

WOODSTOCK & BLADON *news*

June 2025

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BLADON

William | Jones

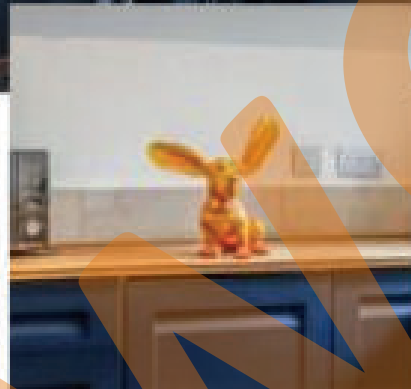
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Editorial

What a lovely time we had in May celebrating amazing events in Bladon and Woodstock. This month four of them have been reviewed with pictures - VE Day in Bladon and then Woodstock, the Danish Liberation ceremony, the Bookshop Festival, and Feastock. All were blessed with hot spring weather - and we are indeed lucky to live in such a vibrant community. We look forward to many more events - please see the back pages for listings of some of them.

The observant ones amongst you may have noticed a slight change in the magazine. We now have full colour throughout, although I will be trying to keep the mainly text pages such as Letters, looking prodimently black and white. It was not an easy decision to move away from our current (and wonderful) local printers, Windrush Press, and I would like to publicly thank them for everything they have done for us in the past. They have been professional, efficient and helpful, and have never once let us down.

The new full-colour format will make the Editor's job much easier, as it will allow for more flexibility, and it means that we can keep items together, rather than having them separated. We can therefore take the opportunity to keep all the Council reports in one place, and it will be in a section called 'Council Matters'. Bladon Parish Council reports will then be able to follow on after the Woodstock reports. We will be asking for news from our MP, and the County, District, and of course the Town Council.

Once again, my grateful thanks to our contributors, distributors, advertisers, and of course our readers and subscribers, without whom this magazine would not be possible to produce. Please write to me if you would like to contribute, or help in any way.

Nick Manby-Brown, Editor

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Front Cover: The lost field at Hill Rise, by Jennifer Taylor

Cards can be purchased by contacting Jennifer on colinjamestaylor@btinternet.com

Answers to the May Crossword - The policeman on duty the night of Sir Winston Churchill funeral was 'Nigel Lambert'

Across: 1. drops by, 5. sparrow, 10. stun, 11. liana, 12. tail, 13. protects, 14. global, 15. delta, 16. anarchic, 19. escalate, 22. tapas, 24. cinema, 27. enabling, 28. knot, 29. depth, 30. arid, 31. regards, 32. enzymes.

Down: 2. retired, 3. panatella, 4. balaclava, 6. prang, 7. ratio, 8. origami, 9. nausea, 17. astrakhan, 18. capillary, 20. science, 21. exempt, 23. sunrise, 25. extra, 26. aided.

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Subscriptions

The magazine costs £2 per issue, or £20 per year.

It can be purchased locally at Blenheim Palace, Mary and Martin's Newsagent, Oxfordshire Museum, Woodstock Bookshop, Woodstock Grocers, and Wootton Stores. It can also be delivered to your door on a monthly basis - please contact Nick (editor@wobl.news) for Woodstock, or Lucy for Bladon.

For bank transfer, please pay to Woodstock and Bladon News Limited - 04-29-09 - 81754981, and use the first line of your address as the reference. To pay by cheque, please make cheque payable to N Manby-Brown (the business account does not accept cheques) and send to 51 Plane Tree Way, Woodstock OX20 1PE.

An online version can also be purchased. Please send an EMail to editor@wobl.news

Please write for our magazine

Send your contributions to: editor@wobl.news

The next copy deadline is **Sunday 22 June 2025** for the July issue.

We aim to be balanced and inclusive, and welcome new contributions that are of interest to our readers.

Printed by Micropress Printers Limited, Southwold
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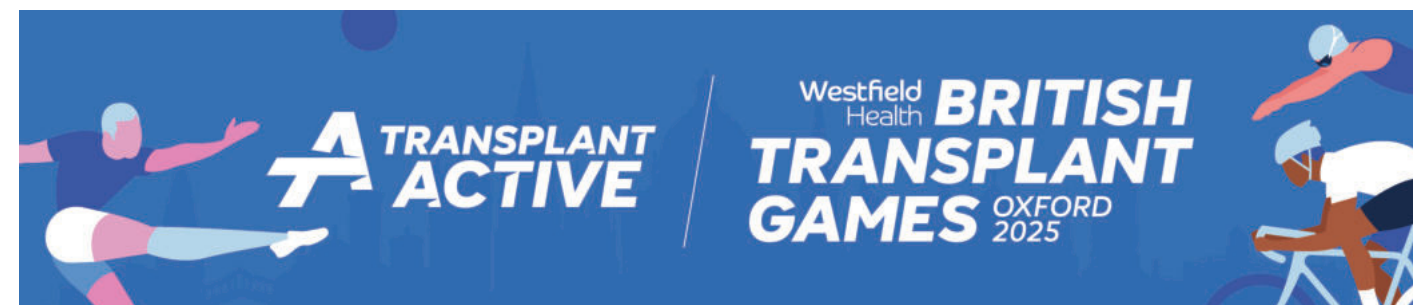


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Donor card relay and Donor run at the British Transplant Games 2025

The British Transplant Games 2025 will take place from July 31st to August 3rd in Oxfordshire, bringing together more than 2,000 transplant recipients of all ages to participate in 24 diverse sporting events. This annual event celebrates the power of organ donation and transplantation, fostering a community of support, resilience, and awareness.

A brand-new addition to this year's festivities is the Donor Card Relay, running on June 26th, designed to spark conversations about organ donation and encourage sign-ups to the donor registry. Building on the success of last year's baton relay in Nottingham, this year's event takes awareness to the next level.

On June 26, two vehicles adorned with giant donor cards and the Games' logo will embark on a tour of all venues hosting the Games. These striking cars will feature messaging on the importance of transplantation, inviting communities to engage in the conversation and sign up as organ donors. At each stop, members of the Oxford team, venue staff, and local supporters will welcome the vehicles. The relay will culminate at the iconic Blenheim Palace, the final stop before the Games officially commence.

A highlight of the relay will be the creation of a feature video, capturing moments from each venue. This video will debut at the Opening Ceremony on 31 Jul, setting the tone for a remarkable event.

Blenheim Palace will not only serve as the grand backdrop for the relay's finale but will also host the Donor Run on Saturday 2 August. Open to participants and the local community, the Donor Run aims to further promote the cause of organ donation.

The event starts at The Duke's Gates by the main courtyard at 7.30pm



We warmly invite the residents of Woodstock and surrounding areas to join in this meaningful run. Applications remain open for the Donor Run, and routes can be found on the official British Transplant Games website.

Join us in celebrating the British Transplant Games 2025 and be part of a movement that honours donors, inspires recipients, and raises awareness of the life-changing impact of organ transplantation.

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Vigil Over Churchill's Grave

Recollections from a remarkable man



The present-day Nigel Lambert

In some ways, the 30th of January 1965 was a disappointing day for 21-year-old Nigel Lambert, Police Constable No. 208 of the Woodstock and Bladon precinct.

It was the day that national leader and hero Winston Churchill was buried in Bladon churchyard. The young Nigel is now aged 82 and still lives in Oxfordshire. On the day just over sixty years ago, he had not been allocated to attend the burial itself, despite the crowds lining the road from Hanborough station all the way to the church.

Instead, Nigel was told by the then Sergeant in Woodstock, the locally revered Les Blofield who oversaw policing of the occasion, that his role would be to guard the grave overnight after the burial. This was not an especially challenging task. The burial was a purely private, mainly family affair, with no press photographs allowed. National dignitaries had previously attended the service in Westminster Abbey.

Woodstock policing - and the arrangements for Churchill's burial - were dominated by the current Duke of Marlborough's grandfather. The 10th Duke had a reputation for grumpiness: 'whatever the duke requires' was the local watchword. While he wintered



PC Nigel Lambert, Oxfordshire Constabulary with wreath from the Queen at the burial of Winston Churchill at Bladon on 30 January 1965

each year in the Caribbean, a police constable was required to go up to the Palace and walk the state rooms every night.

Nigel's dominant memory of the burial occasion was of the intense cold. The only two permitted wreaths had been brought into the vestry to escape its effects. One was from Churchill's wife, the other from Queen Elizabeth. The Queen's wreath bore the handwritten words:

'From the Nation and the Commonwealth in grateful remembrance. Elizabeth R.'

With Nigel was PC Ivor Lambourn, also stationed at Woodstock. Both young men were conscious of the solemnity of the occasion but chatted sporadically through their eight-hour shift. There were no more local visitors from late evening onwards.

Nigel had joined the police as a cadet aged 16; attended training school for three months aged 18; and was sworn in as a constable at the Magistrate's Court in Woodstock town hall on his 19th birthday. Astonishingly, as one of Sergeant Blofield's 'boys', he joined a team which numbered no less than six constables for Woodstock and Bladon, with additional

rural beat officers in each of Long Hanborough, Begbroke, Yarnton, Wootton and Stonesfield. Their sole transport was a Bedford Dormobile.

As a single man, Nigel lived in Bear Close, lodging with a widow who put up a succession of young policeman until they married, when they went up to married quarters in Hill Rise in Old Woodstock.

Nigel was 29 years with the police, retiring aged 48. Some of his service was in Witney and Oxford before he was posted to the CID, becoming a Detective Inspector at Aylesbury, then head of the Fraud Squad for Thames Valley. After retiring, Nigel went on to employment in the Department of Trade and Industry

and the Ministry of Agriculture and Fish, travelling all over the world.

Service runs deep in Nigel. After playing full back in Woodstock Town Football Club, he still referees five games a week as Oxfordshire's oldest referee. He's fit enough as he still runs competitively, often winning his 80s age group. He has been on the Santiago pilgrimage (500 miles) six times, the first in 2012 when he was 70. He is still doing it over a 200-mile distance.

Churchill would be proud of him.

Giles Lewis

Panniers

Everyday cycling in Woodstock and Bladon



Everyday cycling is good for our health and the environment

We are very blessed that Woodstock and Bladon make up a perfect '15 minute neighbourhood' with lots of essential services within easy reach. So this month I am going to abandon any tips or tricks to better cycling and just make a straightforward, unashamed appeal to get as many of us riding around Woodstock and Bladon as possible.

With the summer upon us there is no better time to give everyday cycling a go. Everyday cycling, or utility cycling, means going about our daily routine but swapping the car for a bike on short journeys - to the shops, the post office, the school run, the GP surgery etc. No lycra required, no special clothing, helmets are optional. It's quick, convenient, it's fun, it saves you money and it is better for your health. Plus, it creates calmer streets and frees up car parking spaces for those who really need them.

My own rediscovery of cycling began a few years ago when I decided to dig out my bike and cycle to the Co-op because parking in the centre of Woodstock was a real hassle. As my confidence grew I ventured further afield.

And there is no need to spend money on an expensive bike. My own bike is 40 years old and more than capable of commuting into Oxford and cruising around Woodstock.

I am happy to help anyone who wants to give it a go, whether it be to offer advice or just someone to ride with to gain a bit of confidence. Let's get riding!

David Walker is a member of Sustainable Woodstock, the Village Travel Network and is a qualified Bikeability instructor

Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor,

Electrical Infrastructure or Farmland?

As you know, I recently re-visited Woodstock and we met for a catch-up. I was interested to see your impressive local magazine but very upset to learn about the threat to Blenheim's beautiful and historic surroundings posed by the 4,000 acre Botley West Solar Farm project. Is nowhere sacred?

We face the same issues in Lincolnshire where I live, actually far worse. Not only do we have to contend with the 2,000 acre Heckington Fen Solar Park, owned by Dale Vince's Ecotricity - this is going ahead despite strong local opposition, including from the County Council, and despite the recent discovery of decades worth of gas fields in the county. We are also fighting against the construction of 140km of 50 metre high pylons between Grimsby and Walpole, which would decimate our beautiful countryside.

My heart goes out to you all. Good luck in the fight!

