

The Mouthpiece

Culham's Newsletter



Dates for your Diary

Sun 1 Dec	11am	Holy Communion	St Paul's Church	
Fri 6 Dec	8pm	Ladies Of Culham – wreath making	St Paul's Church	
Sat 7 Dec	11am til 3pm	Europa School Christmas Fayre	Europa School	
Wed 11 Dec	7.30pm	Parish Council Meeting (change of venue!)	Culham Village Pre-school and Nursery	
Sun 22 Dec	4pm	Carol Service	St Paul's Church	
Christmas Day Wed 25 Dec	10am	Christmas Day Service	St Paul's Church	
Fri 3 Jan	8pm	Ladies of Culham – Pot Luck shared dinner	St Paul's Church	
Sun 5 Jan	11am	Holy Communion	St Paul's Church	



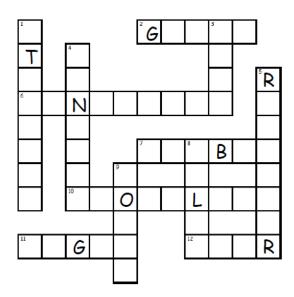
Merry Christmas Culham Village





Enjoy colouring this advent tree in on the days leading up to Christmas Day! Have a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

'Tis the Season





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ACROSS

- 1. Pumpkin or mincemeat
- 3. Santa's ride
- 6. Celebration
- 8. Newborn
- 9. Northpole crew
- 13. Word of praise
- 14. Words on a Christmas card
- 17. It's opened on Christmas

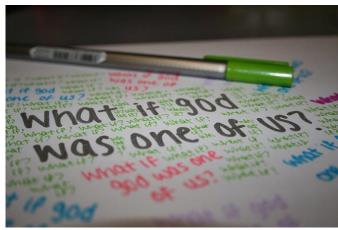
DOWN

- 1. Alternative word to 17 across
- 2. Christmas drink
- 4. Christmas dinner centerpiece
- 5. Dec. holiday
- 7. Christmas warmer
- 8. "Jingle _____ "
- 10. Christmas tree
- 11. O. Henry's "The Gift of the ____"
- 12. What carolers do
- 15. French Christmas.
- 16. Snow glider

Answers towards the back!

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Talking point by Rev'd Jane Willis



What if God was one of us? sang Joan Osborne back in 1995 (and a number of others since

Perhaps it should be a Christmas carol or anthem? (I'll have a word with the Abbey choir....)

The song continues,

then).

If God had a name, what would it be?

...If God had a face, what would it look like?

And would you want to see?

If seeing meant that you would have to believe...

At the heart of the Christmas message is the astonishing news that God has indeed become one of us. That our God is not distant from our beautiful but bewilderingly broken world – but a God who has come to us as one of us. One of my favourite authors (David Runcorn) writes that the incarnation should present no logical difficulty to us as, if human beings are created in the image of God, then we already have the kind of body God would have if he had a body. Think about that for a moment. Think about your own body. And how you feel about it. And the infinite omnipotent creator of the heavens and the earth – chose to inhabit a body just like yours, just like mine. What does that say to any of us about our attitude to our bodies? And, of course, God now has a name and a face for us. From the Old Testament unspeakable unpronounceable name of YHWH, he takes the name of Jesus. 'Christ' is not a surname – rather a title: the long promised and awaited Messiah, the anointed one, chosen one. And – is seeing believing? Or do you still have questions? The song continues,

What would you ask if you had just one question?

What would you ask God – if you had one question?

This Christmas you are warmly welcome to our Dorchester Team Christmas services – whether believing or questioning or somewhere in between. And if you have questions, come and ask us – we would love to help you explore further. Don't apologise thinking clergy are too busy – there's nothing else we'd rather have a conversation about!

A very happy and peaceful Christmas to all,

Jane

Team News

Introducing Mel Stanley – on placement with the Dorchester Team

We are delighted to announce that the Revd Mel Stanley, Assistant Curate in the benefice of Chalgrove with Berrick Salome, is deployed on placement with the Dorchester Team, with effect from Monday 4th November, ministering particularly in the parishes of the Eastern Cluster: Newington, Stadhampton with Chiselhampton, and Warborough. Mel is in the third year of her curacy and will remain under the supervision of the Revd Dr Michael Lakey as her Training Incumbent until her curacy paperwork is completed. It is hoped that her placement will then develop into a secondment, for which she will be licensed to the benefices of Dorchester and Warborough. The Revd Jane Willis is grateful to Father Michael for his generosity in enabling this placement, from which we are confident that both Mel and the Dorchester Team will benefit.



