No. 467

The Mouthpiece

Culham's Newsletter June 2025



Dates for your Diary

Sun 1 June	11am	Holy Communion	St Paul's Church	
Wed 11 June	7.30pm	Parish Council Meeting	Culham Pre-school/Nursery	
Fri 13 June	ТВС	Ladies of Culham – Tour of Oxford with Ruth	TBC	

Talking point by Revd Canon Rachel Carnegie

"You've got to grow, grow, grow big in love." If you happen to be passing the Abbey's Cloister Garden on the first Sunday afternoon of the month, you will hear a group of children with parents and friends singing these words. This is the Forest Church, part of the Abbey's offering for children and families, along with the lovely Family Service and other activities.

Over the spring, it has been a joy to see children excitedly planting daffodil bulbs and blackcurrant bushes and making a bug hotel (definitely 5 star), with superb support from the DOTS gardening team. Together we have also been making mobiles and collages to celebrate our beautiful environment, our shared home – and to give thanks for this gift and think about how we can love and protect it. And we also created an Easter Garden to reflect on the promise of new life in Jesus' resurrection.

With the arrival of June, the village is now in full bloom. It was a long winter, and we have lost so many beloved people in our community. We think of those of us who are grieving, for whom the world may seem to have lost its colour - for whom we pray that the message of the Easter garden can bring hope. And this is where our community itself becomes like a living and loving forest, grounded with roots of relationship, connected by branches of friendship and care.

I recently read a book called The Hidden Life of Trees by Peter Wohlleben, a forester. He had observed that trees are not individual isolated entities, but rather are bound together in communities, helping to protect, feed and sustain one another. Trees form communities able to share nutrients through their root networks. It seems that trees understand that supporting the whole forest is best for the well-being of all.

This is what I have observed and experienced in our community – how we love and care for one another, especially at our times of need, so that as a whole community we can live and flourish together, while also looking out into the needs of the wider world. And as the children sing at Forest Church – may we continue together to "grow, grow, grow big in love".

God bless, Rachel

Events in the Abbey

Saturday 28th June 7:30pm Benson Choral Society

Summer concert on 28th June, guest conductor Harry Sever will direct Benson Choral Society and members of the British Sinfonietta for a performance of John Rutter's beautiful Requiem coupled with Tarik O'Regan's haunting work Dorchester Chronicles. The concert will be completed by our wonderful accompanist Anita D'Attellis joining members of the orchestra to play Mozart's concerto for flute, harp and piano. Tickets from £17 unreserved / £20 reserved

https://www.bensonchoralsociety.org.uk/

TEAM EVENTS

29th June – Ordination of Priests service at Dorchester Abbey:

DORCHESTER ABBEY Sunday 29th June



8.00am Holy Communion A simple said service in the traditional words of the Book of Common Prayer 10.30am The Ordination of Priests The service will include hely Communication and will be consulcted by the Bebry of Operative The Bit Rev down Collins. Procher. Reval Jane Hemmings. Area Director of Ordinands EVery Body's welcome We are delighted that on this occasion one of the ordinands is our very own Emma. We have been so blessed by her diaconal ministry over the last year – do come to support and pray for her as she is ordained priest.

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.

Village News

Village website: www.culhamvillage.org.uk



Ladies of Culham Next Dates:

13th June – tour of Oxford with Ruth 4th July – perfume making with Gaynor 1st August – social walk 5th September – cyanotype printing with Jo 3rd October – sewing / sewing machines / needle felting with Laura 7th November – board games 5th December – Wreath making

Thank you so much to everyone who's run sessions this year, it's been successful so far. 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

SODC District Councillor's Report – Updates for May 2025 Cllr Sam Casey-Rerhaye

Website unavailability

Certain functions on the SODC website will be unavailable for a week starting on 24th May. This is because we are updating some important IT systems, as part of bringing our IT function back inhouse from Capita. This will cover nearly all online services. Planning applications that overlap that period will have a 14 day extension to their consultation periods.

Residents will still be able to contact the council using the online general inquiry form or by phone.

Free outdoor community park fitness sessions

These sessions are designed for those who are new to exercise or have been inactive for some time and are a perfect way to start your fitness journey.