Jane Askam

Dear Editor,

The Black Prince

It is said that Oxford is a summer city; brickwork and the greenery shine brightly in the sun and create a magical atmosphere. I think the same can be said of Woodstock; and the recent VE Day celebrations saw Woodstock at its best. The atmosphere was one of geniality, and there was a real sense of togetherness. There was only one thing missing: the chance to celebrate sitting at familiar wooden tables next to the Glyme or inside the ever-welcoming bar at the Black Prince.

I often pass the Black Prince and see that someone has put a Union Jack flag in one of the upper windows - perhaps a makeshift curtain? I wonder what it hides. The Black Prince was a focal point for the community for years, and then suddenly it went dark. Rumours still circulate - the new owner wants to turn it into flats or there has been some sort of financial wrongdoing. Nobody seems to know.

So my questions are simple: when are we getting our beloved pub back? Can someone actually tell us what is going on?

Naomi Richards

Please send letters to
editor@wobl.news
The deadline for the July issue
is Sunday 22 June

Num 44 Woodstock Social Club

Fantastic News

WODC has finally granted Woodstock Social Club (Num 44) planning protection as an Asset of Community Value.

This is a great relief for us all - it has been an 'interesting' process. This will protect the building and any of your future share investments for at least the next 5 years.

Update:

- There have been no decisions made on the future of the building yet.
- We have conducted a full electrical inspection of the building (passed) and are working on an asbestos survey.
- New phone and communication lines are being installed.
- The fire alarm system and emergency lighting systems are being upgraded.
- We have been consulting various companies, community groups, possible future tenants to develop a future strategy.

What next?

- Develop the business plan and create a share offer
- Help YOU to invest in the future community
- YOU help US to get No.44 back open.

If any of you are involved or in contact with any community groups who may be able to benefit from our future space, please do not hesitate to put them in contact with us, tag them in!

And finally, congratulations to Mrs. Jo Gill - the lucky winner of our magnum of Black Pig Shiraz from the survey draw.

Dean Fowler, Secretary

WOBL Visit to the Ardley Energy Recovery Facility

Last chance to apply
10am on Thursday 19 June 2025

This will be a very interesting visit, which we will write up for those who are unable to come. There are still a few spaces available.

It is a walking visit, and there are some restrictions - for example everyone has to wear a boiler suit and steel capped shoes (supplied by ERF).

Please send your request to come via an EMail to editor@wobl.news

Wootton Village Hall Talks

Our next speaker at 7.30pm on Friday June 6th is **Simon Parker**

Simon, one of the great cyclist-adventurers, makes a much-anticipated return after first appearing in Wootton to talk about his book, *Riding Out*, in which he chronicled his mammoth journey round Britain. On this occasion, Simon will be expanding on his latest book, *A Ride Across America* - in which he describes his 4,300-mile journey across the United States

Simon's impetus was his frustration at the shallow headlines focusing only on Donald Trump, guns and divisions - and he decided that to better understand the USA he would have to travel across it, slowly. He wondered - did the America of his teenage dreams really exist? And was it really as fractured as the headlines suggested?

7.30pm on Friday July 4th - **Tim Birkhead**

Tim is one of the world's leading ornithologists, an emeritus professor at Sheffield University and a member of the Royal Society. He is committed to the public understanding of science and has written several best-seller books, including *The Wisdom of Birds*, *Bird Sense*, *The Most Perfect Thing: the Inside (and Outside) of a Bird's Egg*, *What it's Like to be a Bird* and *Birds and Us*.

For his appearance in Wootton, Tim will be talking about his latest book on the demise of the great auk - which remains a symbol of human folly and the necessity of conservation.

The great auk was a flightless, goose-sized bird superbly adapted for life at sea. Fat, flush with feathers and easy to capture, the birds were in trouble whenever sailors visited their once-remote breeding colonies. Places like Funk Island, off north-east Newfoundland, became scenes of unimaginable slaughter, with birds killed in their millions and, by 1800, the auks of Funk Island were gone

Extinct since 1844, Tim says the great auk's afterlife has been extraordinary and continues to be extraordinary. With so much written about this iconic bird, it is hard to imagine that anything new could be discovered about its life - but that is exactly what has happened. Great auk relics - 75 eggs, 78 stuffed birds and several skeletons - continue to yield new wonders about a bird that was never seen alive by any ornithologist.

Entry is £10 in cash - and includes free food. Wine and soft drinks are available for a modest donation. (Children over 16 welcome). To reserve seats, contact us through our website www.woottontalks.co.uk

Andy Morgan (01993 813016)



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Wake Up To Woodstock

Woodstock's VE Day 80th Celebration Success



Photo credit: John Scott Blackwell

The Oxfordshire market town of Woodstock welcomed hundreds of visitors at the weekend, celebrating the 80th anniversary of Victory in Europe (VE) Day. The event was also attended by Councillors, including 12th Duke of Marlborough, James Spencer-Churchill.

Live 1940s music, vintage military vehicles, and living history displays created a real buzz in the historical town in West Oxfordshire, honouring the end of World War II in Europe.

Nickie Rogan, Chair of Wake up to Woodstock, the member association that supports local businesses and promotes visitors to the town said: "We're so pleased with how the afternoon went, with people of all generations coming together to mark, and to celebrate this important time in history."

Woodstock's independent shops, galleries, pubs, cafés, and museums welcomed customers for what was a truly memorable afternoon and evening.

As well as Wake Up to Woodstock, the celebration was supported by Woodstock Town Council, Blenheim Palace and Soldiers of Oxfordshire Museum.

Woodstock & District u3a

Our modest u3a branch is centred in Woodstock and attracts and welcomes members from all surrounding areas. Members have access to the many and varied interest groups which take place in members' homes or local halls depending on the numbers involved. The association is aimed at those recently retired or more longer retired, as most interest groups take place during the daytime. This month we commenced a table-tennis group in Woodstock on Tuesday afternoons, and also a computer/phone support group

by Zoom— do make contact if you would like more information. New groups develop as members come forward with their time and energy. Members have access to regional and national events including a huge variety of lectures by Zoom.

Monthly members' speaker meetings are held at St Hugh's, Hensington Road, Woodstock 1.45 for 2pm. On 5th June we have John Field with his Amazing World of Magic. In July, Julie Ann Godson visits us with her talk on Free Spirits of Oxfordshire, and then August 7th is our annual open Summer Party - all welcome. Visitors £3.

Sue Blackshaw, Chair

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Danish Liberation 80 years on



Thank you to the British Legion

I want to thank Colin Turner, Katja Bremer and Nick Manby-Brown and their helpers for again organising a wonderful 4th of May Remembrance Service at Churchill's grave in Bladon.

Each year, we Danes pay our homage to 'the Great man' and the British people for liberating us from the Nazis and made sure British Troops reached our borders before the Russians got there or we could have been under the 'iron curtain'. Many thanks also to the standard bearer, Melanie Watkins, and other standard bearers from other places and to the Bugler, Peter.

Our rector, Sarah Bourne, took the service very well and surprised us all by speaking first in Norwegian. Thank you, Sarah, for turning up on a cold, windy evening. There was a good attendance of Danes and representatives from the Danish Embassy, the Deputy Lord Lieutenant, and local councillors. West Oxfordshire District Council was represented by Chair, Elizabeth Poskitt, who has attended the ceremony in many previous years.

Afterwards, a lot of people went to the White House and on all accounts, had a jolly time!

History of the tradition in Bladon

It started in the late 80's with a visit to Churchill's grave by the Danish Resistance Group, 'Holger Danske'. Afterwards, they went to the local pub, The White House and were warmly welcomed by the landlord, Lesley Evans, a larger-than-life character. It was somehow decided that each year some of the Danish Freedom Fighters would return on 4th May and Lesley would organise everything with the able help of his wife, Pam, and the family.

Lesley got the Royal British Legion involved and they came every year until the branch closed. Standard bearers came, not only from Woodstock and



Sarah Bourne, Rector of Woodstock and Bladon, Dan B. Termansen (commodore, defence attache), and Alison Derham, Deputy Lieutenant for Oxfordshire

Bladon but from other counties too. The Danish Embassy sent a wreath with either the Ambassador or a representative.

One year, Churchill's daughter, Mary Soames joined us for sandwiches and Danish gold beer etc. in the church room. I, for many years, had the honour of laying the wreath on behalf of the Danish people. My late husband Geoffrey Cox was Vice President of the Royal British Legion and joined in with great enthusiasm! He already had close connections with Denmark as his old regiment, the Buffs, had the Danish King, Frederik, and later Queen Margrethe as 'Colonel-in-Chief'.

My memories of 4 May 1945

I was 3 years old when we were occupied by the Germans on the 9th April 1940. I do not remember a lot then, but I do remember the night of 4 May 1945 when we were liberated by the British after 5 years of occupation. What joy! Blackout curtains were torn down, candles lit in all the windows (a custom we still uphold). Everyone went into the street - laughing, crying. Strangers greeted each other like old friends, people who had been imprisoned by the Germans were set free; among them, some Italian soldiers who threw paper money in the air and joined the festivities. I was, much to my regret, sent away that night to my grandparents farm some 20 kilometre away. It was by horse and carriage.

It was only natural that I came to admire everything to do with our liberators, the British! I came over with my school when I was 15 and loved it. When I was 18, I returned and became an au pair, returned to marry my childhood sweetheart, and we came over in 1958 to work for short time but stayed and had a very good life. I still live in Woodstock, 67 years later!

Birgit Pedersen

Council Matters

This is a new section where all the Council business will be placed under this banner called 'Council Matters'. We will have all the usual Town Council reports, followed by Bladon Parish Council, and then we hope to have a regular rotating contribution from Callum Miller, MP, Oxford County Council, West Oxfordshire District Council, and of course Wootstock Town Council. This month we start with a piece from Andy Graham

Woodstock Town Council

Town Council Meeting - 6 May 2025

The Meeting was attended by eight councillors and nine members of the public.

Councillor Grant called for a minute's silence to mark the death recently of Cllr Addis's husband Dave.

Under Public Participation:

(a) Former Mayor Nick Manby-Brown referred to the unfortunate recent history of the Council's establishing and then dismantling of Working Groups, the dismantling having been without proper scrutiny or discussion at the 2024 Annual Town Council Meeting. The result had been that important Working Group roles, including that of Finance and Assets, were allocated to a single Councillor, one for Finance and one for Property. With the Council being particularly wealthy in both cash and property, it was incredible, he said, that one Councillor only should be allocated to these roles. He therefore urged Councillors to think carefully about this issue, and the necessary allocation of roles, with a view to decision at the next week's Annual Town Council Meeting.

(b) Another member of the public, Mr. Dean Fowler, former Secretary of the Woodstock Social Club, addressed the Council. He said that following the closure of the Club, its members had decided to apply to have the Club premises at 44 Oxford Street, registered as a Community Asset under the appropriate legislation. He explained that this would protect the premises from being sold or redeveloped. It was the intention to widen the use of the premises to include many and varied community activities.

The Council proceeded to consider the matter, and decided to support the Club's application.

Continuing with the further Agenda items, there was one planning application for consideration, and the Council decided to make no objection.

Councillors agreed to sponsor Cllr Wheatley to attend the Planning Reform Conference 2025, at a cost of £306 plus VAT, and to report back to the Council.

The Council then agreed to exclude the public and press, as the following business was deemed to be of a confidential nature. This was a Property Report regarding the Cobbled Area to the rear of the Town Hall.

Tony McHugh

Annual Town Council Meeting - 13 May 2024

10 Councillors were present and 8 members of the public attended.

Election of new Mayor: Cllr Ann Grant was nominated by Cllr Spencer-Churchill and seconded by two Councillors. Cllr Grant accepted the nomination, and with no other nominations, her election was confirmed without contest.

Election for Deputy Mayor: Cllr Williams was nominated by Cllr Barry Wheatley and seconded by Cllr Spencer-Churchill. Cllr Williams accepted the nomination, and with no other nominations, her election was confirmed without contest.

Apologies for absence: Cllr Addis and Cllr Connolly.

There was no public participation.

The Mayor offered her sincere thanks to the Clerk for all his hard work since joining and asked that this recognition should be recorded in the minutes. She thanked all staff and Councillors who supported the VE Celebrations in the Town Square by attending on Saturday 10th. Gratitude was also expressed to his Grace the Duke of Marlborough who opened the proceedings, this was entirely appropriate him being a descendent of Sir Winston Churchill. She also thanked all those who took part. The Clerk extended sincere thanks to all Cllrs for their support and patience while he is learning his role.