A few words from Mel:

I live in Cuddesdon with my husband, Rob, and our two dogs, Willow and Fern. We moved to Cuddesdon when I came here to study in 2020 and we have never left.

I am currently Assistant Curate in the Benefice of Chalgrove with Berrick Salome and it has been a wonderful curacy. I will be deeply sad to leave but I am also very much looking forward to being on placement with you in the Dorchester Team.

Before ordination, I was a residential property lawyer for over two decades with a brief period as an in-house lawyer at a large national charity. As part of my training for ordination, I obtained a BA in Theology, Ministry and Mission. After completing my BA and saying that I would not undertake further degree level study, I am now studying for the Canon Law MA which I am thoroughly enjoying.

Away from ministry, Rob and I are in the process of finishing off the renovations to our house which takes up a lot of our free time. I also love gardening and walking our dogs.

Introducing Claire - our 2025 curate



We are delighted to be able to introduce to you Claire Wren, who will be coming to the Dorchester Team as full-time curate from summer 2025. Please do pray for Claire and her family as she completes her college training, is ordained deacon and begins ministry with us.

Claire brings along her bustling household: a husband, six energetic kids, an elderly Labrador who still thinks she's a puppy, and a cat who believes he's the true head of the family. Claire's journey began with a Biochemistry degree from St Hugh's College, Oxford, before she swapped lab coats for lesson plans as a chemistry teacher in Didcot. More recently, she served as the Children's and Family Minister at Great Western Park Church, a vibrant new community in Didcot. She has transitioned roles but remained at the same church while completing training at Cuddesdon and CMS to become an Ordained Pioneer Minister.

In her spare time, Claire enjoys singing and playing the saxophone in a local rock covers band, adding a bit of musical flair to her already dynamic life. She is excited to bring her joyful chaos, deep commitment to ministry, and a touch of rock 'n' roll to the Dorchester Team. Claire looks forward to meeting everyone and embarking on this new adventure

Events in the Abbey

Saturday 7th December 7:00 pm – 9:30 pm Nadia Eide – Winter Light Tour

Chart topping soprano and star of The Voice UK, Nadia Eide, presents a spectacular Christmas concert for all ages. Singing festive favourites and classic songs, this show is sure to bring the Christmas joy! Features a special guest choir. All ages welcome. https://nadiaeide.com/ Tickets £19

Saturday 14th December 7:00 pm – 9:30 pm Orchestra of St John's: A Night of Carols at Dorchester Abbev

Join OSJ Voices for a night of Christmas favourites that are sure to spark seasonal joy through music from a range of great composers. https://www.osj.org.uk/osjevent/a-night-of-carols-7pm-at-dorchester-abbey-2/ Tickets £5- £25

Tuesday 17th December 7:30 pm – 9:00 pm Kingwood: A Candlelit Christmas Evening

Juliet Stevenson and Dominic West will entertain the audience with festive readings, accompanied by the beautiful voices of the Magdalen College Choir. Tickets from £30 -SOLD OUT – Waiting list: https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/a-candlelit-christmas-evening-at-dorchester-abbey-oxfordshire-sold-out-tickets-944136927967

Thursday 19th December 7:00 pm - 9:00 pm RAF Benson's Christmas Concert

A festive evening with The Central Band of the Royal Air Force The Central Band of the Royal Air Force will play traditional military and festive music suitable for the whole family. Donations: Fundraising for the RAF Benevolent Fund.

https://www.ticketsource.co.uk/raf-benson/a-festive-evening-with-the-central-band-of-the-royal-air-force/emermao

Saturday 21st December 7:00 pm - 9:30 pm Orchestra of St John's MESSIAH

Handel – Messiah. John Lubbock's new orchestration for winds. Tickets £5- £30 https://www.osj.org.uk/osjevent/handel-messiah-7pm-at-dorchester-abbey-3/

Tuesday 31 December 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm Orchestra of St John's- New Year's Eve Concert

Waltzes, Marches and Polkas Galore! Our ever-popular New Year Concert returns. A concert to set the feet tapping, the hands clapping with its joyous dance music, dispelling all thoughts of winter's cold. Featuring **Derek Paravicini** and **Ashleigh Turley** on piano, with **Poppy McGhee** on violin Tickets £5 - £25 https://www.osj.org.uk/osjevent/new-years-eve-concert-6pm-at-dorchester-abbey-3/

TEAM EVENTS

Sunday 29th December Team Service at Dorchester Abbey 10:30am

Village News

Village website: www.culhamvillage.org.uk

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.



