completing a water transfer pipeline of far greater length (205 miles) than STT as soon as next year - and even after "several delays" it will have gone from announcement in 2019 to completion in 2026 at a cost of £500 million (compared to the several billion of SESRO), which makes the projected STT costs from OfWat look not just realistic, but possibly higher than they would be in reality.

(<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c4gxzkzjpwjo#:~:text=A%20water%20company%20has%20said,from%20North%20Lincolnshire%20to%20Essex.>).

Community Hub – support

Don't forget that if you need support or advice, you can contact the Community Hub here:

Tel: 01235 422600

Email: communitysupport@southandvale.gov.uk

Website: whitehorsedc.gov.uk/costofliving

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PARISH COUNCIL REPORT



The Parish Council met on **14th January**.

We wish everyone a happy new year. Let's hope we can achieve great things for Drayton in 2025!

Need for new Councillors

The PC currently has only 5 councillors out of a potential 11. We could achieve so much more with more of you on board. Councillors are volunteers, supported by a Clerk, Deputy Clerk, Caretaker and Programme Manager. We are responsible for the allocation and management of the PC element of your Council Tax.

The PC supports the maintenance and development of the allotments, the burial ground, Parish Council land, play areas, designated public open spaces and footpaths. We support many village activities and local charities. We also represent you in holding developers to account so that we get what has been promised for the village. We are responsible for the delivery of the new sports facilities at Walnut Meadows. If you are curious about what is going on in the village and want to participate in shaping future services, please consider joining us. You are very welcome to attend one of the monthly meetings to see what goes on, alternatively please contact any of the councillors or council staff to have a chat about the work. In terms of commitment, you would be expected to attend council meetings, but other than that you can do as much or as little as fits into your life.

Manor Farm

The PC is in consultation with the Vale and with Cala Homes about taking on the responsibility for the public open space. The PC has offered to take over the space now and to waive any further maintenance period. However, the Vale are insisting that we adhere to a 12-month maintenance period before the PC can assume responsibility. This is not an issue in itself, but the PC is not in agreement with the current policy of managing hemlock through regular use of pesticides which we see as highly detrimental to the environment. Even if we are prevented from taking over the public open space at this point, we have requested that Cala cease spraying and have offered to take responsibility for managing the emergence of hemlock. We await a response from the Vale to see if this is acceptable to them.

Walnut Meadow

The Planning application covering the Multi Use Games area (MUGA) and Pavilion was due to be determined by the Vale of White Horse on 30th December. This has been delayed and at the time of writing we are still awaiting a decision. This is needed so that the MUGA contractor can schedule the work.

A feasibility report has been commissioned to examine the domestic water services, heating, ventilation, lighting and above-ground drainage for the Pavilion.

Footpaths

We have started the process of inviting quotes to further upgrade the surface of the footpath that leads down past the old scarp yard to Gypsy Lane. Part of this footpath was resurfaced a few years ago but wet weather over the last couple of years has badly affected the rest of the path. We have already appointed Drayton Construction to upgrade the section of Gypsy Lane leading to Oday Hill. Together these upgrades will provide year-round access for walkers and cyclists via Oday Hill to Abingdon.

continued...

The first phase of the work is planned for this spring with the remainder of the work, subject to satisfactory costings and various approvals, hopefully taking place in the summer.

Grass cutting

The grass cutting contractor is currently out for tender. If you are interested, please see the details in the advert on page 12 or check the Drayton Parish Council Facebook page. The closing date is 14th February.

Traffic calming

Oxfordshire County Council's statutory consultation closed on 3rd January. We are currently awaiting an update from them. This relates to crossings at High Street and Walnut Meadow.

Parish Council website

We have a new website! Please have a look at <https://draytonparish.gov.uk/>

Future meetings

Normally we meet on the second Tuesday of each month.

However, for the next two months we will be meeting on the second Monday of every month.

The next meeting is at

The Caudwell Day Centre, Gravel Lane,
at 7.00 pm

on **Monday 10th February**

Elaine Wade

For further Parish Council info.....

.....please see www.DraytonVillage.co.uk for Agendas, Minutes and Papers for the Parish Council, as well as details of current PC Committees and Working Groups.

Here you will also find archives of The Drayton Chronicle, History of Drayton, Village Information, photographs and more. This site now contains a link to the new website mentioned above: draytonparish.gov.uk

Spring Clean

The Vale of White Horse District Council are due to carry out a deep cleanse operation in Drayton on 3rd March 2025.