There then followed consideration of Councillors Roles. Finance, which includes Grants and S106 negotiations was retained by Cllr Poskitt. Cllr Wheatley requested he be the substitute and this will be discussed at the meeting of the 27th.

The Council Member for Property will now be Cllr Cooper working with the Clerk. He takes over from Cllr Grant.

The full list of Councillors Roles in the 12 Working Groups were reviewed including clarification of the remit of the Urgent Planning Committee and Emergency Action Group which has a meeting planned to discuss additional members joining the Group among other things. Cllr Grant sits on all Working Groups with the exception of Christmas Lights. The Website, Social Media and Newsletter Group is controlled by staff only under the guidance of the Clerk as they are covered by insurance. Cllr Wheatley suggested that Councillors would be able to

assist the Clerk in this role as he is very busy, but this was rejected by the Mayor, and Councillors were requested to inform the Clerk if they had any suggestions.

There were a few amendments to the current members of the Working Groups including Cllr Wheatley joining the Staff Group as a floating member.

Requests by Cllr Wheatley (and Cllr Connolly in his absence) to join a specific Group as a floating member were deferred to a future meeting when both were present.

It was noted that Bob Pomfritt, the OWL Volunteer Warden, should now sit on the Environment Committee as a member of the public, and would be invited to future meetings.

Drs New Surgery Working Group: Member Councillors to remain pending future consideration at the Extraordinary Town Council meeting to be held on Tuesday 20th May at 7pm. Cllr Wheatley registered his interest in joining this group.

Christmas Lights Working Group: Cllr Szabados would like to join Cllr Spencer-Churchill & Cllr Addis on the group and also Cllr Wheatley. The Group was urged by those present, to meet as soon as possible.

Remembrance Sunday Working Group: At this point Cllr Spencer-Churchill gave particular thanks to our Rector, Sarah Bourne, for the work that she has done in raising all the funds required for the repair of the church roof. Cllr Poskitt endeavoured to explain that the process had actually taken years and was supported by many people in the town, but was waved away.

International Connections: Cllr Wheatley would like to join Cllr Poskitt on this Group.

Joint Ventures: These include the Town and Palace Dialogue, Traffic Advisory, and Stop Botley West Group. Member Councillors all remained the same. The WODC Parish/Town Liaison Group is made up of The Clerk, the Mayor and Cllr Wheatley will be the +1. There will be some churn within the Exhibition Foundation Councillors as an individual's term of office ends.

Woodstock Town Council is represented at Oxford Airport Consultant Committee Meetings by Cllr Spencer-Churchill with Cllr Parnes as a pre approved substitution. There was some confusion re whether the meetings were on the same nights as WTC or whether dates of meeting were only notified after they had happened. For clarity Cllr Spencer-Churchill undertook to provide a list of future meetings to the Clerk.

Review of Professional Bodies: all agreed to confirm the existing list. It was noted that the auditor's term will expire as they have completed 3 years.

Code of Conduct: This had recently been updated and was therefore adopted - a template from WODC having been rejected as large sections of it were irrelevant to WTC.

Direct Debits and Regular payments were all approved.

Policy documents for consideration had not been received and therefore will be considered at a future meeting. The Mayor asked all present to bring any questions or concerns when reviewing the Policies, to contact the Clerk who will look into it without hesitation.

The Meeting closed at 7.38.

Annie Cripps

Extraordinary Town Council Meeting 20 May 2024

9 councillors and 14 members of the public attended the meeting. The meeting was audio recorded.

Two members of the public spoke. I asked about the progress of looking at putting solar panels on the Community Centre roof. The Mayor said that they had received only one quote so far. John Brimble made note of the refurbishment of the existing surgery saying what a good job had been done and much appreciated by both staff and patients.

The main purpose of the meeting was to discuss and consider a report from Councillor Williams regarding a new GP surgery for Woodstock. As the recent planning application for the former Police station site on Hensington Road had been refused, the Council felt that they should take the initiative in exploring this central town site for the new surgery themselves.

Two documents were made available to the public at the meeting, one regarding a Freedom of Information request to the Integrated Care Board (ICB) and the other notes from a meeting of the Woodstock Surgery Steering Group from 27th March. Although not stated formally, from these notes present at this meeting were our MP Calum Miller, County Councillor Andy Graham, Blenheim Estates and GPs. Unfortunately, these documents are currently not on the Council website but can be requested from the Town Clerk. In brief, this meeting outlined the progress made in the draft Project Initiation Document (PID) and to identify options for funding. The new surgery detailed in the draft PID is designed to be flexible, allowing new outreach clinics such as cardiology and ultrasound, changing places with shower and WC and 45 parking spaces. It will also provide sufficient space

to enable the surgery to follow ‘Care Closer to Home’ principles and become a training practice. Two locations were discussed but not disclosed. One has planning permission, the other would be submitted shortly. The ICB confirmed that there were no issues in terms of the fact that one was in Cherwell the other in WODC. Blenheim Estate would announce their plans for the former Owen Mumford site shortly. It was agreed that both sites could be worked to be comparable in terms of time. In this document the former Police station site was not mentioned. The next step is for the PID to be formally submitted to the ICB for consideration, no timeline was given.

In view of the above Councillor Williams proposed two motions. The first that the Council seek and pay for legal advice as to whether the Council may explore the provision of the new surgery on the former Police station site. The second, should the legal advice be affirmative, the Council should explore with Blenheim, and ideally the current GP practice, the appointment of a specialist architectural firm to provide a viability study for a surgery on the former Police station site. Both motions were passed.

Due to restrictions of space not all Council business has been included. For full details please refer to the Town Council website for agendas, documents and minutes.

Graham Brown

Cllr Nick Melliss - Surgery

Hello everyone, since you elected me as a Woodstock Town Councillor at the election on 1 May, and thanks for doing that, I’ve been to four Council meetings, carried out a disability survey in the town and submitted three motions to the next Council meeting on 27 May (only one of which was accepted). I’ve set up my first Councillor Surgery at the Countryside Gallery in the Woodstock Library on **Tuesday 3 June at 2pm**. I’ll be there for one hour so if you want to have a chat then come along.

I wasn’t too sure what to expect when I signed up to be a Councillor - a bit of 'Vicar of Dibley' and a little bit of 'Yes Minister' (but without the laughs)? Actually it’s mostly Standing Orders and "what did he say, I couldn’t catch that". My aim is to get on with building a new surgery - shovel-ready by next Easter? I doubt it, but I’ve just seen the Council owns seven properties in Market St and Park St. Perhaps we should sell them off and build a new surgery with the money - maybe I’ll suggest that at the next meeting!

Take care, and come along to the surgeries, but only one at a time.

Nick Melliss, Woodstock Town Councillor
newgpsurgery@gmail.com

Oxfordshire County Council

As your re-elected County Councillor for the Woodstock division, may I first thank you for your support in increasing my majority from 168 from 4 years ago to 617 on May 1st.

To those who didn't vote for me I still represent you all and I will do my best in the interests of all our communities going forward.

Some challenges remain but I want to reassure you I am working on moving forward at pace the doctor's surgery with our new MP Calum Miller, Blenheim, the Integrated Care Board, West Oxfordshire District Council and of course the doctors too.

Work has been going on to determine the footprint, locations, operational costs, and capital financing options and this only the strategic group can do. When this work has been completed the proposals will be made known to everyone so, please be patient.

The commitment to make this happen has never been so strong.

On another positive note all county councillors have been given £10,000 to cover the next two years for supporting small community initiatives. It is easy to apply for online and just needs you to email me from your organisation with what help and support might help to make your project happen.

Project grants are normally between £500 and £1000 pounds.

So, looking forward to working with you. Keep positive. Let's do the things that unite us.

Andy Graham

Woodstock and Bladon Churches Together

Finding direction in a troubled world

I write this having led a Communion for Peace this morning at Woodstock Methodist Church and reflecting on our calling, as churches together to prayer.

By temperament, as an historical Methodist, I may have been more the activist than the reflector but as I grow older, prayer and action seem to go more closely together.

The times require us I think to be more consistently prayerful about our world. However, sometimes we miss one important aspect of prayer, which is not just about petitions to God or government, but putting ourselves in the way of our prayer, recognising our complicity in the anger and prejudice expressed within our world.

Throughout my ministry I have sought spiritual counsel, in the old-fashioned language a spiritual director, to help me see the wood for the trees.

The word ‘director’ has unfortunate overtones so what is it not about?

- Being told what to do in my spiritual life by an expert.
- Someone giving me ideas about how to pray.
- Having a talk with the minister.
- Being accountable to someone for my spiritual progress.
- Being only for the super-spiritual or the spiritual professionals.

Spiritual direction is for anyone really who wants to understand themselves better. The first and essential quality of the spiritual guide is a closeness to God but in a down to earth way in the realities of the world.

He or she should be:

- A person of experience, someone who has struggled with the realities of prayer and life.
- A person of discernment, perception and insight.
- A spiritual director gives way to the Holy Spirit.

Anyone who would like to know more please contact your minister or look up SpiDir (Spiritual Direction) website for the Oxfordshire Region to enquire further.

Every blessing.

Revd. Michael Sawyer, Woodstock Methodist Church

Friends of the Oxfordshire Museum

Next Monthly Talks at The Oxfordshire Museum, Woodstock

at 7.30pm on Wednesday 4 June

A ‘Mammoth’ Task: highlights from the Conservation Laboratory

Speaker: Naomi Bergmans, Curatorial Assistant and Conservator, Oxfordshire Museum Service

This talk will spotlight some of the more interesting and challenging projects undertaken by the conservator this year, including the conservation of a Viking sword, and a sneak preview into the behind-the-scenes preparations for our upcoming Ice Age exhibition in the summer,

This talk will be preceded by the AGM at 7pm

at 7.30pm on Wednesday 2 July

Cold Comforts: The Hidden Ice Houses of Oxfordshire

Speaker: Melanie King, Author and Founder of the

History Forum (an online platform for expert-led history talks). This talk gives a glimpse into her upcoming book on the History of Ice Cream (to be published in 2026).

Long before electrified refrigeration, the great houses of Oxfordshire had their own ingenious way of keeping food chilled and drinks deliciously cold. Hidden beneath gardens, buried in woodland, or tucked away behind grand estates lay the remarkable structures known as ice houses. But how did they work? Where did the ice come from? And what do these forgotten buildings reveal about the lavish lifestyles of the past?

Membership of The Friends 2025-2026

Single £20; Double £30
Membership details and our full 2025-2026 programme are on our website.
www.friendsoftom.org.uk.

Membership gives you free access all our talks which take place in the Museum in Woodstock but are also available on ZOOM. Non-members are very welcome at these events for a fee of £5, payable on the evening.

The Oxfordshire Museum

Ice Age Exhibition
Saturday 21 June - Sunday 31 August

Our next exhibition opens on Saturday 21 June at 10am. The finishing touches are being finalised by our team of curators, and we are all excited to see the finished results! There will also be a selection of Ice Age related merchandise, including mammoths, toys and books in the museum gift shop. Free admission

Four Forty Theatre
Friday 25 July 2025 7pm

We are delighted to welcome back these exciting performers for another performance this summer. Last year’s show was so successful we have welcomed them to perform their interpretation of *Much Ado About Nothing* and *Macbeth*.



The show takes place in the wonderful setting of our museum garden - so be sure to bring a rug or your own seating!

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"The team is superbly put together, showing professionalism and personality in equal measure"
Legal 500, 2024



Inheritance Law's Funniest Twists

Death, as the saying goes, is the great leveller. One moment you're sunning yourself on the deck of your yacht with a glass of 2005 Bordeaux in hand, and the next - boom - you're toast. When that day inevitably comes, your loved ones are thrust headfirst into the baffling, bureaucratic, and frequently absurd world of inheritance law, where pragmatism can take the back seat and absurd is often left behind the wheel.

Let's kick things off with a delightful little morsel of Latin madness: the *Commorientes* rule. This charming little regulation deals with the scenario in which two people die at the same time. Plane crash. House fire. Or the classic: two pensioners in a Volvo trying to outpace the 12:15 train to Reading.