6th December – wreath making 3rd January – pot luck shared dinner 7th February – poetry with Jo 7th March – community choir with Anne 4th April – fairy garden creations with Laura 2nd May – abstract art with April 6th June – tour of Oxford with Ruth 4th July – perfume making with Gaynor

Thank you so much to everyone who's run sessions in 2024.

We look forward to lots of workshops, shared experiences and socializing in 2025.

To be added onto the LOC WhatsApp group, or any questions, please email us

Email ladiesofculham@gmail.com



Brief Notes from Culham Parish Council September meeting

Culham Parish Council (CPC) - November 13th - Summary of Meeting

The meeting was attended by 4 councillors, the Parish Clerk, plus one member of the public. Robin Bennett, the County Councillor was also in attendance for part of the meeting to give an update. Given the cold weather, we were very grateful that the Culham Village Nursery & Preschool agreed for us to use those premises. We will discuss further dates with them, as this is also a convenient central location for the council meetings.

The meeting started with a review of the report from District Councillor; in brief:

- Community Grant funding applications open until 29th November.
- Council tax being reviewed on empty homes with a probably charge on long term empty properties.
- SODC revised the net-zero target as waste vehicles unable to be electric in rural areas.

Report from County Councillor (CC), in brief:

- Local Nature Recovery Strategy a draft strategy and an interactive map, identifying local areas 'to create and improve habitats which are most likely to provide the greatest benefit for biodiversity and the wider environment', have been launched for consultation. Go to "letstalk.oxfordshire.gov.uk" for further information.
- CC has been following up regarding the Tollgate Road crossing and making some progress with pressure being applied to get the project underway.
- Some funds still available in the Councillor Priority Fund for local improvement projects.

Road Safety

- Members of Culham Crossing Group, including representatives from Culham Campus and the Europa School met with the Highways Engagement Team on the 15th October. We walked the route from the lock, crossing Tollgate Road, and then onto the Europa school, pointing out specific safety issues on the route, with a particular focus on the dangerous A415 crossing point. Following this event, a report was sent to the county council and the local MP.
- Hedge on Tollgate Road, near the A415 quotations received to significantly cut back the hedge, widen the pavement and improve safety. This work will be carried out in November.
- Following the introduction of 20pmh area to Culham, CPC are looking into buying one or more speed indicator devices and will contact Highways for further advice.
- Clerk to request speed survey on Thame Lane and across the A415 near the Europa school.

Highways and footpaths

- CPC are looking into refurbishing the bus stops on the high street.
- Grounds maintenance contract for grass cutting will be published for tender shortly
- A new litter bin and dog waste bin to be installed at the top of Burycroft, as per requests.

A wreath was laid on behalf of the parish at the Remembrance Day Service at St Paul's by one of the councillors. CPC agreed to donate £100 to Royal British Legion.

The next meeting of the PC is on Wednesday 11th December 2024 at 7.30pm at the Culham Village Pre-school and Nursery on High Street, Culham www.culham-pc.gov.uk



Village Christmas Carol Service

at St Paul's

Sunday 22nd December 2024 16:00

Come and sing carols with fellow villagers!







District Councillor Report, November 2024 - Cllr Sam Casey-Rerhaye

Local Nature Recovery Strategy

Every responsible authority (in our case the County Council) is required by law to produce a Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS). SODC is a member of the Local Nature Partnership, to which this responsibility has been delegated, and there have been a number of workshops involving large numbers of stakeholders over the past 18 months or so. The final draft LNRS has been available for public consultation **for 6 weeks from 15**th **October**. The link is here:

Oxfordshire's Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) survey - phase 1 | Let's Talk Oxfordshire

Council tax on empty homes – possible changes

We are consulting about decreasing the time a home qualifies as empty for the purpose of the council tax premium. This is part of a policy approach to ensure homes are not left empty for long periods to help address the housing crisis. (Ed. The consultation ended on 26th November)