What is included:

- litter picking
- sweeping
- removing weeds and/or moss on pavements.

What is not included:

- weed spraying
- general gardening
- cutting grass or vegetation
- remove weeds and moss that is on roads.

Please note, they only clear land to which the public is permitted access and that is under the direct control of the District Council.

Drayton Parish Council would like to hear from you if there is anywhere in particular, in the village, that you would like to be cleaned. Please contact clerk@draytonpc.org

LOCAL GROUPS and CLUBS

Drayton Table Tennis Club

Hopefully everyone had a good Christmas and Santa gave them everything they asked for! At club we've seen some new bats and also a range of new sports clothing is being displayed by the members.

Coaching sessions on Mondays continue to flourish, with a good mix of young and old attending. We will have to start a waiting list if numbers continue to increase but it's clear coach Jonathan is doing a great job.

In the league I can report in Division 2 the Buzzards have lost their first match! Their scalp was taken by our own Corinthians 7-3! Player of the match winning his three singles was Sergio Garcia Castillo. He was backed by Captain Jonathan Cattell and Lishuang Cao who won 2 and 1 respectively. Jonathan and Sergio joined together to win the doubles. The result hasn't affected the Buzzards' runaway lead at the top though! Corinthians move to 5th in the table. Dingos are in 7th in the 11 teams league.

In division 3 the Flamingos and Eagles are in 4th and 5th places with 2 points separating them. With 9 matches left each it's anyone's guess which will finish higher.

Artisans in Division 1 are showing a very symmetrical listing with 6 wins 2 draws and 6 defeats in their 14 matches to date. It's a very strong division with some highly ranked Table Tennis England players spread around the teams. It's also good to report Rob Hudson is back and playing well after a spell out with injury.

The Handicap Shield and Bidmead Cup competitions are now underway. Runners up last season, our Bidmead team have a bye to round 2. The Handicap Shield is spread over three separate weeks in January, February and March. There are 8 groups and all our 6 teams will each play 2 or three opponents. Winning their mini-league will see progress to the knockout stages.

John Gould
Chairman

WI Report

For our last meeting of the year, we again welcomed Jack Matthews. This time he demonstrated a table decoration; it was amazing. With many types of greenery, some just leaves and some with berries, the display was finished off with some beautiful flowers to add colour to the display. We thanked Jack with a gift from us for his amazing demonstration. The display was won by a member to take home. This was followed by hot dogs and small cakes with a hot punch to toast Christmas. Before we left, we had to choose a gift from the Santa sack. This is a long-standing tradition which causes much laughter.

In January, quite a few members went to the Wheatsheaf Inn in Hendred for our birthday celebration meal. I didn't attend but saw the photos, all looked to be having a good time.

Our next meeting is a talk by a representative of a local food bank. We will, I'm sure, understand more about the bank's origin and its purpose, and the service they give to many grateful people. It has been suggested that we all bring a donation or two for the bank. All donations must be non-perishable tinned or dried types that can be stored without spoiling. It will be for local people to help out, as needed, when needed. If you want to join us and find out more about us and the Abingdon Food Bank, come along to the Caudwell Centre, Gravel Lane, on Thursday, 13th February at 7.30 pm.

Ann

DRAYTON

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Anne Whitehead
ADYP Secretary



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draytonparish.gov.uk

VILLAGE GRASS CUTTING CONTRACT
REQUEST FOR QUOTATION

Drayton Parish Council is responsible for keeping Drayton village neat and tidy and ensuring that the Parish Council's public open spaces are well maintained. This requires regular cutting of grass areas owned or managed by the Parish Council.

The Parish Council invites interested parties to provide a quotation for undertaking grass cutting work initially for a twelve month period with the possibility of a three year contract.

For more information and to send a quote, please email: clerk@draytonpc.org.

Please note that all formal quotes will be reviewed by the 14 February, with interested parties informed of the outcome by the end of February.