You'd think, in this age of forensic wizardry, someone would determine who died first. But no. The law simply says: the older person is presumed to have died first. Automatically. No questions asked. If you think, 'well, fair enough' then apply this scenario to what followed after the Titanic went down. Countless couples and their heirs perished together, and no one could say who'd died first. That meant inheritance decisions were left to the blunt instrument of the *Commorientes* rule and other outdated legal rules often handing entire fortunes to the wrong family branch. Some savvy lawyers started drafting special clauses into Wills to cover 'simultaneous deaths' and decide exactly who gets what in those murky, icy moments. These became known as 'Titanic clauses,' and they've been quietly keeping legal waters calm ever since (but only for those who bothered to write a Will).

Now, while we are on the subject of couples and back in the XXI century. Brace yourself. If you're not married, you have precisely zero automatic right to inherit anything. Zilch. You could have spent four decades together, raised kids and shared a Netflix account. But if your partner dies without a Will, the law doesn't see a loving relationship - it sees a roommate. No house. No money. Brutal, but also avoidable. Yes, you guessed it- writing a Will solves this problem for you and your partner.

What if you do get married, everything's fine, right? Wrong. Because - and here's the twist - getting married revokes any existing Will. That is because marriage (or civil partnership) creates a new legal relationship that brings in automatic inheritance rights for your spouse. Because of this, the law assumes your previous Will might no longer reflect your wishes. So if you left everything to your children in a carefully thought-out estate plan and then tied the knot with someone you met in a Travelodge bar,

congratulations: your original Will is void, and your new spouse gets a sizeable chunk of what you thought you left to your kids. Cue the inheritance equivalent of a Jeremy Kyle episode.

Another charming term linked with inheritance law is 'chattels.' No, not a Victorian disease. Chattels are your stuff. Your car. Your clothes. Your golf clubs. Your lava lamp. Everything that isn't land or money. If you don't say who gets them in your Will, they usually go to your spouse. So if your idea of a Will was shouting 'Johnny can have the lawnmower!' over Sunday lunch, you're in trouble. The law requires paperwork.

Finally, on to the crowning glory of Inheritance law: tax. If you are not married and your estate is worth more than £325,000 - which, these days, is basically any semi-detached house near a train station - you're in inheritance tax territory. If you want your children to get your house - then you can get another £175,000 on top of the £325,000 but that's not much of a consolation, because everything over that will be taxed at an eyewatering 40%.

So there you have it. Inheritance law in England and Wales: a system designed by people who think clarity is a weakness. A place where love doesn't count unless it's been legally notarised, and your life savings might just end up buying the taxman his next Nespresso machine.

Want your wishes respected? Want your family to receive more than a pile of forms and a tax bill? Then write a Will. Update it often. And maybe, just maybe, speak to a lawyer.



Anna Boucher, Senior Associate

Anna Boucher is an inheritance tax, wills and probate specialist solicitor at The Burnside Partnership (Combe office). Each month, Anna will share helpful tips on inheritance law, mixing humour with practical advice. If you have any follow-up questions, you can email her at anna.boucher@theburnsidepartnership.com or call the Combe office on 01865 987781 and ask for her secretary, Bev.

The Marlborough C of E School

Celebrating Year 13



Year 13 Church Service

During the first week of May, we held two very special events which celebrated the success of Year 13 during their time at the Marlborough time, and began our process of saying goodbye to them, as they start their exams and look ahead to exciting university and apprenticeship destinations.

Leavers' Service: On April 30th, the whole of Year 13 walked together to St Mary Magdalene Church, in Woodstock, for a Leavers' Service, led by our vicar Reverend Sarah Bourne. The service included readings and poems from staff and students, and some wonderful musical performances from our talented Year 13's. The students were all given a candle with 'Let your light shine' and our school logo inscribed; a fitting memento for them to remember us with. After the service, staff, students and parents stayed for refreshments and to talk and share memories of the last few years. It was very much enjoyed by all.

Leavers' Assembly and Sports afternoon: On May 2nd, the Year 13 students led their own assembly, with some brilliantly planned quizzes and awards; which saw the whole cohort coming together in friendship. Following this, the students enjoyed pizza and drinks in the Sixth Form garden, before enjoying

an afternoon of sports, which included egg and spoon and sack races, and an inter-form tug of war. Year 13 is a wonderful community of students, who show such support and kindness for one another, and this was the perfect end to their time in school together.

Once the exam period is finished, we have another event to look forward to, which is our Leavers' Celebration Evening at Blenheim Palace. This is always a fantastic evening of photographs, speeches, music and supper, and is the perfect end to the students' hard work through this term.

Year 10 History Trip to Berlin



Visit to the Olympic Stadium

On 3rd April the annual Year 10 History trip to Berlin took place. The pupils had a really early start but spirits were high, as the sun was shining and warm. When we arrived in Berlin the beautiful weather continued as we made our way through the streets of Berlin, like a large snake with luggage.

The first day was spent visiting sights such as CheckPoint Charlie, Potsdamer Platz and the Olympic Stadium. This was the first time that we ventured out to the iconic stadium and it did not disappoint. The structure has not changed much from when it was built in 1936, under the Nazi regime, apart from the repairs that had taken place after the stadium was hit by allied bombs in the Second World War. The stadium was an impressive site, you could get the sense of why people who visited Berlin in 1936 were bowled over by these Olympic games.

Over the course of the weekend the weather was sunny and bright and the pupils were able to take in some amazing sites, such as Brandenburg Gate, the Reichstag, Sachsenhausen Concentration Camp, Bernauer Strasse, plus the informative museums that the city has to offer. Although the walks were long, the pupils all agreed that the trip was worth it and definitely a place that they would want to visit again.

Sarah Fitchett

Blenheim Park Cricket Club



Blenheim Park is a unique cricket club and they play locally in Woodstock on the beautiful South Lawn directly in front of the Palace. As a club, we not only welcome all cricket supporters but anyone wanting a fun day out with their family. A perfect place for a family picnic or to enjoy a glass or two in the sunshine.

We are inclusive and thank our VPs and sponsors and would love them to come and watch any of our games, or just come and enjoy the fantastic cricket teas provided by local caterers.

Fixtures

Sun 01 Jun	Home	Medmenham CC
Sun 08 Jun	Away	Minster Lovell CC
Sun 15 Jun	Home	Eynsham CC
Wed 18 Jun	Home	Middleton Stoney CC
Sun 22 Jun	Home	Littlewick Green CC
Sun 29 Jun	Away	Sheepscombe CC
Sun 06 Jul	Home	Steeple Aston CC
Sun 13 Jul	Home	Islip CC
Wed 16 Jul	Home	West Oxon Barbarians
Sun 20 Jul	Home	Cricketers Club
Sun 27 Jul	Home	Isis CC
Wed 30 Jul	Home	Sponsors Match
Sun 03 Aug	Home	South Wales Hunts
Sun 10 Aug	Home	Philosophers' XI
Sun 17 Aug	Away	Littlewick Green CC
Sun 24 Aug	Away	Royal Household CC
Sun 31 Aug	Away	Bibury CC
Sun 07 Sep	Home	Authors XI
Sun 14 Sep	Home	Elmhurst CC

Please see website for latest details and match times

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Friday 4th & Saturday 5th July 2025

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Oxfordshire & Home Counties

St Mary Magdalene

Look out for the Church roof Scaffolding !



We are very pleased to provide an update on our Roof Appeal which has been running for the last 3 years and is now only £5,000 away from our Projected budget of £225,000. A Big Thank You to everyone who has donated or attended an event to help raise the funds. This will enable the old leaky lead roofs over the Nave and Aisles to be entirely replaced with Tern Coated Stainless Steel, plus we will add insulation, and Solar Panels will be installed on the south roofs with a supporting battery costing £35,000. The new metal roof will look very shiny to start with but will dull down a bit.

This major fund raising has been achieved through generous donations and attending fund raising events by the congregation and the wider local Community for which we are very thankful for. This will ensure that there will be no further water leaks causing damage in the body of the building and provide some insulation. The solar panels will also greatly improve our sustainability and Carbon footprint for many years to come. The Appeal has been supported by several grants, £50,000 from Oxfordshire Historic Churches Trust, £25,000 from the Garfield Weston Foundation, £10,000 from The Gladiator Trust and £5,000 from the Marlborough Charitable Trust, and £4,000 from Benefact. These grants recognise the importance of the Historical Architectural features of the Church and the widespread use of the church building by the Community in providing a vital space for many events that contribute to the Town scene.

Contracts have been signed, with companies; Marc A Gibson Carpentry and Cotswold Metal Roofing undertaking the roof work and Darke and Taylor undertaking the solar work. Scaffolding goes up in the first week of June and work starts 9th June. Completion is anticipated by the end of September.

The work will normally finish daily at 4pm ish and there is no planned weekend working. Evening and weekend events should not be affected by the work. The church will be open daily with some areas cordoned off internally for short periods of time. Work will stop for the Wednesday communion service at 10am. The Churchyard and path will still be open but some areas near the church will be cordoned off for safety. We apologise in advance for any noise or inconvenience to undertake this essential work.

Thank you all for your support.

Aidan Salter, Treasurer, St Mary Magdalene.

The Arts Society Cotswolds

Lecture on Wednesday 11 June 2025

Lecture: The Bird in Art from Prehistory to the Present Day

Most people love watching and listening to birds, from colourful jays to squawking parakeets, and this lecture enables us to look at them in all their glory. From Aboriginal rock decorations, millennia ago, to the present day, birds appear in many different guises: as hunters and hunted, doves as symbols of peace or the holy spirit.

About the speaker: Frank Woodgate is a lecturer and Guide at Tate Britain and Tate Modern, for the Art Fund, the National Trust, U3A and other organisations, including on Zoom. Lectured for Dulwich Picture Gallery, Pallant House Gallery, Chichester and on cruises on behalf of Tate. Previously script-writer for The Living Paintings Trust (art for the visually impaired).

This hybrid lecture will be held at the Warwick Hall, Church Green, Burford, OX18 4RZ at 11am and via Zoom. Booking is recommended to reserve a place (www.theartsocietycotswolds.org.uk). Non-members are welcome (space permitting) at a charge of £10.

Further information will be circulated via the newsletter and bookings can be made via the website (www.theartsocietycotswolds.org.uk) or please contact Lisa Etheridge on 07918 180895 for a booking form.

To learn more about The Arts Society Cotswolds and to see what lectures, Special Interest Days and other activities are planned, please visit our website.

Woodstock Exhibition Foundation

Elizabeth I on Progress: Performance, Politics and Popularity

7pm Monday 30 June 2025 St. Mary Madalene Church, Woodstock.

Speaker: Dr Alexandra Gadja

In recent issues of Woodstock & Bladon News there have been articles about Queen Elizabeth I's visit to Woodstock Palace in 1575. These lead up to the Woodstock Exhibition's 2025 lecture when Dr Alexandra Gadja will discuss why Elizabeth liked to go on her annual progresses around southern England.

Since 2011 Dr Gadja has been a Fellow and Tutor in History at Jesus College and Associate Professor, in the History Faculty, University of Oxford. She studied at New College Oxford where she was awarded a M.A. in Modern History with First Class Honours and was the Gibbs Book Prize winner.

In 2024 the Foundation made grants totalling £12,750 to 30 Woodstock young people who have gone on to university or entered into an apprenticeship. This was both a record number of students that the Foundation has supported and the highest total grants given in a single year. The subjects being studied by students vary from history of art to medicine and include film production, psychology, music, veterinary medicine, adult nursing, English, history and paramedic science. A grant was also made to an apprentice electrician.

The lecture will last 45-50 minutes and be followed by questions. Afterwards there will be a glass of wine and some nibbles. We hope everyone will stay for a chat.

Dr Gadja has also kindly agreed to talk to school pupils who are considering applying to go to university about the application process and give them tips on how to get accepted by their first choice.

Tickets cost £12 (students £6) and can be bought from Mary & Martin Newsagents, Woodstock Bookshop and Woodstock Grocers.

Her books include *The Earl of Essex and Late Elizabethan Political Culture* (Oxford, 2012) which was shortlisted for Institute of Historical Research Whitfield Prize for the best first book in British history. With Paul Cavill she edited *Writing the History of Parliament in Tudor and Early Stuart England* (Manchester, 2018). Her current project is editing, with Rory Rapple, *Illuminating Elizabethan Political Thought*, which will be published in 2026.