People can find the full dates and locations on the <u>Active Communities Facebook page</u> and the <u>South</u> Open Space Activities pages.

Everyone Active grant

The Everyone Active grant is now open for applications, to improve the health and wellbeing of residents. There is a budget of £50,000 - with a maximum of £1,000 for each application - for projects that benefit more than one individual becoming active or sustaining activity, to groups of residents, in South Oxfordshire. The grant scheme is open to a wide range of not-for-profit groups and sports clubs, town and parish councils/parish meetings, not for profit pre-schools, PTAs and local authority run schools or academies for non-statutory elements of the education programme.

For more information visit the <u>Everyone Active grant scheme webpage</u> or email <u>grants@southandvale.gov.uk</u>

Please get in touch if I can help in any way: <u>Sam.casey-rerhaye@southoxon.gov.uk</u>

Become a school governor!





We would be interested in hearing from people who have experience, skills or interests in accounting/finance, project management, IT, education and/or someone who attends their local church. You do not need a background in education to be a School Governor and training is available.

We would be particularly interested in hearing from someone who:

Is passionate about children's education and development Has a genuine desire to support a small village school Can commit time and energy to the role (around 5-6 hours per month)

Is able to work as part of a team

Has an enquiring mind and can ask questions and debate issues that affect the school Can consider matters objectively and make informed judgements.

The role of the Governors is to:

Set and review the strategic direction of the school and set targets for improvement

Hold the Head teacher and school leaders to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils Oversee the financial performance of the school ensuring that public money is well spent.

This is a voluntary role and you'd be joining a group of like-minded people from a range of different backgrounds, skills and experiences who share a common interest of wanting the very best possible education for the children in our school.

mber of the Governing Body will be happy to give you a call discuss in more detail.

01865 407700 office.3183@clifton-hampden.oxon.sch.uk

For More Information www.clifton-hampden.oxon.sch.uk

THAMES WATER SOUTH EAST STRATEGIC RESERVOIR (SESRO) / 'ABINGDON' RESERVOIR



In July 2025 Thames Water are holding a second round of public consultation on their proposal to build a GIANT reservoir in the Steventon area. Please view with extreme scepticism the brochures and images they will be exhibiting which will make it look like a nature paradise. It will not be an unrestricted leisure facility.

FACTS

The proposed reservoir would be the **largest non-impounding reservoir in the country**. The capacity would be **150 billion litres** (150 million cubic litres). It would cover 7 square miles (of land currently owned by c. 170 landowners). **This is the size of Gatwick Airport and 20 times the size of Farmoor Reservoir,** for those who have seen that. The embankments will be 20-25 metres high. It will mean the loss of 1000

acres of productive farmland, 40 acres of woodland, 50 miles of hedges, 240 ancient & veteran trees, with numerous bird & animal species threatened.

NONE of the water is for Oxfordshire. 55% is for London, 15% for Affinity and 30% for Southern – piped underground to Hampshire.

It will take 10 years to build and 2 years to fill and require 1.5 million tons of rock and gravel brought in. It will involve completely re-routing the Hanney Road and the construction of a new access road to it from the A415 between Marcham and the A34, with the consequent traffic, noise, dust and pollution. The predicted cost (as at 2022 prices) is £2.7 billion.

LOCAL IMPACT IN CULHAM

There will also be construction work that affects Culham because there is to be an intake/outfall from the River Thames AT CULHAM.

This would involve:

- 1. A building on the river bank
- 2. An access road to the building
- 3. A weir structure on the river bank (not across the river) and a shaft.
- 4. 'Screens' to stop fish / debris.
- 5. An intake tunnel entrance below water level
- 6. A 5km long 4 m diameter tunnel will be bored from the reservoir end to the tunnel entrance on the Thames at Culham at a depth of c. 20m. It will be bored in the same way underground tunnels get bored and the spoil and residue will be taken out at the reservoir end.
- 7. On the attached photo the dotted line (13) is the route of the conveyance tunnel to the intake/outfall (14) at Culham (including emergency discharge).



FLOOD RISK

Because of the sheer weight of the water, the surrounding villages – East Hanney, Steventon, Drayton – are likely to experience a 1 metre risk in the water table and flood risk to homes. There are no accurate models on how SESRO will manage flood risk. Dam breach is rare, but would be potentially catastrophic if *any* point of its **7 mile** embankment fails. It will need an evacuation zone plan.

