

The Mouthpiece

Culham's Newsletter
October 2025



Dates for your Diary

Fri 3 Oct	7.30pm	Ladies of Culham- sewing/sewing machines and needle felting	St Paul's Church
Sun 5 Oct	11am	Harvest Service	St Paul's Church
Wed 8 Oct	7.30pm	Parish Council Meeting	Culham Pre-school/Nursery

Talking point by Talking point by Revd Jane Willis, Team Rector

'We plough the fields and scatter the good seed on the ground...' we sing lustily every at every Harvest Festival.

Though to be honest, for the most part, we don't. When our children were little we had some good friends, Jonathan and Alex. Jonathan had always wanted to be a farmer, but had somehow ended up an insurance broker. So, to make up for the lack, they had three allotments. They were a bit of an inspiration to me. One day – the nearest I would ever get to the image of an earth-mother, I made bread with our girls (this was in the days before bread-makers!) – and felt rather pleased with myself. Later that day I told Alex at the school gate – she smiled and said 'Ah yes, we're

growing wheat on our allotment.' It was clear I was never going to keep up!

For most of us the nearest we get to food production is a vegetable patch – and with fresh produce readily available in our supermarkets now apparently independent of season or the elements – we find ourselves somewhat removed from its source – and hence to any sense of dependence on God for all that he gives us. Earlier in my ministry I was privileged to serve in a number of deeply rural North Devon communities. Two of our churches were in farmyards

and one of our congregations was made up entirely of farmers and their families. Suddenly all the metaphors of

harvest that had featured in my preaching in previous years were these people's real lives – and I was very much a lay person. I will never forget passing the peace shaking huge farmers' hands, or placing the communion bread in hands rough and stained from farm work. These people's relationship with land and place was like nothing I had ever known – and yes, farmers are always talking about the weather: asking me to pray for rain, or for it to stop raining (in North Devon it was usually the latter!). Here these people's livelihoods were deeply dependant on the elements

– and on the grace of God. Churches were packed at Harvest – and the other agricultural festivals of Rogation and Plough Sunday.

So this harvest may we remember our farming community, pray for them and give thanks for them. May we tend our gardens and vegetable plots with love and care and encounter God in the goodness of his creation. And wherever we earn our living – in the city, in schools, in healthcare, in retirement or wherever – may we indeed know that 'all good gifts around us are sent from heaven above' – and 'thank the Lord, yes thank the Lord, for all his love.'

Team News

ABBEY CONCERT MANAGERS REQUIRED- ARE YOU INTERESTED?

The demand for Events to be held in the Abbey has been steadily increasing this year and we need to increase the number of volunteer Concert Managers who play a vital part in helping to make the events run smoothly. This is an opportunity to find out more about what goes on behind the scenes, meeting interesting artists, hearing lovely music and being the welcoming face of the Abbey to the audience.

Training will be given. For further details please contact the Office Manager, Dorchester Abbey, Samantha Turner; sam@dorchester-abbey.org.uk and 01865 340007 (Mon, Wed and Fri mornings)

Events in the Abbey

Saturday 04 October, 7pm-9pm. Orchestra of St John's – MOZART Ave Verum Corpus K618, Piano concerto no 9 in E flat 'Jeunehomme' K271, Laudate Dominum K339, Ch'io mi scordi di te K505, Symphony no 29 K201 Rupert Egerton-Smith piano, Hannah Davey soprano, OSJ Voices, Orchestra of St John's Tickets £15.00 – £25.00

<https://www.osj.org.uk/osjevent/mozart-7pm-at-dorchester-abbey> Free tickets available for NHS workers and for the disabled. Please email admin@osj.org.uk

Look Ahead: Upcoming at the Abbey this November:

Saturday 8th November 'A Tribute to Hans Zimmer' & 'Film Favourites ~ Illuminated'

Saturday 15th November Orchestra of St John's 'RAVEL AND STRAVINSKY with JENEBA KANNEH-MASON'

For Full details and ongoing updates on all event listings

visit & follow www.dorchester-abbey.org.uk/whats-on

#DorchesterAbbeyEvents

TEAM EVENTS

The licencing service for Reverend Vicky Burton will be held on Monday 20th October at 7:30pm at the Abbey. All are welcome to attend.

DORCHESTER TEAM



Service of Licensing for the
Revd Vicky Burton
as Team Vicar in the Dorchester Team
20th October 2025 at 7.30pm
Dorchester Abbey

Culham Village Community WhatsApp Group

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

Culham Parish Council - September 10th 2025

Summary of Meeting

The meeting was attended by five councillors, the Parish Clerk, Robin Jones and members of the public. The meeting opened at 7:30PM with the Chair welcoming new members to the village. The meeting started with public participation, continued with the Parish Councillor's report, the County Councillor's report, the Clerk's report, plus the general meeting.