She took part in the edition of Radio Four's 'Great Lives' with Ian Hislop and Jesse Norman on 'Sir



Elizabeth I : The Ditchley Portrait
© The National Portrait Gallery

Edward Coke'. She appeared in 'Lucy Worsley Investigates' on The Gunpowder Plot on BBC2 and was also the Historical consultant on BBC2's 'Who do you think you are?' podcasts on 'The Death of Elizabeth' and 'Not Just the Tudors', with Susannah Lipscomb.

This year our September coffee morning will be held on Saturday 20 September from 10am until 1pm, slightly later than usual. Again, the aim is to raise money to give to Woodstock's young people. Donations and legacies are always welcome.

However, the annual lecture is the Foundation's main annual fund-raising event. Please buy a ticket and support Woodstock's young people.

Registered Charity Number: 309554

Frank Collingwood

Woodstock Natural History Society

Woodstock Natural History Society’s Monthly meetings, to which all are welcome, are held at St Hugh’s Hall, Hensington Road, Woodstock, at 7.15 pm on the second Tuesday of each month. That constant provides a backdrop for a bewildering variety of fascinating subjects. After our last two events, exploring (via a lecturer) Oxfordshire’s (and Europe’s!) longest dinosaur pathway, and then the birds of Italy, using sources back to the Renaissance, I had expected this month’s talk to seem a bit tame.

On the contrary, it was utterly captivating. Dr Sue Burge OBE entranced her large audience with her talk 'Plants, Medicine, and Magic'. Dr Burge, like many of our speakers, is a polymath, being both a dermatologist and Hon Senior Clinical Fellow at Nuffield and a curator of the Oxford Botanic Garden, the Royal College of Physicians’ Garden of Medicinal Plants by Regents Park, and the Chelsea Physic Garden.

Sue reminded us of the recently observed orang-utan behaviour of making a plant poultice to successfully repair a serious facial injury, and postulated that early humans may have copied animal behaviour in identifying plants with medicinal qualities. Apparently a Neanderthal gentleman more than 50,000 years ago applied a 'plant-based' anti-plaque agent to his teeth, so humans have been using plants for medicinal purposes for some time.

Sue gave us a superb account of the development of plant-based medicine on these islands, through healers, monasteries (until Henry VIII’s dissolution of these institutions destroyed their medical mission), and subsequently ladies of the manor. Attempts to codify and classify what was known took place from time to time; the c1550 BC Egyptian Ebers Papyrus included about 800 medicinal compounds, while around 1000 CE the Persian Ibn Sina wrote extensively of a range of medical and surgical approaches, some using plants. Sue also explained the 'signature' theory of plants and medicine, that God had beneficently designed certain plants to look like parts of the human body to advise humans on what a plant can heal. This quaint theory resulted in some ineffective and even harmful applications of plant compounds. The bifurcated roots of the mandrake, with a superficial resemblance to the human body, was an extreme example of this idea.

'Pharmacopoeia Londinensis' of 1618 attempted a comprehensive list of medically useful plants, and in 1653 Dr Nicholas Culpepper published his 'Complete Herbal'. Culpepper helpfully supplemented the medicinal use of each plant with astrological guidance as to when the application of a particular treatment should prove most efficacious. In 1735 when Carl

Linnaeus published his system of species nomenclature, he gave the suffix 'officinalis' to any plant he thought to have medicinal applications. Since then many active ingredients have been isolated from plants and made into drugs, and more recently plants have been bypassed by compounds synthesised at the molecular level.

This is not to say that herbal medicine is dead; across much of the world it remains the only affordable source of medicaments, and who knows what valuable compounds lie undiscovered in plants untested or even unidentified? “Yet what of Magic?”, you will ask. Sue explained that mandrake was widely believed to be the source of witches’ power to fly. A subject for further research, perhaps?

This year sees our half-century, and as over the past 49 years we have no speaker meeting in June, July or August; the other nine months all have such a speaker. The next Tuesday evening meeting is on 9 September, when Dr Christopher Hoskins will speak of 'Orchids in our area and their germination'.

While our Tuesday meetings are absent during the Summer, our wonderful programme of guided walks, social events and visits continues unabated; by the time you read this you will have missed a visit behind the scenes at the Pitt-Rivers, but you could still apply for a place at our 6th June walk around Gibbets Close, Witney, or our July 11th Nature Trail Walk. EMail contactwnhs@gmail.com for details.

We are still seeking a new Walks Organiser, who could be an individual, a couple, or two friends, and would welcome volunteers.

We would love to see you at one of our events, and very much hope that you will want to become a member (£15 pa). For a copy of our programme please email contactwnhs@gmail.com. Please also check this column regularly, and come to one of our Tuesday evenings. We are also keen to help young people appreciate nature, and will do what we can to assist schoolteachers wishing to embark on relevant projects.

Stephen Vickers (Dr), Meetings correspondent

GOLF DAY

The Woodstock and Bladon News GOLF DAY has been booked at Witney Lakes Golf Club on Friday 5 Sept 2025

Please EMail editor@wobl.news to register an interest

Updates on 'Botley West'

Latest News & Diary Dates



Community Impact Statement

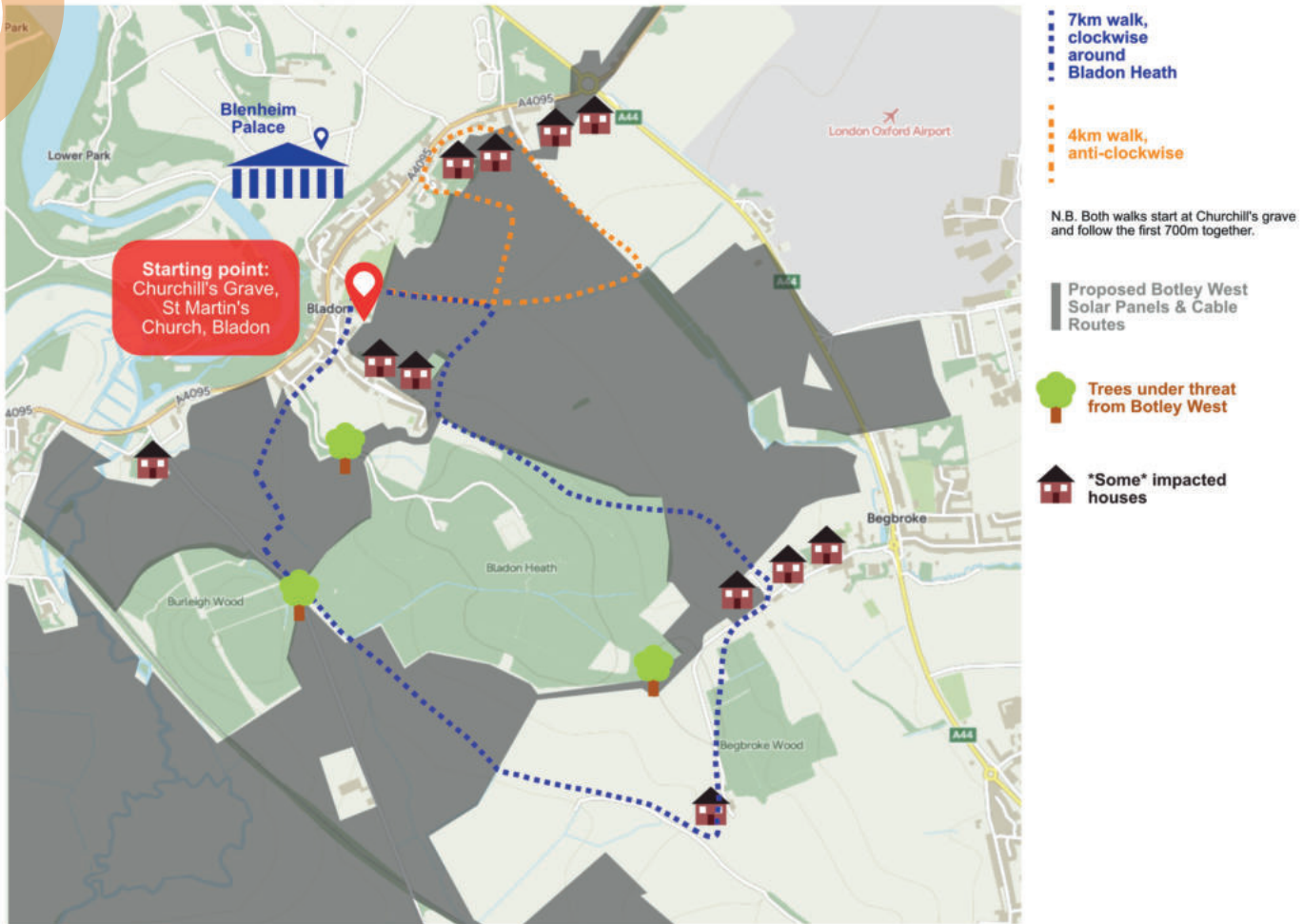
Stop Botley West is compiling a Community Impact Statement to present to the Examining Authority (the Planning Inspectors).

We are inviting you to use your local knowledge to send personal comments, with photographs if appropriate, on possible impacts of the Botley West Solar Farm proposals on you, your family, friends and neighbours, your business, your village, the whole Community.

Anything that is unique and may not have been considered by the Developer. Have you already been impacted in any way? For example, we heard recently of a club that is losing their premises due to the proposal. Issues relating to visual impact, noise, traffic and congestion, impacted footpaths, wildlife, loss of trade, health and well-being are all relevant.

If we use your comment, you will not be identified by name - just “a resident of” So please provide your village name.

Please send to feedback@stopbotleywest.com



SUPPORTERS WALK

Join us at 10:00am on Sunday 8th June in Bladon School Playground.

Stop Botley West supporters will be walking together on footpaths due to be impacted by Botley West. This is part of a national campaign event in which other campaigns against large solar developments will also be walking in their local areas. We’re very much hoping for coverage in the media so the more people we have taking part, the better! Please see the map below for an outline of the two routes.

Parking options include: Bladon primary school or the White House pub.

Public transport options include: For those who live along the A4095 (the S7) stops in Bladon.

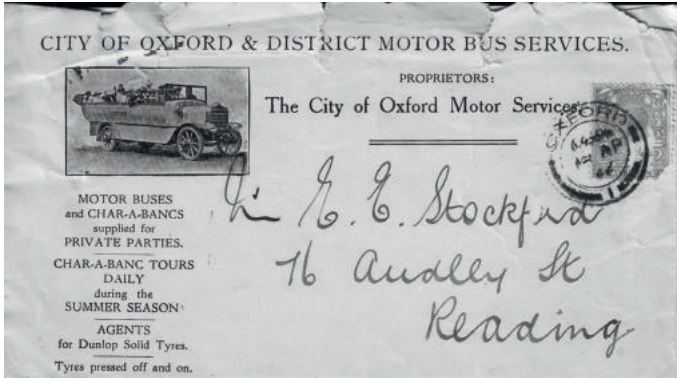
Visit stopbotleywest.com for more details including our Events Calendar, regular updates and other helpful information.

PLEASE HELP WITH A DONATION

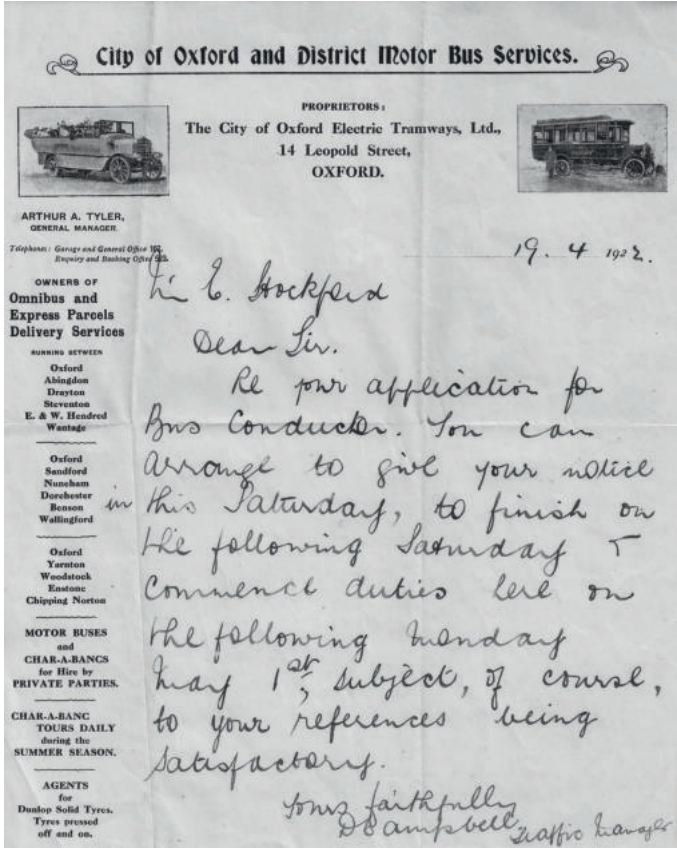
Please join us and make a donation to our fighting fund via stopbotleywest.com If you are in a position to make a significant donation please contact our Chair: alex.rogers@stopbotleywest.com to arrange a personal meeting.