Flooding impact on Culham

The inlet/outfall at Culham will be used in case of dam breach and emergency drain down. This would mean a discharge of 80 tons of water per second, every second, for 15 days with likely flooding of Culham, Sutton Courteney, Appleford and all the way down to Wallingford. The impact does not bear thinking about.... WHAT IS CULHAM PARISH COUNCIL DOING

We have joined forces with the Parish councils of Steventon, Sutton Courtenay and Long Wittenham to share information and knowledge; ensure that we respond robustly to consultations and take every opportunity to disseminate information to locals.

What can you do?

1. Sign GARD's petition before 19th June: <u>https://you.38degrees.org.uk/petitions/stop-thames-water-s-plans-for-a-devastating-mega-reservoir</u>

2. Study GARD's website and consider joining GARD: <u>https://www.abingdonreservoir.org.uk/</u> Or donating to GARD. AND/OR follow GARD on Facebook and re-post/share https://www.facebook.com/abingdonreservoir

3. Write to our MP, Olly Glover: <u>olly.glover.mp@parliament.uk</u> (make sure to add your address as he can only respond to his constituents).

4. 3. Join the 'Locals Against the Megavoir' WhatsApp group. Text your name and number to Cathy on 07775 922209.

5. Volunteer. GARD need help to deliver leaflets, canvass, put up posters, fundraiser, etc. *Contact* <u>gard.secretary@gmail.com</u> to get involved

We believe the local exhibition of Thames Water's plans will be at Sutton Courtenay Village Hall on July 5th, but there will be (hopefully) leaflets announcing the exhibition and consultation deadline.

Other News



Inspire, Explore, Create Memories!

Are you ready to make a real difference to young people's lives whilst having loads of fun?

We are a team of enthusiastic volunteers delivering exciting activities for young people aged 6-14 in Sutton Courtenay. We are looking for adults to join us to help shape and run our programs, particularly for the 6-10 age range.

You'll be guiding young adventurers through a world of discovery and confidence-building pursuits. From nature walks to creative crafts, from team games to camping under the stars,

you'll help shape young lives whilst developing your own skills in leadership, teamwork, and communication.

Why volunteer?

- Make a lasting impact on young people
- Pass on your own skills and life experiences
- Enjoy unforgettable moments and great friendships
- Be part of a movement that inspires the next generation

What You'll be Doing

- Helping young people earn badges and develop essential life skills through fun challenges
- Creating a safe and supportive environment where young people can grow and thrive
- Delivering an exciting, engaging, and inclusive programme of activities
- Communicating with parents and carers to keep them informed and engaged
- Mentoring and encouraging new volunteers when you're ready to do so

No prior Scouting experience is necessary - just enthusiasm, a sense of fun, and a willingness to give it a go. Full training and support are provided!

Join us and be part of something amazing! email <u>26thabingdon@btinternet.com</u>



Thereare a few more events remaining in the RSPB Local Group (Vale of White Horse) 24/25 season, and we are already making plans for the next season. At this time of year we meet in the River Room, by the church, Sutton Courtenay once a month, and also have monthly wildlife walks:

* Walk 22nd June: Greenham Common (evening, nightjars etc)

For the remainder of the 24/25 season you can join for the reduced price of £10 for adults (whether or not you are an RSPB member), and free for under-16s. This covers the programme above, and a quarterly e-Newsletter. You can join using the form on our website (under "Contacts"): <u>www.rspb-vwh.org.uk</u>, or at a meeting (cash, cheque or bank transfer).

Our 25/26 season will start in September, with initial talks from Fergus Mosey who works at RSPB Otmoor, and a visit from the Owl Conservation Project including some of their live owls!!

Marcham Road Health Centre PPG

Are you a patient at this practice?

This article is written for you



At Marcham Road Health Centre, interest in research is high on the agenda. This helps to identify patients who could benefit from research and also keep up to date with research programmes that can be passed on to patients to help them improve their own health.

With this in mind, The Patient Participation Group (PPG), which represents patients, recently held an event where Sleep Research, was on the agenda. Advanced Nurse Practitioner, Carley Moore, invited guest speaker, Dr Fiona Tierney, from Oxford Brookes University, to speak to some patients from the practice.