SODC has reviewed its Net Zero Targets

- Review of the 2025 Operational Net Zero Target. The Cabinet has adopted a revised operational net zero target of 2030. While we recognise the significant progress made in reducing the council's operational carbon emissions, these have reduced by 19 per cent since the council's Climate Action Plan baseline year of 2019/20 and by 52 per cent since Greenhouse Gas reporting commenced in 2009/10, there are still issues that mean we will not reach the (very ambitious) initial target of 2025.
- Review of the 2030 District Net-Zero Carbon Target- Cabinet has formally recognised that the
 aspirational target of being a net zero carbon district by 2030 cannot be met. Cabinet commits to a new
 but still ambitious target of 2045 for reaching net zero carbon for the district, and to work within our sphere
 of influence to accelerate this decarbonisation as much as possible, in particular by working in partnership
 to deliver the Oxfordshire Net Zero Route Map and Action Plan.

We have joined UK100 as part of our efforts to accelerate our work and address where we can, some of the barriers and challenges.

Members of UK100 share best practice and details of successful projects to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and move towards net zero.

The council has already made good progress – for example:

- buys electricity for its buildings (such as council offices and its arts centre) that is from 100 per cent renewable energy sources;
- has a programme of installing solar panels and air source heat pumps at its leisure centres in Didcot, Thame and Wheatley and its arts centre, Cornerstone, enabled by various funding sources including the council's budget, the government's Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme and Swimming Pool Support Fund;
- has had 62 EV chargers installed at its car parks;
- has ordered an electric food truck for the waste collections fleet;
- has given grants for many community climate and nature recovery projects through its grants programme;
- has regularly lobbied government on climate change and nature recovery actions
- has supported cultural organisations with their climate change ambitions by supporting Green Arts Oxfordshire and its carbon literacy training programme.
- Has adopted a new waste strategy which includes objectives to reduce all waste and therefore impact on the environment'

Councillor Community Grant

There are only a few weeks left until the deadline for applications for the latest round of the Councillor Community Grant Scheme. All applications must be completed by midday **Friday 29 November**. Please get any applications in quickly, but do let me know first what you are planning! If you have any questions, email the Community Enablement Team.

Christmas highlights at Cornerstone

This December, Cornerstone Arts Centre is offering festive shows for everyone:

<u>Hundred Watt Club</u> (5 December): A cheeky, vintage-inspired burlesque and cabaret show with plenty of laughs, sparkle, and circus acts. Perfect for a memorable night out with friends — adults only!

<u>Oxford Gospel Choir</u> (7 December): Kick off Christmas with soul-stirring gospel and holiday tunes, supporting Camerados. Get ready to clap, sing, and celebrate.

<u>An Elf Advent-ure</u> (8 December): A sensory theatre experience for ages 0–3, as little ones join 'Elf' in a magical countdown to Christmas, full of festive sights and sounds.

<u>Cinderella Pantomime</u> (18–31 December): KD Theatre Productions presents Cinderella, a magical pantomime filled with comedy, enchanting characters, and lavish costumes. Don't miss the discounted Preview Night on 18 December!

As ever, if you have any questions or issues you would like to contact me about: Sam.casey-rerhaye@southoxon.gov.uk

Or leave a message for me on 01235 635566













Tackling shoplifting in southern Oxfordshire

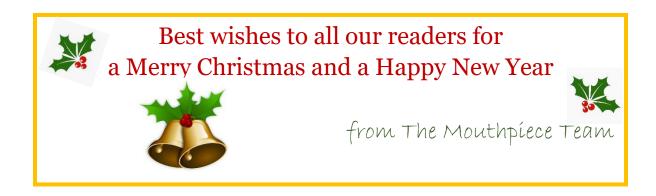
One of the common myths about shoplifting is that it is linked to the cost of living. Whilst there will inevitably be some exceptions, we see that a significant amount of shoplifting is related to addiction (drink and drugs), but the biggest rise is actually from organised crime. Even in our more rural areas, sadly some retailers have been targeted but help is at hand; and the new Retail Crime Strategy that I launched earlier this year has made supporting retailers a higher priority for the police.

Over the last year across South Oxfordshire and the Vale of White Horse the number of charges for shoplifting has more than doubled (up by 106% so far this year), showing that the work to tackle prolific offenders is paying off. The police have identified the top suspects locally and as a result many are now behind bars.