Thank you for your support.

Oxford Bus and Morris Motors Museums



Carol Rix was having a clear out and came across an envelope addressed to her grandfather, Ernest Stockford. The letter, dated 19 April 1922 is handwritten by the traffic manager and the notepaper is interesting as it promotes the company’s activities. The envelope bears an image of a COMS charabanc.



The letter offered him a job as a bus conductor with The City of Oxford and District Motor Bus services. Carol has kindly donated the papers and a couple of photographs to the museum.

Contemporary traffic manager’s reports to the directors record that the company was expanding its country network and now had to use male instead of female conductors. The question of checking conductors on country routes was a ‘matter of importance’ as the men were thought to be less honest than the girls ‘although not long ago we trapped one of the girls.’ The proposed solution was to acquire a



Ernest Stockford in his conductor’s uniform

bicycle or even a motor bike for the country ticket inspectors.

Mr Stockford was 21 when he was offered the job. Later he was promoted to become a bus driver. He worked for COMS right through the Second World War leaving in 1950 to work in Oxford University’s Halifax House in Woodstock Road.

The family connection with COMS continued when Carol married a COMS bus driver, Martin Rix, who worked from 1984 until 2022, mainly on country routes finishing with Stagecoach and Moulton Minibus Services.

Father’s Day is on Sunday 15 June. We shall allow free entry to the museum for dads accompanied by children under 16. There will be historic bus rides at 12.15 and 2.15pm on both Father’s Day and 1 June.

Frank Collingwood



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Girlguiding Woodstock

Did you know that during WWII there was a Guide International Service (GIS)? These guides went to Europe and among many things, they were with the first people to enter Belsen Concentration camp. On VE Day 80, we remembered those brave members of the GIS.

2nd Woodstock Guides have competed their Innovate skills builders, designing tools for surgeons to use in keyhole surgery on cardboard box patients, experimenting with baking ingredients and more. This badge goes towards the Express Myself theme award.

We worked on the Girlguiding Anglia Rambling and Roaming badge, learning map reading and compass skills before undertaking a challenge hike from Stonesfield to Blenheim Adventure Play! Well deserved badges for everyone.

Next month is our unit camp at Jubilee House with a traditional theme.

To commemorate VE Day 80, we took on the challenge of being wartime guides, learning first aid skills using items available at the time, making stretchers to help move injured people and entertaining the group when having to shelter in an air raid shelter. We hope this activity made the Guides think about those still being affected by wars around the world and how lives can change.

Well done to Juno, Isla and Wren for completing their Guide Bronze Awards.

1st Woodstock Rainbows started the new eco challenge with a litter pick around the hut area. They have completed the agility badge, building assault courses and trying out indoor curling.

Our adult group - Woodstock Trefoil have continued their Dobble championships with a new version. We had a talk about travelling Lorraine style and are looking forward to trying pyrography.

Lorraine was presented with her Silver Voyage Award by Jenny, our county Trefoil chair.

If you would like to join any of our groups please see details below.

You can register at www.girlguiding.org.uk/joinus or email girlguidingwoodstock@hotmail.co.uk for Trefoil details.

Rainbows for girls age 4-7 meeting on a Wednesday
Brownies for girls age 7-10 meeting on a Monday
Guides for girls age 10-14 meeting on a Thursday
Trefoil for anyone age 18+ meeting monthly
Lorraine Wing

Woodstock Probus Club

Our meeting started by reviewing recent outings and those in the pipe-line. One of our members made a special announcement. Much to everyone’s surprise, The Rev Dr Stephen Pix announced that he was to be married soon and would be moving away from Woodstock. We congratulated him and wished him every happiness, but he will be missed as a friend and colleague, and as a member of Probus who has done sterling service to the club over the many years, as well as being President in 2021/2.

As it was the AGM there was no speaker. Instead, the Secretary, Social secretary, Speaker secretary and the Treasurer all gave their reports, reminding us of the many interesting talks and outings we had had over the year, covering a very varied range of topics and places. The last outing was to Ardley regeneration centre. The facility has been going for roughly 10 years treating non-recyclable waste. It diverts at least 95% of Oxfordshire’s residual municipal waste away from landfill and generates enough electricity to power the equivalent of 80 thousand homes. As well as treating household waste on behalf of Oxfordshire County Council, the facility also receives residual waste from businesses and other local authorities.

The club is in good health with 57 ordinary members and some honorary and life members. We could take a few more as we recently increased our permissible membership to 65. Roughly 45 members come for lunch on a regular basis. Our next away events are a car treasure hunt on 19 June, the President’s Dinner at Witney Lakes on 23 June and a visit to Rousham Hall on 9 July. We have an active golf section with various trophies to be competed for in the friendliest of ways and several members meet on a monthly basis for a cycle ride - usually about 8 miles before a leisurely lunch and a 6 mile ride home.

If anyone is interesting in joining PROBUS, they should contact Frank Collingwood, Secretary, Alan Holder, Incoming President, myself, or any Probus member.

David Anderson, Past President



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Bladon postman, David Hogg retires after 41 years at the Post Office

Bladon residents turned out in force to say 'Thank you' to their postman, David Hogg, who retired after 41 years at the Post Office. The villagers came together for a surprise event for David at their community pub, The White House.

David was overwhelmed by the turnout at the event, in fact for the first time ever he was speechless. Later he did say "I was only doing my job and loved working in Bladon as the residents were so friendly and helpful. To ensure that dogs knew who I was I always carried treats for them to avoid being bitten."

"During the winter it can be hard work ensuring that everybody gets their post, I would always try and look out for the vulnerable residents as sometimes I think I was their only contact with the outside world."

"I'll miss the comradery of the other posties but will look forward to having a lie in. I have no immediate plans other than to follow my football team Liverpool."

"The event tonight was a real surprise and I'm grateful to all of Bladon for showing such affection towards me. I'm sure I'll meet up with the locals in the future."



Bladon resident Helen Renfrew is pictured presenting David with the collection that the village had raised for him, she said "Dave, the postman, otherwise known as 'Dave double-decks', felt the love of the village he served for 41 years as their loyal postie. Always going the extra mile and ready with a smile and a quick chat on his travels, his local knowledge was legendary. We were lucky to have him; he will be sorely missed. Thank you, Dave!"

Bladon resident, Carolyn Hudspeth organised the card, the collection and the event, she said "I wanted to show to David how much he means to everybody in Bladon. We'll miss him and he'll be a difficult act to follow".

Local business owner, Nickie Rogan said "Small businesses still rely on the Post Office for many deliveries; David went above and beyond his job to ensure that the post was always delivered. He was a fantastic benefit to the many small businesses in Bladon, we'll all miss him".

Woodstock Lunch Club

What a delightful surprise awaited our members as they arrived at the Community Centre on Wednesday 7 May for their regular fortnightly lunch and catch-up. The hall was alive with the nostalgic sounds of popular 1940s music, setting the perfect tone for a special occasion - the 80th anniversary of VE Day.



The venue was festively adorned with Union Jack flags, colourful bunting, balloons, and vintage-style posters, creating a vibrant and patriotic atmosphere.

There was no sign of wartime austerity when lunch was served! Guests enjoyed a hearty beef casserole with Yorkshire pudding, creamy mashed potatoes, and a selection of vegetables. Dessert was a delicious combination of mixed berries, meringue, and ice cream, accompanied by tea, coffee, and a tempting array of fancy cakes. Wine, beer, and fruit juice were also on offer to round off the meal. A wonderful time was had by all.

We were especially pleased to welcome Sven, the son of our much-missed regular Nancy Kiley, who is visiting from Tasmania. As many of you know, Nancy relocated there last year to be closer to her family, and she sends her warmest regards to all her friends in Woodstock.

For more information about Woodstock Lunch Club, please contact James on 07889 655012 or Pauline on 07756 938559.

Bladon Snippets from the Past

Bladon Annual Flower, Vegetable and Produce Show was very well supported. This combined with a Fete held at the Village Hall.....when we had one.

We had a very VIP opening one year when Kenneth Moore, at the height of his fame, opened the show.

Mary F. Sitch

Having the Builders in Part 1 How to find a reliable builder

So you have obtained the relevant planning permission, had the construction drawings done and a schedule of works prepared that specifies materials, finishes, and performance requirements and obtained a Building Regulations Conditional Approval for the construction drawings and it's now time to get quotes for the building work and appoint a builder. At the design stage of the job, I always recommend getting a budget cost estimate prepared before submitting the planning application. This will give you a benchmark against which to compare the tender prices and haggle with the builder.

Start by creating a shortlist of potential builders through recommendations from friends, family and neighbours who have had similar work done. Look for contractors who are experienced in similar projects such as extensions and alterations and are familiar with UK Building Regulations. Verify recommendations using trusted sources such as the Federation of Master Builders (FMB) and the NHBC and also Companies House to check that the business is officially registered and active, is in good financial health and has a solid trading history. Sites like Checkatrade, Rated People, MyBuilder and others can be useful starting points, but they should be treated with caution and used as part of a wider vetting process. Their background checks tend to be minimal and they don't assess financial health nor technical quality. I have always had doubts about the reliability of reviews. While many reviews are genuine, some can be fake or selectively filtered. Search online reviews using their name plus terms like 'complaints', 'court case', or 'scam'.

Aim to invite at least five or six contractors to tender - typically only about half will submit a quote. The tender documents should include the Conditionally Approved construction drawings, the Schedule of Works and a covering letter. Supply identical copies to ensure like-for-like pricing. In the covering letter ask for a fixed-price quote as well as details of relevant trade association memberships, valid Public Liability and Employers' Liability Insurance and Health and Safety policies. Set a clear deadline for the return of tenders, allowing a period of 4 to 6 weeks. Ensure builders can access the site, and when they visit make a note of who came and when.

Once the tenders come in, assess them critically. Don't just focus on price - consider construction duration and availability too. Disregard any tenders from contractors who didn't visit the site. It is likely that you will end up with a shortlist of two or three builders, so ask questions of each of them to do with

things like their approach to site management, waste disposal, and neighbour considerations. Conduct financial checks on the contractors to ensure they are solvent and capable of completing the project, and ask for copies of certificates and check expiry dates for their Public Liability and Employers' Liability Insurance and Contractor's All-Risk Insurance. Clarify the payment schedule and terms and ask for details of their experience on similar projects and request references. If possible, visit previous projects they have completed and speak to the clients about workmanship, communication, punctuality, and problem-solving.

When you have settled on a contractor for the job, you should give some consideration to a contract and agreement. In my experience most people are happy to go with the tender drawings and the schedule of works as the basis of the agreement plus anything that they have agreed with the contractor in terms of contract duration and payment schedules. However, you can also use a formal building contract, such as the JCT Homeowner Contract or one from the Federation of Master Builders.

With the contract in place and the builder appointed you are good to go. In my next article I will discuss how to handle having the builders on site.

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Feastock 2025



“Feasting, fun, fizz, friendly folk, and fantastic weather....what a fabulous evening Feastock was.”
Rebecca Gallighan

A sunny Saturday on evening on 17th May saw Woodstock’s 4th Feastock, a Safari Supper designed to bring the community together, and to raise money for local charities, around a love of food and socialising. This year was our biggest and best yet, with over 80 people participating and Bex’s quote captures the event perfectly!