Her approach was to elicit sleep experiences from the audience to enable her to give pragmatic advice and make suggestions to improve their quality of sleep. This prompted a fascinating range of sleep experiences, including; the impact of exercise, smart watches, bright light, shift-working, herbal teas and body rhythms.

She explained how she uses three prompts: Lights, Lions and Tools to help us to manage our own sleep. The *Light* prompt refers to the Circadian process and she recommends exposure to light especially in the morning, as this is more effective, and to avoid napping for more than 30 minutes. The *Lions* prompt requires us to ask ourselves, have we done enough exercise, do we have regular meal-times and regular bed-times? Finally, Dr Tierney explained, "it's important that our brain feels it's safe to wind down and go to sleep" which brings us to the *Tools* category that requires us to consider what we can do to make our brain feel that it doesn't need to 'be on alert'. Things that patients can try are: a regular night-time routine, not watching television an hour before bed-time, having a night-time drink or reading in bed. She emphasised, "We're all different so try some of the above and see what works for you".

All the attendees were asked to complete a simple questionnaire, which will be used to improve future events and to provide information to the Practice & PPG. The participants thanked the PPG for organising the event, Dr Tierney for her talk and Carley Moore for hosting it.

If you are interested in attending member events with limited attendances, please contact us with your email address and we will add you to the pre - invitation email records.

If you would like more information or wish to be involved with the PPG contact: mrfhc.ppg@nhs.net or drop a note into reception marked for The PPG.

https://www.marchamroadhealthcentre.co.uk/practice-information/patient-participation-group/

Our responsibilities online

Social media and the increased use of technology in our everyday lives have brought benefits that would have been unimaginable just a few generations ago, yet we all know that there are drawbacks. A lot of the debate about social media can leave us feeling rather powerless. It's all about big tech giants and the need for governments to impose regulations and restrictions, but the reality is that social media only serves to amplify the trends that already exist in society - both good and bad.

We can all have a role to play, whether it is about keeping ourselves and our loved ones safe, or being conscious of what we are sharing ourselves.



There is a lot of useful information available for parents in particular - a good place to start is <u>internetmatters.org</u>, which provides practical advice for parents and teachers. What's always worth remembering is that in many ways the risks that exist today have always existed, they have just taken on a different form. The speed of social media and the fact that it brings the outside world into our most private spaces presents some new challenges, but the underlying issues remain the same.

Increasingly parents will be aware of the risk of online grooming, but few people realise the largest proportion of indecent images are shared by children with other children - often to those they consider themselves to be in a relationship with, and these images may then be shared on to other people. Our children need to learn, not just how to be safe from strangers, but the importance of normal, healthy relationships, and how to treat each other offline as well.

Parents are key to this. Of course all children are different, with varying levels of maturity and differing needs. There is an understandable worry of children being left behind if they don't have access to the latest tech. These can be difficult decisions but if we as parents cannot withstand the inevitable "peer pressure" then why would we expect our children not to follow the same path.

Keeping children safe online often makes us think about the darker, more sinister side of social media; but we should also think about how we engage with the more benign side of social media. The old adage, never say anything online you wouldn't say to someone's face, remains very true. Often the separation provided by a screen can make us forget that we are talking to, or about, real people - whether that's celebrities or someone in our own village.

Social media is great, I use it a lot, but we know it has it's down sides. There are things that big companies can do to protect children in particular, but it's unfashionable these days to talk about our own responsibility. We can all play our part in making our online and offline world a little better.



June News – Summer Nature

Seasonal Spotlight

For many of our local hedgerows, summer is berry season! If you're curious about your own hedgerows at this time, consider surveying your hedges to receive management advice to ensure your hedges stay healthy! <u>https://www.wildoxfordshire.org.uk/guidance/hedgerow-surveying</u>

Great Big Green Week - 7th to 15th June

The Great Big Green Week is the UKs biggest celebration of community action to tackle climate change and protect nature. See how you can join in the action and follow local communities... Find your local Big Green Week events to get involved with here: <u>https://greatbiggreenweek.com/</u>

You can also follow events and updates on social media or add your Great Big Green Week actions using the #GreatBigGreenWeek

Swift Awareness Week 28th June – 6th July

See if you can spot any swifts this month and sign up to our monthly Bulletin to hear all about events and walks taking place <u>https://www.wildoxfordshire.org.uk/news</u>

Let it Bloom June!