Public Participation:

Eight members of the public joined the meeting, raising road safety concerns, specifically relating to the route to Europa school, plus discussing flooding and drainage issues. Cllr Robin Jones responded to the road safety concerns, confirming that progress was being made with the Tollgate Road/A415 crossing, with further news expected soon. Cllr Robin Jones also confirmed that the Oxfordshire County Council Chief Executive and colleagues had recently visited Culham, to discuss the crossing, plus general infrastructure issues cycling from Abingdon to Culham.

Hedge growth and potholes were also discussed, with the PC and members of the public discussing setting up a work-party to cut back some foliage.

Flood Mitigation: A question was raised to Cllr Robin Jones asking why OCCs annual gully cleansing program did not occur as scheduled this summer. Cllr Jones will investigate the schedule, as there are concerns that the High Street may have some blocked drains. The PC discussed setting up a Flood Group, in collaboration with the public, to request a Flood Risk Survey for Culham.

Waste Bins: following public feedback, the recently installed bins at the north end of the Burycroft have been removed, with the dog waste bin due to be relocated away from the house and road. With the bins becoming a magnet for fly-tipping, the PC will consider where to relocate the rubbish bin.

Summary of County Councillors Report

Cllr Robin Jones gave a brief review of his report, which can be found in full on the Parish Council website. Oxfordshire County Council is undertaking a major road resurfacing programme (covering 111,000 m² across 36 sites) through to mid-October, while Thames Valley Police recently stepped up enforcement of speeding and dangerous driving on the A4074 using drones. The council is leading on environmental performance, currently ranking first nationally via Climate Emergency UK, and has pledged to clear every roadside drain, gully and manhole annually. Robin will question why Culham's scheduled clearance has not occurred yet. Other priorities include promoting active travel, particularly around school journeys, and deploying £1.8 million in Home Office funds to tackle serious violence in the Thames Valley. Locally the councillor raised questions about school transport provision in Berinsfield, future mineral extraction in South Oxfordshire, and traffic management around key river crossings and the HIF1 relief road's terminus. The council is also consulting on a congestion charge for Oxford (with revisions proposed), and has opened a £10,000 Councillor Priority Fund (applications due by November 2026) for projects in the division.

<https://culham-pc.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/08/Berinsfield-and-Garsington-OCC-Monthly-Report-AugSept-25.pdf>

Summary of Parish Councillor's Report

District Councillor Sam Casey-Rerhaye summarised her monthly report, highlighting that South and Vale's Waste team have updated their phone number - 01235 422123, with the local team advising on waste enquiries. Sam also noted that a recent IT migration project was running slightly behind schedule, with the planning permission process two weeks behind schedule. South and Vale expect normal service to return shortly. Sam's report also included details of a local grant scheme, with £7500 pot available for local initiatives.

General meeting:

Speed monitoring and Speed Indicator Devices (SIDS)

The first of the SIDS poles have now been installed, with the second one due soon. The PC will purchase the initial SIDS devices this month, for installation this Autumn.

Recreation Ground and Community Orchard:

The PC has received confirmation from the land owner that an unused area of the recreation ground can be used for a community orchard. The PC will set up a working group to manage this project. The PC will prepare to initiate a community building feasibility study for the recreation ground.

Bus Stops

Following the Community Meeting, the PC will review access to the bus stop outside of the old Lion pub, before pursuing bus shelters.

OxRAIL 2040 - Oxfordshire County Council has opened OxRAIL 2040, a consultation relating to regional rail development for the next decade. Residents are encouraged to submit feedback up until October 1st via the council website - <https://letstalk.oxfordshire.gov.uk/oxrail-2040>.

The meeting adjourned at 9:15PM.

The next PC meeting is scheduled for **8th October, 19:30**.

Further details and links to documents referenced in these notes can be found on the Culham Parish Council website.

<https://culham-pc.gov.uk/>

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<https://culham-pc.gov.uk/>

St Paul's Church – Going Forwards

There was a meeting at the church on Tuesday 9 September, led by Rev Jo Allen, team vicar of the Bridge Group. The meeting was attended by about 25 residents of Culham, the Rector of Dorchester Rev Jane Willis and Rev Jane Manser who conducts many services here.