We started out at Woodstock’s newest venue, ALEX’S. This fabulous new cr perie, opening imminently, is going to help create a real sense of community in Woodstock’s newest quarter, Park View. Guests were given a sneak peek of ALEX’S colourful interior, and enjoyed a delicious cr pe, as a starter, along with glasses of fizz. Alex and Marek served cr pes from the van, so they could accommodate such a large group descending all at once, and everyone commented on how delicious the food was.

A huge thank you to Alex’s generosity, which was all donated to support our charity efforts. Likewise, Breckon & Breckon who provided the drinks (as well



as supported our marketing with signage which you’ll have seen all around town).

After our big gathering (and obligatory group photo) everyone headed off in different directions, to 10 different homes for a main course. Some generous hosts, like Katherine McAlister from OxInABox, had generously thrown open their homes to a small group of strangers before, and enjoyed the experience so much that they agreed to do so again.

Others were new to Woodstock and were trying Feastock for the first time. Gemma Ferrier is Woodstock’s new Curate (from July 6th), and together with husband Nick invited 6 travellers to dine with them. Gemma told me “It was such a wonderful evening, amazing to start meeting and getting to know so many others in the Woodstock community, and an incredible sense of warmth and welcome, wherever we went, and from those who we hosted.”

After dining, the hosts opened an envelope and revealed to their guests which home they were to walk to next. Again, guests dashed off in different directions, so people could have maximum mingling, meeting as many new people as possible. Sometimes,



long established friends visited homes mixed with newbies. Other homes found a whole new set of people meeting for the first time over a pavlova or a lemon posset.

And then, after pud, to The Feathers, who generously let us have their new conservatory space at The Aviary, for cocktails and conversation, where the whole group gathered. We must say a massive thankyou to the bar staff who ably served a very large group of people who all descended at the same time. And it was great to get a sneak peak of the new space, which we are looking forward to being opened. The pizza-oven in the garden, and the warm hospitality we already enjoy, promises to bring a more informal side to what’s already becoming a firm favourite for locals.

Every year we get such fantastic feedback. Many new friendships have been forged at Feastock, for example Rosie and Jacqui who met at our inaugural event, who are now firm friends and hosted together, making a Feastock branded Tiramasu. Nicely done, ladies! Jacqui wrote on Instagram “four years now and gets better every year.” As well as loyal participants, we always hope that new people will join in, and this year 30% of participants were first timers.

Park View was central to this year’s event. With many people joining Woodstock via this new quarter, it’s always been central to our marketing efforts. Sarah



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Cunningham told us “Feastock doesn’t just offer residents one social evening: it helps turn strangers into neighbours, neighbours into friends, and friends into community.”

And, importantly, we raise money for local charities, Yellow Submarine Caf  and the West Oxfordshire foodbank. With our largest turnout yet, I’m pleased to report that we raised nearly  1400 in total.

A huge thank you to everyone who so generously supported with time, money, effort and enthusiasm, especially to the organisers Heather Fletcher & Nic Lacey, and the businesses who supported us, Breckon and Breckon our sponsors, ALEX’S and The Feathers.

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Woodstock Bookshop Festival

The 2nd to the 4th of May saw the return of Woodstock Bookshop’s festival. The aim was to celebrate books (and many other forms of art) with our marvellous community.

Scientists, Poets, Children’s authors and Entertainers, Actors and Musicians, local and national, were all in the spotlight at various venues around town.

‘Poetry in the Pub’ at The Crown launched the festival on Friday night, with spellbinding and moving poetry from Patrick McGuinness and Rev. Esther Lay. At ‘The Children’s Festival (St. Hugh’s, Saturday morning), children were entertained by the wonderful writer and musician Phil Freizinger & Sweet Zombie Horse, and local author Denise Beaumont.



Prof Ian Goldin, Prof Jason Chin, Prof Robin Choudhury, Prof Nicky Clayton, Prof Hagan Bayley at the Science Festival

‘The Science Festival’ at the Town Hall on Saturday afternoon, curated by the Bookshop’s own Prof Hagan Bayley, was a hugely popular collaboration with Professors Ian Goldin, Robin Choudhury, Nicky Clayton, and Jason Chin giving us insights into the science that underlies the nature of the universe and the fabric of our everyday lives.

Saturday was rounded off, again at The Town Hall, with an exquisite fusion of words and music from poet Chris Tutton and award-winning harpist Lise Vandermissen.

On Sunday, star of film and theatre Ben Lamb led an afternoon of inspirational drama at St Hugh’s, with fantastic support from the students and staff of the Oxford School of Drama, bringing the power of words and imagination to transport us to places we’ve never been.

And what better way to end the weekend but with music at the King’s Arms? Versatile jazz pianist

Richard Belmont set a lively mood with crowd-inspired favourites, then the magnificent Mandolirium treated us to a tour de force of folk, jazz, and Americana to send us all home happy.

We are immensely grateful to the talented performers for their time and art.



Chris Tutton and harpist Lise Vandermissen

Huge thanks to all the Woodstock community for supporting us! Without the generosity of the venues, local businesses and townfolk, plus our marvellous crew of volunteer roadies, we would not have been able to make the festival a success.

Woodstock Bookshop team: Prof Hagan Bayley (Prop.) Nikki, Lesley, Michelle, Helen, Berne

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Artweeks in Woodstock 2025 Review

A third glorious Artweeks by the Artists in Oxfordshire. The sun shone, the windows looked amazing, and the Church was full of beauty. A huge thanks to all the businesses who supported us (Blenheim, and all the windows) and a huge well done to the 17 artists, some of whom were exhibiting for the first time. Do take a look at our website artistsinwoodstock.co.uk to find out more about the artists and our group, as we are always looking for new members to participate next year!

Caroline Parkes



Collaboration between Jane Topliss and Rod Craig

Bladon and Woodstock Flower Club

Hello everyone - after our wonderful meeting in April and as I write this report, members are looking forward to going to the Flower Festival at Salisbury Cathedral. I have nothing else to really report on, except the fact that we are looking forward to our June meeting on the 9th when we have an inhouse workshop on Handtied and Frames. This will be taken by our chairperson Ann. These are always full of fun and friendship the more experienced helping the less experienced and we always end up with a beautiful display of arrangements. On 14 July we have a demonstration with Erica Cunningham with her title



Jane Greer with her work



Woodstock Bookshop’s literary themed window

‘We’re all going on a Summer holiday’. That brings back some memories!

Three of our members have recently taken part in the Marcham church Flower Festival in aid of Macmillan Nurses and the Floral Art marque will again be at the Blenheim Flower Show when several of our members are taking part in the competition work.

If you would like to know more about other local Flower Clubs, please go on the website to see all the news www.bbando.org.uk. We usually meet at 7pm on the second Monday of each month at the Bowls and Tennis Clubhouse, Cadogan Park.

Margaret Lang



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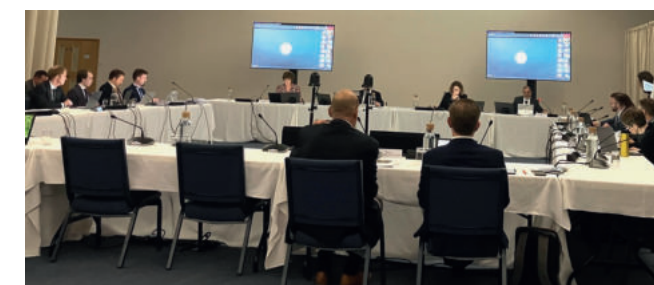
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Sustainable Woodstock

Botley West Solar Farm



Botley West Solar Farm is a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) and the developer has to gain approval for the project by submitting an application for a Development Consent Order (DCO) to the Planning Inspectorate (the government agency who examines the proposal). The application was submitted in November last year and accepted in December, and there are now several process stages before the final decision is made by the Secretary of State (SoS), around this time next year. Everyone was invited to participate during the proposal stages, organised by the applicants (the developers PVDP on behalf of SolarFive Ltd). Four independent Inspectors were appointed for the Examination, and eventually they will make recommendations to the SoS early next year.

The Examination hearings were held recently in Oxford from 13th May until 15th May. The Preliminary Meeting was held on the first morning and there were representatives from various district councils, organisations and the developers, plus individuals. Only the process of the Examination was discussed for this session and there was an opportunity for all attendees (in person or virtually) to influence the process, but all were reminded not to speak on the merits, advantages or disadvantages of the project at this stage,... 'this would be possible during the Open Floor Hearings (OFH).'

The afternoon and next day were devoted to OFHs where you were able to speak in person, virtually or simply observe. Up to 5 minutes were allocated to each speaker with an additional 5 minutes available for you to take questions from the Inspectors. In all, around 37 speakers registered to speak, representing the concerns of parishes, organisations, businesses, or of individuals. Sustainable Woodstock chose to focus once again on the inadequately low amount of community benefit that had been offered thus far by the developers and highlighted the potential loss of £millions of community money. There were others that spoke on the community benefit including Oxfordshire Community Foundation, Southill Community Energy (Charlbury), Cherwell Collective and Low Carbon Hub. You may remember that Low Carbon Hub recently created a petition for us all to

engage with to try and increase the amount offered by the developers and highlight the lack of process with regards to community benefit. While we knew that the approval process does not take community benefit into account, we are pleased to report that interest in the subject was shown by the Inspectors. At the end of the first and second day the developers, including their representatives, were invited to respond to what they had heard at the OFHs and if they were unable to answer or expand on questions from the Inspectors there and then, they were asked to submit information by June 4th. The Inspectors made the same request to those who spoke at the OFHs, if there was a point of interest that they considered needed referencing or expanding.

Issue Specific Hearings were held on the final day and it was devoted to a thorough examination of several issues such as strategic alternatives, green belt, aviation safety and climate change. The purpose was to clarify specific issues raised by the Inspectors. The Inspectors led the questioning but once again, there was ample opportunity to question or present our views.

Not having attended an NSIP examination previously, we found the examination interesting, friendly, accommodating, flexible, genuine and professionally managed. The venue was suitable and accessible and we were satisfied that everyone had a chance to speak and give their views.

What's next? The Inspectors will wait for responses from the developers on the questions they raised plus responses from speakers and others present by the deadline of June 4th. There are further deadlines, further site visits and then the Inspectors will write a recommendation report that must be submitted to the SoS in February 2026, within 3 months of the end of examination stage.

The recordings and transcripts of all the sessions are available on the Planning Inspectorate National Infrastructure Planning website ... search for Botley and you will find the updates of all the sessions.

Green Week 7 to 15 June

Free Film Event. Sustainable Woodstock and Natural History Society plan to show the film Wilding - Friday 13 June at the Oxfordshire Museum starts 7.30pm.

Community Picnic. Picnic at the Woodstock Community Orchard on Saturday 7 June between 12 and 2pm. Bring your own picnic and we'll supply some drinks. Little ones are welcome to bring their teddy bear for a picnic as well ... adults welcome to bring theirs too. Orchard accessed by walking through the Community Woodland - entrance on A44, just past the 50mph sign, on left, just north of Hill Rise.

STOP PRESS

Bridge in Watermeadows: The first bridge on the Glyme after the Black Prince has been closed for repairs. There are diversions available.

Council Matters: Woodstock and Bladon News has been reporting on Council meetings since at least 2022, and they are now all available to view on our website - www.wobl.news.

Transplant Games Opening Ceremony: This is not taking place in Woodstock now, mainly for H&S reasons. The games are taking place from Thursday 31 July until Sunday 3 August, and the opening ceremony will take place inside Blenheim Palace. All our welcome. The event organisers are looking for volunteers and athletes for the donor run. Look out for the 2 well marked donor vehicles on Thursday 26 June coming to all event locations and ending up in Woodstock and Blenheim.

WOBL: The next magazine will be a July issue and will be published on Friday 4 July 2025.

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Meme of the Month

Breaking News

Rare worn down pencil
belonging to William
Shakespeare has been
unearthed.
Experts not sure if pencil
is 2B or not 2B

Fitness What's On

Exercise and movement classes in and around Woodstock. If you know of other classes please let us know and we'll add it to the list.

