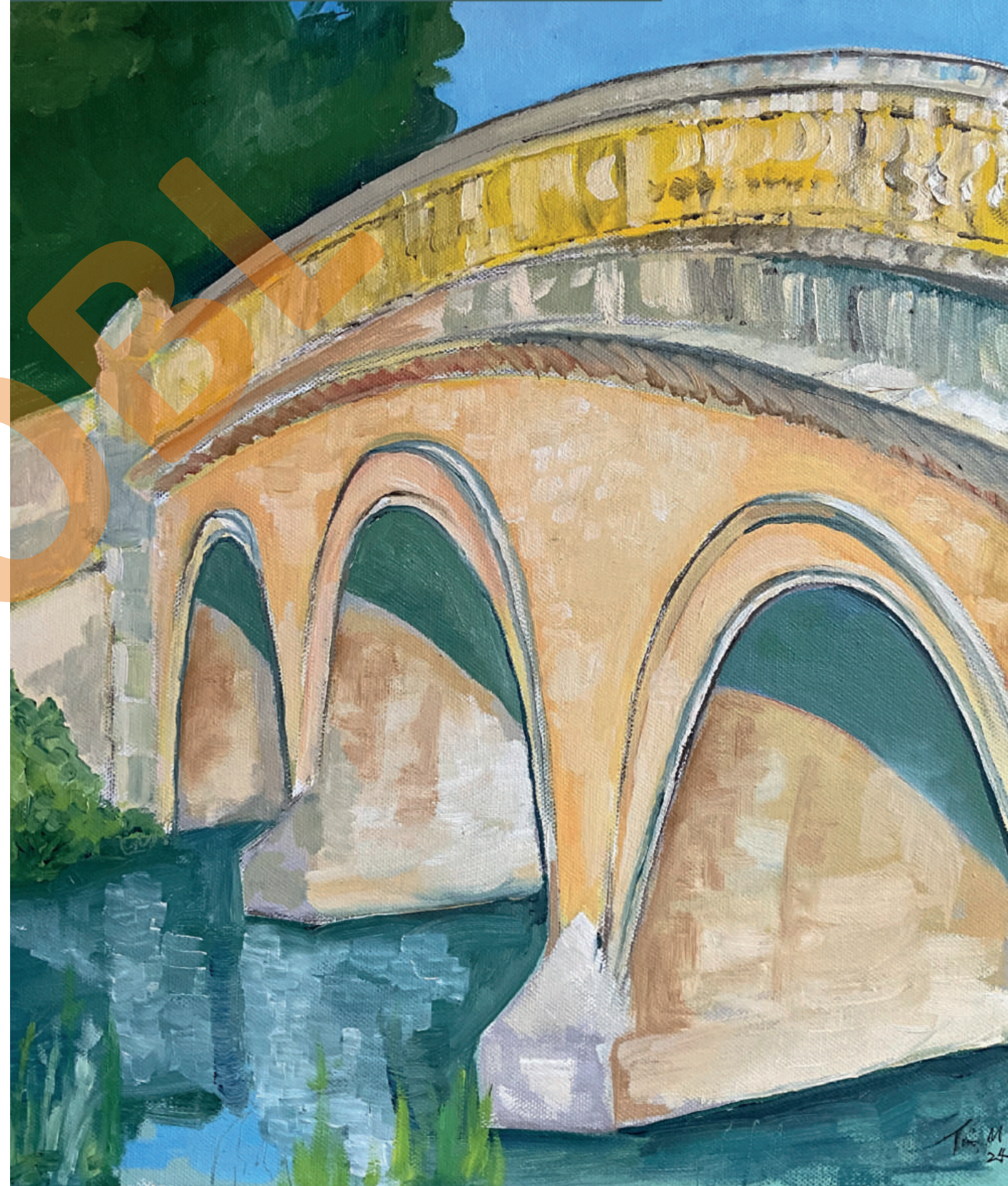




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Editorial

Well, it's been 6 weeks since the last edition, and despite having more time to think about the Editorial, it's come down to the last few days again!

What a wonderful sunny summer we have had. And the local scene has been hot as well, with loads of amazing events in Woodstock. This month you will find a review of Woodstock Live which happened at the end of August, and next month I am going to co-write a review of the enormous range of music I've had the pleasure of witnessing in our local community over the summer.