Enjoyed 'No Mow May'? Bring even more wildlife to your wildflowers and take part in **'Let it Bloom June'**! Mowing at the end of May removes the free buffet you've created for your bees and butterflies. Let it Bloom June allows the nectar source to stay that little bit longer. Why not leave an area that's got the most flowers? If you're able to, a way to provide nectar all through the summer is to leave this section uncut until September and then strim it. All these options give your garden even more of a chance to diversify and provide for wildlife.

Open Garden Days



Look out for Open Garden events in your local area, and see if you can spot how many are gardening with nature in mind, creating havens for wildlife and beautiful spaces for us. Many Open Gardens are registered on this website

https://www.opengardens.co.uk/open_gardens_in_oxfordshire.php

Wildlife friendly gardening jobs for June:



June is another bustling period for garden wildlife. Birds diligently seek caterpillars to nourish their chicks, while bees, moths, butterflies, and other pollinators thrive amidst blooming plants and sunny days. At night, hedgehogs forage for beetles, millipedes, and other invertebrates along our borders to provide for their young. As if this wasn't enough, this season's amphibians will venture from garden ponds in search of cool, moist refuge for the first time.

1) Put out and top up water

Water is crucial for wildlife beyond drinking. Keeping the bird bath topped up means birds can drink and bathe in dry weather. With clean feathers, birds are better able to regulate their body temperatures, fly from predators and are less likely to get disease. Amphibians like newts, frogs, and toads use water for shelter and breeding, while butterflies obtain essential minerals from muddy water. Any water source, from puddles to ponds, attracts and helps wildlife – particularly now we're in the warmer months! Make sure you've got water sources in your garden.

- Try placing water dishes and bird baths near trees or shrubs so that wildlife can get to safety easily.
- Also try putting water at ground level in dishes or a dug-in pond so that hedgehogs can drink (make sure your pond has an easy escape route).
- You could also put in butterfly puddling stations which are shallow dishes of gravel and water to help butterflies get the minerals and hydration they need.

2) Create a cool, damp spot for amphibians to take shelter

Make a **log pile** or 'hibernaculum' in a shady corner. If doing a log pile, bury the bottom layer of logs and fill nooks and crannies with fallen leaves and moss to make it good for amphibians. Or use the Wildlife Trust's 'how to' to make a hibernaculum. This is a dug-down structure that can be used by reptiles and amphibians for shelter in the summer and hibernation in the winter.



1) Avoid deadheading roses so that they create rosehibs for the birds later this year

Thank you so much for all you have done for nature's recovery in the last year. Together we have brought people together, created more space for nature, and inspired more people to act for nature. Many people contribute to Wild Oxfordshire, and this support enables us to create a more natural, resilient, and biodiverse Oxfordshire for the benefit of all. If you would like to join in and are able to, we would greatly appreciate a contribution towards our work, either through a <u>one-off contribution</u>, or a <u>monthly contribution</u>. Check out our website to find out more about the many ways you can <u>support us</u> and our recent achievements.



SUTTON COURTENAY WI



We always welcome new members We meet every third Tuesday monthly in the

River Room, All Saints Church, at 7.30 pm

Come along for visit

Contact us via email at <u>suttoncourtenaywi@oxfordshirewi.co.uk</u> Or 01869 331081















Soldiers of Oxfordshire Museum to host Operation Varsity: Crossing Time exhibition in partnership with arts charity Outside In, with support from The Veterans' Foundation

• New exhibition marks 80 years since Operation Varsity, the largest single-day airborne operation in history

• The culmination of a collaborative project between three charities, Outside In, Soldiers of Oxfordshire Trust and The Veterans Foundation, with exhibition support from MDSE.

• Outside In supports artists facing barriers entering the art world, with veterans and serving members of the armed forces amongst those who curated the new exhibition

The Soldiers of Oxford Museum in Woodstock is to host an exhibition, **Operation Varsity: Crossing Time,** in partnership with Outside In <u>www.outsidein.org.uk</u>, a charity that provides a platform for artists who encounter significant barriers to the art world. The exhibition

results from the award-winning charity running a Step Up: Curating Exhibitions course with the Museum, which commenced in February 2025.