Firstly, Jo outlined the decision of the PCC to move the church's service pattern to something more like a 'festival' basis, where services not be on a regular monthly basis but, instead, hold services to coincide with church and local festivals such as Christmas Easter, Remembrance, Harvest etc. Details will be provided in the Mouthpiece.

The next service will be a Harvest service on Sunday 5 October.

There was also a discussion about the ongoing plan to re-order the church. This has 'in principle' approval from the diocesan authorities and the PCC would now like to take this forwards. However, it is recognised that more resource (in terms of effort) is going to be needed than that which the PCC have at their disposal and so residents of Culham are invited to offer whatever they can in terms of help with moving this forward, so that the church building can be more of a community-focussed space. This would include installation of loos, a kitchen re-flooring and better heating.

A 'questionnaire' was distributed at the meeting about interest in helping out with regular services etc and also the re-ordering and a copy is included here. If you are interested in offering some help on any matter, please could you complete the questionnaire and return it to Andrew Churchill Stone at 21 High Street. Thank you



Village Church Community Survey

We value your input and support. Please take a few minutes to complete this survey to help shape the future of our church services, community celebrations and building project. *(Please feel free to copy this page for more than one response from your household)*

1. Festival Celebrations

What types of community or seasonal celebrations would you like to see held at the church?

(Examples: Harvest, Christmas, Remembrance, Pancake Day, Village Fair, etc.)

Your ideas:

2. Would You Be Willing to Help with Any of the Following?

(Tick as many as you'd like)

- ☐ Bible reading during services
- ☐ Cleaning the church
- ☐ Opening and closing the church
- ☐ Providing or serving food and drink at events

3. Reordering Project – Join the Team

We are looking for volunteers to help bring the church reordering project to life.

Please tick any areas you are interested in supporting:

- ☐ **Project Management Team** – Coordinate the overall project, working with the PCC
- ☐ **Grant Applications** – Research and complete funding applications
- ☐ **Communications** – Liaise with the vicar, PCC, community, and external partners
- ☐ **Other** _____

4. If you have ticked any of the above boxes, please leave your details:

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

- ☐ I consent to the church contacting me by **phone**
- ☐ I consent to the church contacting me by **email**

Under the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018, the PCC of St Paul's, Culham needs your consent to contact you, for the purposes regarding Church services and/or the re-ordering process. Your data will be stored in a secure location; you can opt out at any time – please contact the PCC to do so.

Ladies of Culham Next Dates:

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 – September 2025

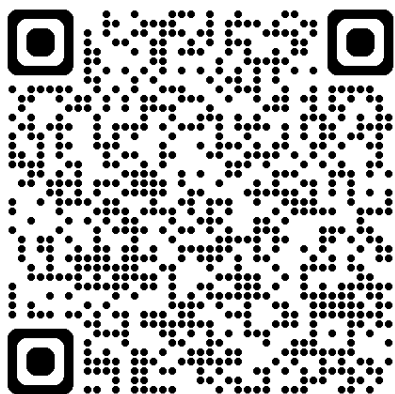
Cllr Sam Casey-Rerhaye – Sandford & Wittenhams ward

Councillor Community Grants

The Councillor Community Grant scheme is now open for applications. If there's a community project near you that could do with a boost, please tell them about this. I have £7,500 to give out to groups across the ward.

The deadline for applications is midday 5 December and more information can be found on the **grants pages on our website**. The grants team are also very happy to speak to people who want more information or to find out if a project is likely suitable.

We've also created a poster which can be downloaded and put up around your wards to help spread the news! Scan here:



New phone number for waste inquiries

From 8th September, residents should use a new number for district council waste and recycling enquiries: 01235 422 123.

The previous number (03000 610 610) is being phased out and will be switched off soon.

01235 422 123 is **the new number is for all household waste, recycling, food, garden waste (collections only)*, bulky waste collections, clinical waste collections and street cleaning services**. It is also the number to call **to report fly-tipping and abandoned vehicles**.

*For queries about garden waste permits, residents should continue to call 01235 422 422.

For enquiries relating to Household Waste and Recycling Centres (HWRC's), please continue to contact the county council on 0345 310 1111.

Planning service update

Earlier this year, the council carried out a major piece of planned essential maintenance work on the council's IT system. The work affected the availability of many of the council's online services. The majority of our online services returned to normal in July, however, the planning team has been impacted for a longer period and unfortunately, they still have a backlog of planning applications. The team is currently unable to offer a full level of service to residents and customers but are phasing the reintroduction of services.

At present they are working approximately two weeks behind the standard time for processing planning applications. I am pleased to confirm they have resumed offering a pre-application advice service in connection with major planning application work; for non-major pre application work, this will be reviewed again by 15 September.