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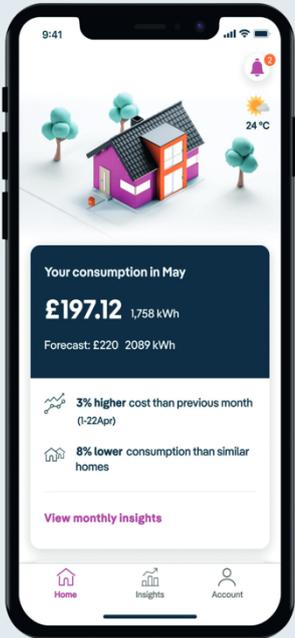
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Obituary

Richard Williams

1952-2024



During the last few years, we might see Richard walking round the village but then his walks became less frequent, then slower. In November we learned the very sad news that he had died in the Churchill Hospital.

Drayton has much to thank him for. For ten years he devoted himself to village affairs, serving on the Parish Council (latterly as chairman), on the committee of the Neighbourhood Development Plan and in a regular column of the Drayton Chronicle in which he diligently explained the processes and outcomes of changes that would affect us all. As a result of Richard and his team, Drayton was spared the excessive development with which we first seemed threatened, ensured that improved village amenities were built into the Plan, and when it came to writing the necessarily detailed planning document itself, it was Richard who did much of the heavy lifting. Quite rightly, all this outstanding community commitment was recognised by Oxfordshire County Council in a Public Service Award.

After university, Richard embarked on a career as a teacher in Birmingham but after a few years he left to join the Fire Service because, as he joked, he wanted to do something safer. He worked for Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service for 22 years, taking a two-year sabbatical in the 1990s to teach in Botswana. In 2001 he became Station Officer at Rewley Road Fire Station in Oxford and, until his retirement in 2007, he was part of a team undertaking petroleum and explosives inspections in Oxfordshire.

In 2001 he and Janet moved to Drayton along with 56 boxes of books, to which he added more at the rate of three or four a week. I worked with him on the Neighbourhood Development Plan and during that time I thought I had got to know him pretty well – but I had no idea about all those books. Although I had been to his house many times I was never invited into his study and now I know why. There was simply no room for me.

Richard was a big man. Big enough to deal courteously and patiently with the passions that sometimes attended the fortnightly public meetings leading up to the success of the Neighbourhood Development Plan, and the monthly public meetings of the Parish Council. He was a genial companion and generous with his time.

Last year Richard and Janet were delighted when their family relocated from South Africa to Drayton. Richard particularly enjoyed sharing his love of reading with Zoe.



By
 Andrew Bax

LETTERS

David Hale

I should like to write a few words about David Hale who passed away on the 19th December. He was well known to many in the village as a true gentleman and very community-minded, being a member of several clubs and societies namely both churches, Tuesday Connexions Thursday Baptist Coffee Morning, and Wednesday Badminton Club where he played until about 18 months ago and continued as treasurer and made us tea each week. David was Drayton's number one unofficial Taxi driver, ferrying many grateful elderly senior citizens to their appointments. We shall all miss him dearly.

*from Jayne Henderson and all his friends at
Drayton Baptist Chapel.*

Dear Editor

I was very sorry to see a letter in the November Chronicle saying that the British Legion could not sell poppies on the Green because of the weather. Our forces could not choose what weather they went out in.

Sheila Cook



New Authentic Indian Restaurant for Drayton

The grand opening of **Drayton Dosa Spices** took place on Friday 24th January. The former Wheatsheaf pub has been transformed into an Indian restaurant which is open seven days a week, and also offers a collection and home delivery service.

For those interested, a dosa is a thin savoury pancake made from a fermented batter of ground black gram and rice. A glance at the menu reveals a wide range of fillings and toppings for the dosas, as well as many other more well-known Indian dishes such as tikka masalas, baltis, jalfrezi, kormas etc.

For further information, see the advert on page 17.

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Dear Editor,

I am writing on behalf of the Drayton Parish Council on a recruitment drive, as we are becoming a rarer and rarer breed, and at this rate will reach a state of extinction without new members. With all the new houses that have been built in Drayton, maybe there are a few brave residents who are willing to stick their necks out and join us. After all, where would we be without a workable Parish Council? We are only just quorate. One more resignation (heaven forbid) and we would be unable to function.