Free speech is very much in the national (and international) news at the moment, with the extraordinary arrest of a comedian and writer for a tweet; a huge march in London recently; and then the tragic and awful shooting of Charlie Kirk for debating openly with people who disagreed with him. And it looks like the 'banter ban' could be introduced into legislation soon, causing yet more problems for our embattled hospitality trade. Personally, I believe free speech is one of the biggest battles of our generation.

Not to be outdone, this problem has popped up locally, with our own Town Council now regrettably trying to control free speech - see the Letter from former Councillor Nick Melliss on page 10. And the Copyright and Filming Policies, recently drafted and approved by the Council, also attempt to restrict public access to reports on the Council's business and Minutes. Woodstock and Bladon News is proud of our balanced reports on all Town Council meetings that we have published since 2022, and they can be found in the 'Council Matters' section of our website - www.wobl.news.

This edition is again larger than normal with what I hope is great local content (but not quite as large as last month's bumper issue). Sadly, coverage of Mock Mayor Part 2 has had to be postponed until November because of a lack of space.

I am extremely grateful to all those who contribute, and welcome new ideas, articles, and letters.

Nick Manby-Brown, Editor

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This month's front cover is of Bladon Bridge in Blenheim Palace, sometimes known as 'New Bridge'. Designed by William Chambers, and constructed c. 1772-1773, with three arches to cross the widened river Glyme. Oil on canvas by Tim Massey.

Items included in this issue

Page	Item
5	Blenheim Park playing at Windsor
6	Woodstock Live 2025 Review
8	Letters to the Editor
11	WOBL Around The World
12	Council Matters
18	Woodstock Pubs History
20	Dr Robert Edwards: 60 Years On
28	Inaugural Golf Day Report
30	Alex's Creperie - A Review
41	Regular Events and What's On
42	Quiz and Crossword

There are many other reports and notices from local clubs and societies

Subscriptions

The magazine costs £2 per issue, or £20 per year, and the price will remain the same for 2025/2026.

It can be purchased at Blenheim Palace, Mary and Martin's Newsagent, Oxfordshire Museum, Woodstock Bookshop, Woodstock Grocers, and Wootton Stores, and from this month from Alex's new cafe in Park View. It can also be delivered - 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.

For those who elect to have the magazine delivered, please renew as soon as possible.

Please write for our magazine

Send your contributions to: editor@wobl.news

The next issue will be an November one, and copy deadline is **Sunday 19 October 2025**.

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

PLEASE NOTE: The answers to last month's quiz and crossword are on Page 38

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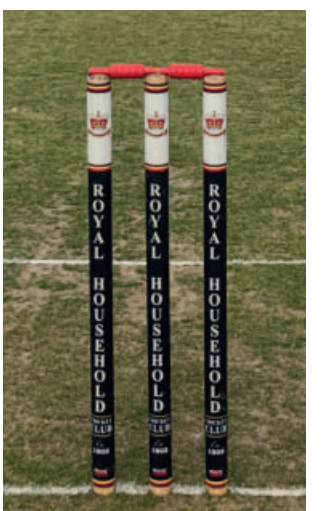
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Blenheim Park Cricket Club at Windsor Great Park



Playing at a Palace as we do, it's not surprising that teams from the upper strata of British society see us as suitable opposition, which is presumably why the Royal Household CC invited us to their charming ground within the Royal estate at Windsor.

But injuries/holidays/failed security clearances meant that we took a below strength XI forty miles downstream, and there were signs of apprehension on Blenheim faces when the toss resulted in the hosts batting first dig in what was - glory be! - a good old-fashioned timed match, which at least meant we could cope with the lack of a fifth bowler. Or even, we thought, a fourth.

The late Queen, whose smiling portrait adorns the clubhouse, was renowned as dutiful, loyal, dependable and undemonstrative, and much the same can be said of our own Nigel Walker (bar the smiling). And it was Old Reliable who struck in the first over, inducing a smart catch to Phil Boardman at slip. Another wicket in his third over and the trepidation began to ease, perhaps this wouldn't mean three hours of fruitlessly chasing the ball over the scorched outfield? Harvey, from the Castle End, was beating the bat with regularity but not finding the edge. Could a moment of magic bring a third wicket?

No, it couldn't. Mountford-Hills inexplicably went for a wander after another waft, leaving Kerr the simplest of tasks to roll the ball towards the stumps. The unedifying celebration that followed presumably a tribute to the jumbos overhead.