I would like to thank you all for your patience during what has been a challenging time during a complex change to the IT systems.

Give your views the new Licensing Act Policy

There are changes planned to the Council's policy which determines how licensing decisions are taken and how licensed premises can operate in our district. The proposed updated Licensing Act Policy includes new references to: Martyn's Law, the Ask for Angela scheme and promoting initiatives for women and girls' safety; and updated guidance on staff training about safeguarding and evacuation and emergency procedures.

You can find out more and have your say via [our consultation page](#). Comments are open until 16 October.

Annual Elector Canvass

The electoral register annual canvass is the requirement to contact residents each year to ensure they check that their details on the register are up to date.

Residents will receive either a yellow letter or an email - this will ask them to visit householdresponse.com/southandvale to either confirm 'no change' to our records, or to make changes online, if required.

Anyone who doesn't respond by 3 October, or who hasn't registered an email address with the council, will receive a green letter in October.

Please encourage people to respond by email as it avoids having to send a letter to them, saving printing, admin and postage costs.

The email will go out from Monday 8 September from elections@southandvale.gov.uk with the subject line "South & Vale District Councils - Annual Electoral Register Check" and will contain both council logos.

Residents can find more information

at southoxon.gov.uk/ElectionsCanvass or whitehorsedc.gov.uk/ElectionsCanvass

Please contact me on sam.casey-rerhaye@southoxon.gov.uk for any issues regarding the District council

For any support or queries please email me: sam.casey-rerhaye@southoxon.gov.uk

Other News



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 suttoncourtenaywi@oxfordshirewi.co.uk
Or 01869 331081



Seasonal Spotlight – Autumn

It's that time of year when the trees will be changing colour, the air is getting colder and fresher, and we can't help thinking of warm drinks, cosy clothes and playing in the crunchy leaves. As we enter Autumn, it can be tempting to cut back all the dead and dying vegetation in our gardens and green spaces. It's worth considering that many of these woody stems will become perfect winter homes for insects as they enter hibernation and can create areas of architectural beauty in our homes and communities.

In Oxfordshire, the hedgerow species we generally recommend planting (for their capacity to provide for both people and wildlife year-round) and you're most likely to see in your local area include Blackthorn, Spindle, Common Buckthorn, Guelder Rose, Wild Privet, Cherry Plum, Dog Rose and Hazel. Fruiting season for many of these species starts from late summer to early autumn. As such, by this time of year, most of the species listed above will be fruiting.

Hawthorn berries have traditional use in heart-strengthening natural medicines but also act as a vital source of food for caterpillars, moths, and migratory birds. Keep your eyes peeled for **spindle**, which has vibrant autumnal colours with vibrant pinks, and the leaves turning from a deep green to a beautiful red.



Riverside trees

The native white, crack, pussy, osier and goat willows are a familiar sight along the Thames and its tributaries. Willows provide shelter for birds, mammals, including bats, otters and water voles. Their leaves are the larval foodplant of the Purple Emperor, Large Tortoiseshell and Comma butterflies and their catkins the earliest sources of food for bees. Both the male and female flowers (catkins) carry sugary nectar, and the male flowers also carry protein rich pollen, which is so important for developing bee larvae. Willow nectar is also a major energy source for Blue Tits during early spring. Traditionally managed by 'coppicing' and 'pollarding', mature trees can be cut to form a thick stump or 'coppice stool' that considerably extends the life of the tree and lets in light to the shrub layer. Some Crack Willow pollards are known to have lived for 1000 years. Willow is also a useful hedge plant in damp conditions.

Trees for Bees

Trees are an important, stable long-term source of food for bees and other pollinators, providing thousands of flower heads all in one place. Plant a variety of tree species selected to benefit bees and other pollinators, with species that flower at different times of the year to provide nectar, pollen and nesting sites as well as offering a haven for other wildlife and cleaning the air and water and storing carbon. Check out the guidance on our website for more information:

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

Hedgehog Friendly things to do this autumn and winter

- Put out a shallow dish of water or make sure your ponds are easy to get out of for hedgehogs (shallow edges or a platform / ramp), so they have water to drink
- Leave a wild patch each year with piled up logs or leaves that you don't disturb
- Always move your burn piles before you light them as hedgehogs and frogs often use them to sleep in (this is, after-all, how hedgehogs were once upon a time cooked to be eaten!). Thankfully it is now illegal to eat this endangered species