Let me point out where we would be without a PC: we would be shoulder high in grass on all the spaces run by the PC, including the Millenium Green, the Village Green and the recreation ground behind the Village Hall; we would be knee deep in litter; the footpaths would be impassable; there would be a huge pile of refuse dumped in the cemetery; the hedges would be wild uncontrollable bushes; traffic would be racing through the village with no zebra crossings, humps or speed limits; there would be no grants for DAMASCUS, the Drayton Chronicle, the Village Hall, the football club, the bowling club or Abingdon Bridge; there would be nobody to ensure that all the snagging issues are sorted out with the various developers in the village; nobody to oversee the establishing of a playing field at Walnut Meadows or the erecting of a sports pavilion; there would be no entry signs, walnuts or mosaic in the Village Hall, with no prospect of future art projects; we would be sliding around in dog poo with no bins or collections etc. etc. I could go on, but I daresay I've conveyed the idea. We do a very valuable job to make your lives run easily in a pleasant and civilised environment.

We are a happy group from all walks of life, and though I know that many of you are busy with jobs and family (me included!), it might be worth you considering putting aside a little time to contribute to the running of your community. I joined the PC partly because I was asked to, but also because I wanted to give back something to the community (not just take things for granted), and to have a say about how things are run. It's all very well complaining about decisions that are made, but having a say in those decisions is vital in my mind.

If you are fair-minded and unbiased and would like a new dimension to your life, to be a useful member of the village, and to get to know your fellow villagers and feel part of a community, please give it a try, and join the PC. If you don't like it, you can always change your mind! We aren't pompous, boring or petty, and will be very welcoming. Join us and discover a new extension to your life!

The best point of contact for everyone who would like to apply for a position on the Parish Council would be the Clerk - clerk@draytonpc.org - and I look forward to seeing you all at the next meeting at the Caudwell Centre, Gravel Lane on Monday February 10th at 7pm. I'll put out extra chairs providing we have enough!

Thank you in advance, from a rare breed.

*Pervin Shahin
Drayton PC*



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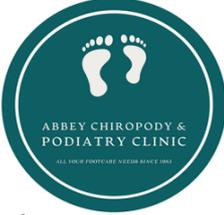
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2025 EVENTS FOR DIARIES



Oxford Literary Festival 2025

29th MARCH – 6th APRIL

29 March to 06 April
Sheldonian Theatre

The Oxford Literary Festival is a world-class literary event that brings together leading authors and public figures in a magnificent setting in the central university area of Oxford each year.



Oxford Town and Gown 2025 (Bidwells Oxford 10k)

11th MAY

11 May
Oxford University Parks



Oxford Half Marathon 2025

13 October

13th OCTOBER

Broad Street & University Parks



Oxford Open Doors 2025

13 & 14 September

Venues across Oxford

13th/14th SEPTEMBER

Oxford Open Doors is a weekend that celebrates Oxford's heritage and culture by giving everyone the chance to explore the colleges, university buildings and green spaces together with a range of heritage sites across the city – many of which are not usually open to members of the public.



Foodies Festival Oxford 2025

23 to 25 August

South Park, Oxford

23rd – 25th AUGUST



Oxfordshire Artweeks Festival 2025

3rd – 26th MAY

03 to 26 May
Various venues



St Giles' Fair 2025

08 & 09 September

St Giles', Oxford

8th/9th SEPTEMBER

For further info visit:

<https://theoxfordmagazine.com/annual-events-in-oxford/>

DRAYTON HALL NEWS



We've another **ANTIQUES Fair, Sunday Feb 2nd**, 9am to about 3pm, and a few new stalls apparently, that's plus Kathy Head running her excellent value cafe for one of her good causes (lovely breakfast, or perhaps just a bacon sarniel!). Another one on March 2nd too.

Grateful thanks to **Steve & Jackie**, who've been running the Fairs since they started here (2021 – doesn't time fly?!), but have now handed over to a new organiser.

We've another **JEWELLERY VALUATION** day, this time a **MONday**, (Feb 3rd), 1pm to about 4pm. Last time he had a steady stream of customers, and I'm told **offers very fair prices**. That's all sorts of items, brooches, watches, (working or not!), rings, chains, etc, he does a leaflet drop round the village ("Wanted – Gold & Silver") a couple of days before the event, with far more details about items of interest.

Oh, and another 'good-cause' **Craft Fair** this month, it's Saturday Feb 8th, (11am to 4pm) and in aid of the JR Diabetes team, look out for ads on the local F'book?

I hear that the sessions of **KEEP FIT with FAYE**, (Fridays at 11am), have quite a crowd now, but still room for a few more, aimed at the 'more mature' customer, so seated if you prefer, they're **just £6** per class and get great reviews (she runs them at several other local halls).