Monday

- 9am - Strength and Stretch with Rachel at St Hugh's Church Hall, Hensington Road (engergitraining.co.uk)
- 9.30am - Cardio Tennis at Woodstock Tennis Club
- 12pm - Age UK Stretch and Balance Class (open to all) at Woodstock Community Centre (01235 849403)
- 7pm - Boot Camp at Tackley Playing Field with Energi Training

Tuesday

- 6pm - Hatha Yoga Flow with Inspire Studio at Woodstock Community Centre
- 6pm - Strength and Stretch with Rachel at St Hugh's Church Hall, Hensington Road (engergitraining.co.uk)
- 6pm - Jim's Fitness Bootcamp in Tackley (Jim Brown PT)
- 7.30pm - Zumba with Rhonda at Woodstock Youth Centre, New Road

Wednesday

- 9am - Boot Camp at Tackley Playing Field with Energi Training.
- 8pm - Hatha Yoga with Kira at Pilates Studio on Hensington Road (07887 512523)

Thursday

- 6.15pm - Mountain Bike Club with Project Active
- 7pm - Strength and Stretch with Rachel at Woodstock Town Hall (engergitraining.co.uk)
- 7pm - Beginnner Pilates Reformer class at Woodstock Pilates Studio, Hensington Road
- 8pm - Vinyasa Yoga with Kira at Woodstock Pilates Studio, Hensington Road

Friday

- 10am - Zumba with Rhonda at Woodstock Youth Centre, New Road
- 10am - SOMA Breathing Energised Meditation at St Hugh's Church Hall, Hensington Road

Saturday

- 8.15am - Blenheim Bootcamp with Project Active (more info 07940 733102)
- 9am - Bazza's Bootcamp at Kirtlington Village Hall

**Wootton-by-Woodstock Open Gardens
and Flower and Craft Festival**

Saturday 6th and Sunday 7th June 2025
2.00 to 5.30pm

St Mary's Church, Wootton

In aid of church funds

Garden ticket £8, available at the church

Regular Events

This section tries to list regular events, and it is very much in its infancy. If you would like your event included here, please email editor@wobl.news.

Bereavement Cafe

The 3rd Friday of every month between 3 and 5pm at St Mary Magdalene Church

Cricket at Blenheim Palace

The local team play on the South Lawn at Blenheim Palace most Sundays, and they are at home for the whole of May (starting on the 4th)

Friends of the Oxfordshire Museum

The Friends hold regular talks and events, which will all be listed in What's On

Kings Arms / Mandolirium

Listen to our local group in our local pub, usually every third Thursday at 6.30pm
Next date - 12 June

Ladies Coffee Morning

The last Tuesday of every month between 10am and 12noon at 10 High Street, Woodstock.

Methodist Coffee Club

The Coffee Club meets every Thursday morning 10.30am to 12 noon in Woodstock Methodist Hall - all welcome.

Singing for Fun

This takes place at St Mary Magdalene Church every 1st Monday of the month at 2pm

St Mary Magdalene Church coffee morning

First Saturday of the month between 10am and 12noon. All proceeds to our local food bank.

The Crown

Live music every Friday nights from 7.30pm

Woodstock Lunch Club

Lunches are held in the Community Centre every 2nd Wednesday

Woodstock 50+ Cinema Club

Monthly films used to be at the Methodist Church, but sadly this has now stopped as of May 2025. They are hoping to reorganise.

Woodstock Jazz

These events are usually monthly, on the last Friday of each month. The actual events will be listed in the What's On section.

Woodstock Literature Society

This well established society hold regular talks and events, which will all be listed in What's On.

Woodstock and District u3a

All events are listed in What's On

Wootton Village Hall Talks

These take place monthly.

What's On

For the latest information, please click on the Events link at www.wobl.news. If you would like your event included here, please email editor@wobl.news.

Friday 30 May 2025, 19:30

Woodstock Jazz - Music
Simon Spillett: Fast, Furious AND full of melody
St Hugh's Centre

Wednesday 04 Jun 2025, 19:30

Friends of the Oxfordshire Museum - Talk
A 'Mammoth' Task: highlights from the Conservation Laboratory. Speaker: Naomi Bergmans
Oxfordshire Museum

Thursday 05 Jun 2025, 14:00

Woodstock and District u3a - Talk
John Field: The Amazing World of Magic
St Hugh's Centre

Wednesday 18 Jun 2025, 20:00

Woodstock Literature Society - Talk
'John Ruskin: A Victorian for our Times': Professor John Holmes
St Mary Magdalene Church

Friday 27 Jun 2025, 19:30

Woodstock Jazz - Music
Lily Dior in Concert: One of the finest voices in British Jazz Today
St Hugh's Centre

Monday 30 Jun 2025, 19:00

Woodstock Exhibition Foundation - Talk
Elizabeth I on Progress: Performance, Politics and Popularity
St Mary Magdalene Church

Friday 04 Jul 2025, 19:00

Woodstock Music Society - Concert
Joseph Haydn: 'The Creation' with Choir and Chamber Orchestra. Also on 5 July
St Mary Magdalene Church

Saturday 19 Jul 2025, 14:00

The Annual Mock Mayor Elections
Woodstock Town Square

Friday 25 Jul 2025, 18:00

Oxfordshire Museum - Theatre
440 presents Much ado about Nothing and Macbeth
Oxfordshire Museum

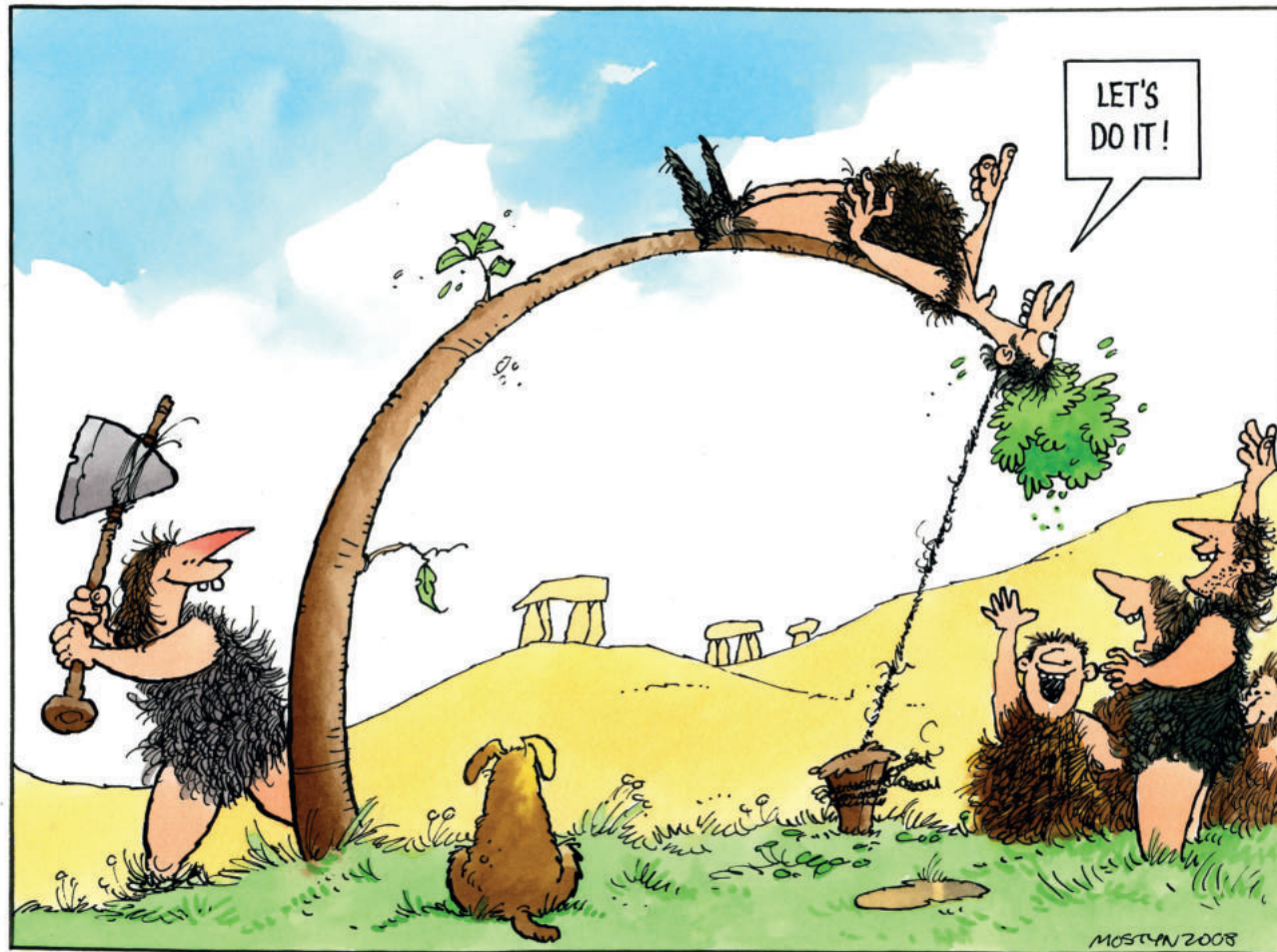
Thursday 31 Jul 2025, 16:00

British Transplant Games - Opening Ceremony
Blenheim Palace

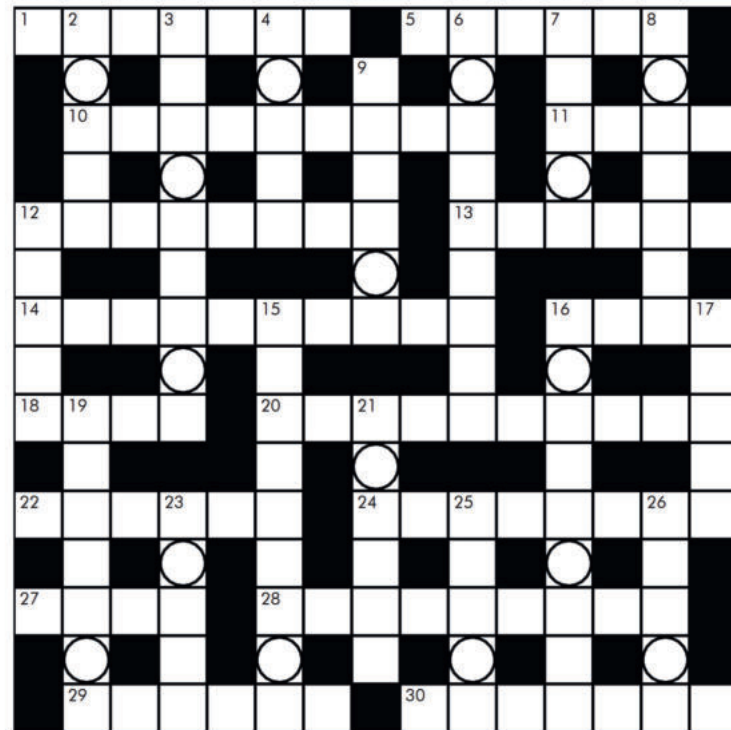
Thursday 04 Sep 2025, 14:00

Woodstock and District u3a - Talk
Liz Woolley: Beer, Sausages and Marmalade

Karatoon Korner



Solve the clues to this straight crossword. Read through the letters in the marked squares to reveal what event happened on 4 May 1945.



Across

1. Gym weight
5. Reflect
10. Flat
11. Breathe noisily
12. Finnish capital
13. Revolve
14. In all places
16. Basic particle
18. Strongbox
20. Postponing
22. Echo
24. Lawless
27. Fuzzy fruit
28. Pasta strands
29. Longs for
30. Wonder child

Down

2. Proverb
3. Small restaurant
4. Roman language
6. Meddle
7. Correct
8. Italian rice dish
9. Mentally infirm
12. Stilettos
15. Bathroom sink
16. Renounced
17. Sorcery
21. Sailor
23. Heath plant
25. Loathe
26. Frosting

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Dums - ROB BRIAN

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BLENHEIM PALACE

WHAT'S ON

Experience a whole year of
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JUNE

The Conference of Birds: Bridget McCrum 27th April - 17th September
Standing with Giants Installation 1st May - 30th June
Giffords Circus 22nd May - 2nd June
Pip and Posy 23rd May Onwards
Formal Gardens Painting Classes May - September
Blenheim Palace Triathlon..... 7th - 8th June
Nocturne Live 18th - 22nd June
Blenheim Palace Flower Show 27th - 29th June

JULY

Battle Proms 5th July
DogFest..... 12th - 13th July
British Transplant Games..... 31st July - 3rd August



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more
about
our
events.

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