- Avoid using pesticides or herbicides as this will make hedgehogs very ill. Find out more here www.hedgehogrescue.org.uk/hedgehog-friendly-slug-pellets/
- If you want to put out food, cat or dog food is best
- If you find a sick or injured hedgehog, or one up and about during the middle of the day, call Tiggywinkles Wildlife Hospital on 01844 292292

To find out more about:

- 1) Hedgehogs - head over to the People's Trust of Endangered Species (PTES) website.
- 2) Wildlife and hedgehog friendly gardening - head over to the Wild Oxfordshire website at www.wildoxfordshire.org.uk and have a look in our guidance section.
- 3) Kirtlington's Hedgehog Street – see the website at www.hedgehogstreet.org/kirtlington/

Imogen Parker, Wild Oxfordshire Community Ecologist

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



Is it really your bank calling?

Sadly, we know that one of the most common crimes that we can all be vulnerable to is fraud. It can take many forms but impersonation of your bank, a government agency or even the police is a tactic that many criminals will use.

If you receive a suspicious call, independently contact your bank or the relevant agency using an official telephone number – do not use numbers given to you by the cold caller. But who has the time to dig out and verify a number for your bank?

That's why the 159 service was created. If you get a call from someone claiming to be your bank you can simply call 159 and you'll be put through to an automated service which can put you through directly. The system is supported by most of the major banks.

The idea is to give one trusted number that the public know they can call safely in order to be put through directly to their bank.

In some cases, however, fraudsters will try to keep the line open, so that when you call back, you're actually talking to the fraudsters again.

The best way to avoid that is to wait for 15 minutes, to ensure the line is clear, or call from another phone if you have one available. Then simply call 159 to be put through directly to your bank.

NEVER disclose any personal or sensitive information over the telephone.

Whilst fraud is one of the biggest risks to us all from criminals it is also one of the most easily prevented crimes. A dose of healthy scepticism goes a long way, and always be cautious with unsolicited calls, emails and texts.

If in doubt, take a moment, do not be pressured into sharing information or handing over money. Check with someone else if you're suspicious. thamesvalley-pcc.gov.uk/get-involved/community-fund.



The Mouthpiece

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

Please send contributions for the November 2025 issue of The Mouthpiece by **October 15th** 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 directly if you are interested in joining us



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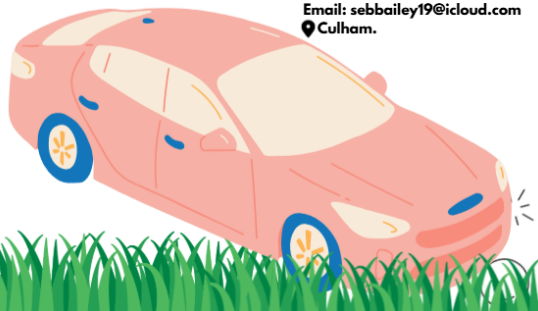
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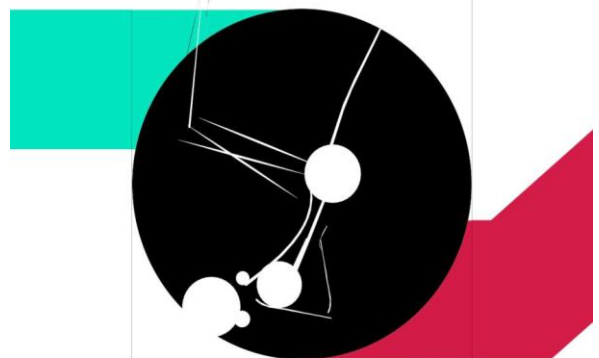
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WHO IS WHO IN CULHAM

CULHAM PARISH COUNCIL			
Chris Pritchard (Chair)	c.pritchard@culham-pc.gov.uk		
Caroline Baird	c.baird@culham-pc.gov.uk		
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Robin Jones	robin.jones@oxfordshire.gov.uk		07916 293681
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Ordained Local Minister	Revd. David Haylett	familyhaylett@yahoo.com	01865 407382
Hon. Treasurer:	Andrew Churchill Stone	21 High Street, Culham	01235533011
Churchwarden:	vacancy		
Hon. Secretary:	vacancy		
FRIENDS OF ST PAUL'S CHURCH			
Chairman:	Philip Owen	6 The Green, Culham	01235 555223
ST PAUL'S & CULHAM VILLAGE RE-ORDERING COMMTEE			
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LADIES OF CULHAM (LOC)			
Laura Cooper	ladiesofculham@gmail.com	Also Jenny Williams, Jo Oughtred	
CULHAM POORS ALLOTMENT CHARITY			
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