Tight bowling, astute captaincy and tigerish fielding, all things that rarely appear referring to BPCC in a match report, but I'm duty-bound to report that all three were on display. The last was particularly notable, as Dean Yates left the field early with a nasty sounding calf injury, and although a small child in a football jersey wandered around the outfield as a replacement, he didn't actually touch the ball. Special mention must be made of Ollie Boardman's

outstanding ground fielding; sometimes the apple falls miles and miles from the tree.

Spearman (4 wickets) and guest/ringer Rohan Gupta (2) kept up the pressure, never allowing the batsmen to break free, and with tough catches being held at regular intervals - guest2/ringer2 Mayan Gupta's boundary grab a particular highlight - the Royal Household innings never got going. Not until the ninth wicket had fallen did we see some adventure from the batsmen, the innings being declared closed at 152-9.

Boardman Sr and Parker opened after tea, and chasing a smallish target with plenty of time available, sensibly dug in against a sharp and testing opening attack. Patiently they accumulated, and took the game firmly out of the hands of the home team with a partnership of 77. Astute scoreboard-watchers will note that when the first wicket fell, the two batsman's scores totalled 41 of those 77. Skipper West went in at 3, and paid the price for having press-ganged David Hughes into umpiring the match. It wasn't so much the LBW decision that gratified our Chairman, as the fifteen-second interval between appeal and raised finger.

With the back of the chase broken, Mayan (36*) and Ollie (32*) could express themselves freely, unfurling a dazzling array of shots straight out of the coaching manual (albeit the All England Club one rather than the MCC) to take the visitors to a seven wicket victory so comfortable that Phil Spearman, due in at a vertigo-inducing number eight, did not even have to pad up.

A wonderful day. Let's hope they allow us back.

Royal Household CC 152-9d (P Spearman 4-47)
Blenheim Park CC 155-3 (M Gupta 36*, P Boardman 35, O Boardman 32*)
BPCC won by 7 wickets

David Hughes

Woodstock Live 2025 Review

Ask anyone who attended Woodstock Live this year, and it's fair to say that they would say that it was incredible! The sun was out, the atmosphere was excellent, and the music was absolutely rocking! Unlike the wet weather we experienced last year, we could not have asked for better weather, and this paved the way for a beautiful weekend of music from start to finish!



Myself, Harry Moseley, & Jack Walker, as co-chairs, with Claudia Stephenson and Abigail Saks as bar manager and marketing manager came together harmoniously this year as an all new committee. We could not be more pleased with how well attended this year's festival was - a sea of Woodstock society coming together to celebrate with a festival of music. Our team of volunteers were brilliant, from setting up to packing down and everything in between, these were the people that allowed the festival to run as smoothly as possible.

The festival kicked off from 4pm on the Friday with Matthew Jack in the Woodstock Arms, proceeding with Daniel Moseley in the Back Lane Tavern, Mandolirium at the King's Arms Hotel, and Tom Rogers closing the Friday evening at the Crown. All venues were well attended, and a great start to the festival!

With the festival in full flow, the main event started on both days with family Entertainment provided by Jordan Bass, creating a fun atmosphere and family friendly vibes from the off. We also had the winners of this year's Marlborough School Battle of the Bands to take the stage first at 1pm on Saturday, with exceptional performances from Chuck Louis who played rock and roll hits and the red kites playing two instrumental numbers.

We had a mix of traditional European and Native American folk tunes with originals from Alisa Apreleva. We then visited America with the Holy Fools doing what they do best on stage. Midair brought brilliant songwriting and harmonies in their original songs to the stage. Harry Quin and Danny

Davies brought modern acoustic originals and covers with great guitar playing and harmonies. Steady Habits brought fresh queer country to Woodstock. We then had dancy balkan fun from the Balkan Wanderers.

On Sunday, Medowsuite opened with a mix of traditional and original folk music. Woodstock did some counting and dancing to One Trick Donkey's world music. Tim Friers and the Mercenaries brought fun and energy. We had a mix of neo soul and jazz from the master musicians in Small Claims and friends. Woodstock then sang along to some favorite songs with Hannah Speller and Jamie Felton. Bankside brought great originals whilst the crowd were bathed in sunlight during their fantastic set. Papa Nui then brought huge fun and dancing during a set which included songs about early birds & worms! What The Funk naturally got everyone up and dancing to their funky and dancy set.



Our Headliners: Marlia Rae brought her brand new band to the stage on Saturday and gave us a glimpse of what to expect of her magnificent new music. The band thrilled the crowd with fantastic funky tunes and a few old favourites. The Shakes closed Saturday night with songs by the Rolling Stones, Stevie Wonder, ACDC and Paul Simon amongst others, thrilling the Woodstock Live crowd. On Sunday, we closed the festival with the fantastic Mambo Panthers bringing a latin flavour to Woodstock. Their addictive latin beat was the perfect way to finish a beautiful weekend of music!