Part of the effort to work more closely with shop staff is to increase reporting. We know that all too often shoplifting or assaults on staff can go unreported. Sometimes people feel the police won't act - well if it is never reported, they certainly can't act! To help encourage reporting and information sharing I have funded a new system called Disc, which is being rolled out free to any retail business locally that wants to sign up.

The app allows them to report more easily to the police - of course if there's a crime happening now, always call 999 - and crucially to share images from CCTV and mobile phones of suspects. These are shared both with the police and neighbouring businesses. I have been out with the police in Wantage, Didcot and Wallingford, talking to staff about their experience and getting them to sign up to the free scheme. Anyone with a retail business can contact Thames Valley Police to sign up and find out more by emailing oliver.fletcher@thamesvalley.police.uk.





Abingdon: All about hedgehogs!

Saturday

07 December

2024

Learn about the secret life of hedgehogs, and how to encourage them in your garden.

This free and informative event is hosted by Environmental Science Teacher Sue Boudreau, MEd, and will involve a fun, and interactive presentation with activities for all the family.

Make a giant food web, play a 'pub quiz' game, share and listen to hedgehog and local wildlife stories and lots more.

Register for a space by calling 01235 520374 or email abingdon.library@oxfordshire.gov.uk.



Address

Abingdon Library

The Charter Abingdon OX14 3LY

Dates

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Price

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'Tis the Season

Crossword

SOLUTION



Christmas Crossword

SOLUTION



Cllr Robin Bennett, County Councillor Report: November 2024

Robin.bennett@Oxfordshire.gov.uk

Have your say on the draft Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS)

Earlier in 2024, OCC asked people and organisations in Oxfordshire about their priorities for nature's recovery. Then, in May, the council collected information about specific locations where people and organisations are planning actions to recover biodiversity in Oxfordshire. Now this information has been used to create draft versions of the LNRS documents and a map which you can find within the consultation page at https://letstalk.oxfordshire.gov.uk/lnrs-phase3-consultation

The draft documents and map aim to summarise the top biodiversity priorities to people and organisations in Oxfordshire. The map also aims to identify specific locations where some of these actions could help to create 'areas that could become of particular importance to biodiversity' in the future.

Hearing your thoughts on these draft documents and the draft map will help to create a final Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Oxfordshire in 2025 so please do encourage anyone interested in this topic to take a look. Authorities across England have been appointed by government to create these Local Nature Recovery Strategies and government expect that these will create a set of strategies which, together will help to join up national efforts to reverse the decline of biodiversity.

A stable and healthy variety of species provides us with everything necessary for survival, from fresh water, clean air, and climate regulation to food and medicines and much more. These benefits do not come from individual species but from a rich variety of species working together.

OxLEP and the Business and Intellectual Property Centre

Earlier this year, Government instructed county councils to take on the running of their Local Enterprise Partnerships (in Oxfordshire, that's OxLEP), and indeed cut all remaining funding for them in the recent budget. The County Council already has an excellent Business and Intellectual Property Centre (at Oxford Library) which has some great resources for those running or starting up businesses. One such event on 21st November is "Startup Huddle", designed to help local entrepreneurs. 1 or 2 preselected start-ups will present their business followed by QA and plenty of time for networking.

Participants are encouraged to support one another with their local links, knowledge and insights, and it will be a great opportunity to explore all of the facilities and resources available to access for free at Oxfordshire Business & IP Centre.

https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/startup-huddle-networking-event-tickets-1050321639297

Local transport and development issues

Garsington: I am following up with council teams to look at how best to address the current parking issues in Pettiwell and the green. Discussions are also ongoing about the 'pinch point'.

I have asked the officer overseeing traffic plans for Northfield to meet with the PC chair. I plan to attend the 'long term stewardship' event for community facilities at Northfield alongside local residents and representatives.

I have also asked for better updates from council officers on OCC infrastructure (transport, schools etc) proposals for **ALL the strategic sites** in the division (Berinsfield, Culham, Northfield, Grenoble Rd), so more updates on these should follow. These sites are all at different stages of progress, with little info so far on the Grenoble Rd site, but Culham #1 and overall masterplan already at planning application stage (OCC has responded to the application).

Tuesday Full Council (5th Nov): I have asked a council question about punctuality of school travel from Berinsfield-Abingdon (45 and AB84).

I have also asked a question about the timetable for the A415/Tollgate Rd crossing (at Culham).