Outside In artists participating in the course used the Soldiers of Oxfordshire Museum's collection as the starting point to develop their own exhibition. As their theme, they chose to honour Operation Varsity, the largest allied airborne operation in history to take place in one day and in one location, involving over 16,000 paratroopers and several thousand aircraft, as part of push to cross the Rhine towards the end of World War II.

The resulting exhibition will include displays of clothing and equipment, a new portrait in oils and a clay portrait sculpture of Phillip Aucott, a veteran who celebrated his 100th birthday on 12th April and who spoke of his experiences in the military to members of the team.

Throughout the course, which was generously supported by the Veterans' Foundation, participants Thomas Stimpson, Karran Collings and James Wilkins learned about practical and conceptual considerations around developing and realising an exhibition - from storytelling to writing wall labels and programming events. The course has provided a great opportunity for the participants to gain new curatorial skills within a safe and supportive environment.

'This course has been exceptional it has provided a thorough in-depth course on curating exhibitions culminating in an exhibition at Soldiers of Oxfordshire Museum.' Tom Stimpson 'It has been a great pleasure to work with our enthusiastic Step Up artists, veterans and military participants Karran, James and Thomas and Step Up Course Assistant and artist Tincy.' Jackie Sarafopoulos, Course Tutor

'The Soldiers of Oxfordshire Museum is always enthusiastic to see projects that bring in new friends and use the collections in innovative ways. These workshops and resulting exhibition have been a fantastic addition to our program and a real enhancement to our work with veterans. We are extremely grateful to both Outside In and the Veterans Foundation for joining us on this creative journey.' Ursula Corcoran, Director of Soldiers of Oxfordshire Museum.

'Varsity 80- Crossing Time' will open with a launch event on Saturday 7 June and run until 27 July and will include a special workshop and Share Art event on 16 July.

Soldiers of Oxfordshire Museum would also like to thank Museum Development South East who kindly supported the creation of the exhibition through grant funding

Soldiers of Oxfordshire Museum, Park Street, Woodstock, OX20 1SN

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 01993 810210

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 July/August 2025 issue of The Mouthpiece by **June 15th** to: <u>generalmouthpiece@gmail.com</u>

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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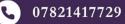
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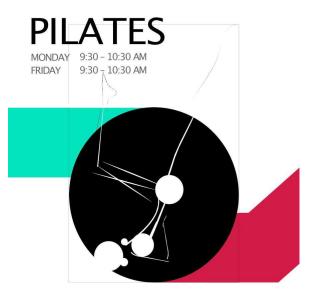
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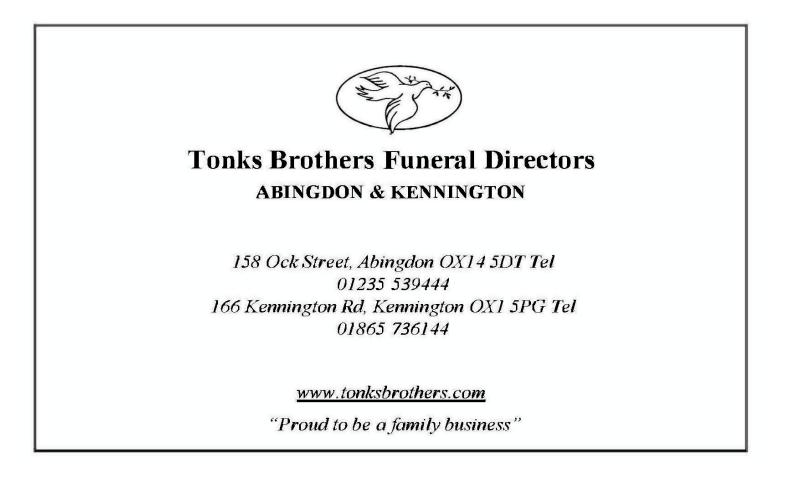


Matrix Arts Centre, Sutton Courtenay, OX14 4UA Drop in or book in advance online









SB

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