A special Thank You has to also go to our sound engineers Spike and Stuart whose efforts throughout the weekend made our incredible 2025 lineup sound so amazing; as well as our videographer Andy Boyd, and photographers Cyrus Mower & Olivia Conner who provided excellent videography and photography to picture such a special weekend!

As in previous years, festival goers have been encouraged to bring or reuse their own pint cups, to reduce plastic waste. A great effort from all that were there, and once again proving that we are making a

difference with this initiative. I have to also mention seeing a family with a full dining table set up at one point, so hats off to whoever they were for their planning and dedication as they were there most of the Sunday!



Papa Nui performing on stage

As we know, Woodstock Live is volunteer-led and would not be the same without our festival bar, manned by our experienced and willing volunteers and captained by Bar Manager, Claudia Stephenson. We also re-introduced a Tombola and raffle this year, championed by our Marketing Manager, Abigail Saks. This proved to be a great hit with festival goers, who supported the festival by snapping up raffle tickets and exhausted the Tombola before Saturday finished! Prizes for the raffle were generously given from businesses around Woodstock, with over £2000 worth of prizes.

Support from our main event sponsors, Flowers Estate Agents, who provided significant financial support was generously pledged again this year. Without their involvement Woodstock Live would not be what it is today.

Alongside our main event sponsor, we have received a host of new sponsorship this year with QuickStart - Oxfordshire Motorcycle Training, Howling Productions, Wurzel, the Star Inn, Alfonso Gelateria and the Back Lane Tavern all supporting the festival, with Blenheim Palace, the Topsy Palace, Alex Creperie, Woodstock Accountancy and Lewis Properties also continuing to support the festival for continuous years. Alex Creperie provided their amazing Crepes as always!

We are so lucky to have a community in Woodstock in which businesses give so freely to events like Woodstock Live, and we are so thankful for all your contributions and sponsorship. This combined with incredible volunteer support makes Woodstock Live, and the town of Woodstock so special to be a part of.

Lastly, but definitely not least, is a huge thank you to everyone who attended Woodstock Live this August bank holiday weekend. The great support from the entire community at large truly is what makes this

event viable, and worth organising. Your enthusiastic and continued support year in, year out, allows us to confidently organise a fantastic weekend to suit such a fantastic community. This is mirrored with other community events like Night of 1000 Candles in November, as well as Old Woodstock Mock Mayor which of course will be returning in 2026!

Jack Walker and myself thoroughly enjoyed chairing Woodstock Live this year. We certainly will be continuing to organise this event for years to come, with next year rumoured to be the 20th year of Woodstock Live! So we will see you out on Market Place next year for another incredible weekend - See you in 2026!

Harry Moseley

Wake Up To Woodstock

Supporting local businesses and our community - be part of it.

Wake Up to Woodstock (WUTW) is dedicated to strengthening our town's business community by creating connections and promoting Woodstock as a thriving place to visit.

Through partnerships with Experience Oxfordshire, Cotswold Tours, OXLEP, and Blenheim Palace, we help showcase the town's boutique shops, award-winning hotels, restaurants, and cultural landmarks.

We're proud to play a role in Woodstock's cherished events, including the Woodstock Festive Fayre, A Night of a Thousand Candles, and other local favourites, Woodstock Live and Salon Privé. Beyond attracting visitors, these events enhance community spirit and connection which is important for us all.

As we continue to grow, Wake Up to Woodstock remains committed to supporting businesses, strengthening partnerships, and ensuring Woodstock is a great place to live, visit, and work. Our business social and networking mixer events provide valuable opportunities for local entrepreneurs and businesses to meet, collaborate and grow, supported by a social media presence that highlights our members.

If you're a business within the OX20 postcode, and you'd like to become a part of our growing community, drop Vicki and the team a line at info@wutw.co.uk or visit www.wutw.co.uk for more information. Or just come along to the next networking event - this October, Wake Up to Woodstock is holding its autumn mixer networking event. If you're interested in attending, drop us a line at mixers@wutw.co.uk.

We really look forward to welcoming you.

Nickie Rogan, Chair, Wake Up to Woodstock

Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor,

Clear and present danger: A sequel to 'Lives before loot.'