I have asked a formal question on the timetable for the sand and gravel extraction plan (Minerals and Waste Plan) which is always of interest/concern in our area. I gather that it was delayed by the changes to the NPPF in Dec 2023 but as these are now being reversed, I would expect progress soon.

Other News

Marcham Road Health Centre PPG Are you a patient at this practice? This article is written for you



The Health Centre has a newly-formed Patient Participation Group (PPG), which is working with practice staff to ensure patients' needs and suggestions are heard. The PPG members are all volunteers and patients at the surgery.

Their purpose is to ensure patients are involved in decisions about the range and quality of services provided by the Practice, across non-clinical areas. One of their roles is to provide a channel for patients to communicate their views on matters that interest or affect them including the clarity of information provided to patients, by the Practice.

The PPG will relay information about patients' views and needs to the Practice and provide information to patients about any planned changes. We are keen to hear from patients who would like to communicate with us or who may even be interested in joining the PPG to expand our team.

For more information, or request to be involved, please contact:

MRFHC.PPG@nhs.net

www.marchamroadhealthcentre.co.uk and search for PPG

Or if you prefer, please drop a note into reception marked: For the attention of the PPG, with your contact details.

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 **February 2025** issue of the Mouthpiece by **January 15**th to: **

generalmouthpiece@gmail.com

The Mouthpiece Team

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



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Address

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Contact

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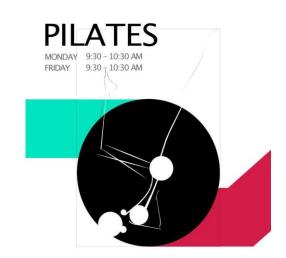
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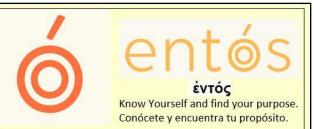


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WHO IS WHO IN CULHAM?

CULHAM PARISH COUN	ICIL		
Chris Pritchard (Chair)	c.pritchard@culham-pc.gov.uk		
Caroline Baird	c.baird@culham-pc.gov.uk		
Sam Casey-Rerhaye	s.caseyrerhaye@culham-pc.gov.uk	3 The Burycroft, Culham	01235 635566
Nacho Gimenez	n.gimenez@culham-pc.gov.uk		
Mike Richmond-Cooper	m.richmondcooper@culham-pc.gov.uk		
Siobhan Sargeant	s.sergeant@culham-pc.gov.uk	(Yes – the email is misspelled!)	
CLERK TO PARISH COU	INCIL		
Denise Corney	clerk@culham-pc.gov.uk		
DISTRICT COUNCILLOR		'	
Sam Casey-Rerhaye	Sam.Casey-Rerhaye@southoxon.gov.uk	3 The Burycroft, Culham	01235 635566
COUNTY COUNCILLOR			
Robin Bennett	robin.bennett@oxfordshire.gov.uk	4 Meadside, Dorchester-on-Thames	07979 646815
ST PAUL'S CHURCH			
Associate Team Vicar:	Revd. Joanne Allen	revjoallen@gmail.com Dorchester Office: 01865 340007	
Ordained Local Minister	Revd. David Haylett	familyhaylett@yahoo.com	01865 407382
Hon. Treasurer:	vacancy		
Churchwarden:	vacancy	stpaulsculham@gmail.com	
Hon. Secretary:	Ruth Ward	stpaulsculham@gmail.com 5 Thame Lane, Culham	
FRIENDS OF ST PAUL'S	CHURCH		
Chairman:	Philip Owen	6 The Green, Culham	01235 555223
ST PAUL'S & CULHAM \	/ILLAGE RE-ORDERING COMMTTEE		
Philip Owen	stpaulsandculhamvillage@gmail.com	6 The Green, Culham	01235 555223
LADIES OF CULHAM (LC	DC)		
Laura Cooper	ladiesofculham@gmail.com	Also Jenny Williams, Jo Oughtred	
CULHAM POORS ALLO	TMENT CHARITY		
Hon Secretary	Gordon Gibbs	32 High Street, Culham	01235 523679
POLICE			
Neighbourhood Policing Team		Non-emergency Phone Number	101
THE MOUTHPIECE	generalmouthpiece@gmail.com		
Editors:	Anne Churchill Stone	21 High Street, Culham	01235 533011
	Gordon & Joan Gibbs	32 High Street, Culham	01235 523679
Advertising Manager:	vacancy		
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