And our **Bowls Club** ('short mat') is looking for **a few new members**, especially the Weds evening group (other sessions are Monday & Thurs afternoons). It's a skilful game, but not too hard to pick up, and they're a friendly bunch, very big on their tea & bikkies! **WHY NOT** come and give it a try??

Tony Holmes

Waste and Recycling

Garden Waste Changes

We are introducing a new permit scheme for garden waste collections this year. This is a change to how the garden waste service is managed, and there are actions you'll need to take to continue receiving garden waste collections.

To receive garden waste collections from 1 April 2025, you must purchase a new annual permit. This will replace your direct debit.

What you need to do:

- **From late February, visit the council's website www.southandvale.gov.uk/GardenWastePermit to make a one-off, annual payment for your garden waste collections.**
- **When you get it in the post, stick your permit to the lid of your brown bin.**

You can also sign up for an online account on our website to make it easier when you purchase your next permit in 2026.

(Mostly) Hall Diary for February

All events held in Drayton Hall unless otherwise stated

To book the Hall :- bookings@draytonvh.co.uk or call Tony Holmes on (01235) 531180; see the website :- www.draytonvh.co.uk
(for other regular events, see that column)

Sun	2	9.00am	ANTIQUES FAIR (to 3pm)
Mon	3	1.00pm	Jewellery Valuation (to 4pm)
Tues	4	2.00pm	Bowls (League) Match
Sat	8	11.00am	Charity CRAFT FAIR (to 4pm)
Sun	9		Private Function (all day)
Tues	11	7.00pm	Parish Council Meeting (Caudwell DC)
Sat	15		Dog Show (private club - all day)
Mon	17	5.00pm	Chronicle Deadline (Ads = Fri 14th) (NB – see page 2 for Chron schedule)
Sat	22		Private Function (all day)
Sun	23		Private Function (all day)

'Regular Events' - IF an error, DO PLEASE tell us!

REGULARLY OCCURRING EVENTS

Weekly in Drayton Hall unless stated otherwise

NB PLEASE – if an entry is wrong – DO tell an editor (page 2)

MONDAYS [## = Small Hall in Village Hall]

2.00 pm	Short Mat Bowling Club Session
6.00 pm	Damascus Youth ## (NB – check their F'book!)
7.15 pm	Badminton (Looking for NEW Members!!)
7.45 pm	Bell-ringing (for 1½ hours) <i>St Peter's</i>

TUESDAYS

9.30 am	Pilates (via Alexandra Merson 07788 248925)
1.45 pm	Drayton Art Group (until 4 pm) <i>Caudwell Day Centre</i>
2.30 pm	Tuesday Connect (back to 1st Tuesday!) <i>Church</i>
6.30 pm	Karate/'Dojang X' session (Sabrina 07938 537310)

WEDNESDAYS

10.00 am	Pebbles (Baby, Toddler, Carer group) <i>Church</i>
1.30 pm	Whist Drive <i>Caudwell DC</i>
1.45 pm	U3A Science/Tech, 1st Weds (07890 385931) ##
2.00 pm	Drayton Wives (Last Wednesday, most months) ##
2.00 pm	Badminton
6.30 pm	Brownies (term-time / Laura 07916 459435) ##
6.45 pm	Short Mat Bowling Club (seeking NEW members!)

THURSDAYS

9.30 am	Parent & Toddler Group
9.45 am	Holy Communion (**) <i>St Peter's Lady Chapel</i>
11.00 am	Baptist Café (to 1pm) NOW IN >> <i>Caudwell DC</i>
2.00 pm	Short Mat Bowling Club Session
2.00 pm	Crafts Group (2nd Thursday – run by U3A, but it's simple to join. Call Kate for info 01235 550486) ##
5.30 pm	Rainbows (girls 5 to 7 yrs) ##
7.30 pm	Sequence Dancing (Brian - 01235 531701)
7.30 pm	Women's Institute Meeting (2nd Thurs) <i>Caudwell DC</i>
7.30 pm	Drayton Community Choir (2nd/4th Thurs) -- Call Kay for info 01235 204187 <i>Church Room</i>

FRIDAYS

11.00 am	Keep Fit with FAYE (07815 583591)
4.15 pm	Karate/'Dojang X' sessions (07938 537310)

SUNDAYS

(**) For all the latest info re their Services (Thursday communion, & especially Sundays), PLEASE see our St Peter's Church page	
6.00 pm	Evening Service <i>Baptist Church</i>

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