I am grateful to the veteran flight instructor for sharing his personal experiences of the danger of solar panels in proximity to airports. At the same time a 'battle royal' has erupted in the Dutch aviation industry which has clear implications for West Oxfordshire. The controversy is even more relevant now that British Airways will soon relocate their pilot training to Oxford Airport.

In spring this year Amsterdam's Schiphol Airport was forced to close two of its main runways between 10am and noon through intense glare from nearby solar panels. As you will see from the illustration the 100 hectare site is some distance from the airport perimeter and diminutive in comparison with the proposed 1000 hectare Botley West development. Yet it has created havoc. As well as causing severe air traffic disruption it has impacted the local community through noise pollution when aircraft are diverted over residential areas. When the costs to Schiphol exceeded €330 million and further closures were predicted for the autumn, the solar developer was taken to court.

It transpired that the local municipality Haarlemmermeer had been warned in advance that glare posed risks for both pilots and control tower before planning permission was granted. So now they were also in the firing line. The court's judgement was that the developer, De Groene Energie Corridor had caused a situation that, to quote, "is a severe threat to flight safety". Accordingly the judge ordered the company to immediately remove 78,000 of the offending panels by September 1st . A penalty of €1 million will be inflicted if the work is not completed by that time with a further €500,000 for each day that the panels remain afterwards. The developer made clear that this would bankrupt them but the National airline KLM entered the debate stating that the disruption had cost them many millions so they would sue if all the panels were not dismantled immediately. The Dutch Airline Authority is now overseeing the deconstruction of the whole site and insisting that the original permit be revoked.

Whether our own Government Planning Inspectorate wants to take the same risks remains to be seen. West Oxfordshire District Council clearly don't. The Schiphol experience now sets an important legal precedent. Discarding the warnings has been financially catastrophic for both airport and developer. So are we on the same planet? What are the differences between Amsterdam and Oxford?

Firstly the Dutch site is a fraction of the size of the Botley West proposal. We are anticipating 1000 hectares of metal, glass and high wire fences between Oxford Airport and Brize Norton, one of the UK's principle RAF bases. Second, the pilots flying commercial jets into Schiphol are experienced and assisted by co-pilots. In stark contrast, Oxford Airport is an exceptionally busy training school with novices flying small, and in some cases, aging, single engine aircraft on the same runway day and night. The flight instructor outlined the multiple dangers including blinding glare, bird displacement from Bladon Heath with the risk of engine strike, thermal currents from hot panels and potential disruption of radar systems at the RAF base. And it goes without saying, the vast expanse of panels would severely restrict emergency landing options and access for the emergency services.

In April 2024 well in advance of the Photovolt Development Partners submission for government approval, an article entitled 'Balancing solar energy generation and pilot safety at airports' was published in the scientific press. This contains the statement "solar reflections can impact pilots and cause safety concerns through glint and glare". The research employed a Solar Glare Hazard Analysis Tool (SGHAT) widely used in the air industry and formally endorsed by the US Federal Aviation Administration. Given that the Botley West site abuts closely upon Oxford Airport should these important issues not have been shared by Photovolt Development Partners with interested parties? Similarly the World Health Organisation has advised a 1.2 mile (2 km) gap between residential buildings and solar panels.

As a result of the airport's concerns a derisory 10 hectare wedge of panels was removed at the end of the runway. The purpose was to mitigate against emergency landings in the event of engine failure but this fails to address the multitude of other potential hazards. The 'Schiphol precedent' would see all panels removed from proximity to both Oxford Airport and Brize Norton which probably means the development in its entirety.

It's time to 'get real.' The UK contributes just 1% to global emissions so what does the widespread decimation of rural Britain achieve? Solar sites are proliferating rapidly in an unregulated manner driven by the uncertain future for farmers. For sub-50-megawatt developments (less than 100 hectares) national planning permission is not required. Landowners benefit from £1,200/acre/year whilst the operator sells electricity at prices indexed to gas generation irrespective of solar's negligible input costs. A 100 hectare, 50 megawatt site can generate £3 million annually with profit over 40 years reaching £120 million. Multiply that by 10 for Botley West's earnings and you will have

little doubt about their motivation. In the meantime consumers see their energy bills rise not fall. The National Grid warns of oversupply where producers have to be paid not to generate power so this is not about 'saving the planet'. Only this week, Nikkei Asia reported that major Chinese solar panel makers have posted huge losses in the first half of the year due to production overcapacity so the industry faces mounting pressure to cut output.

The time to address these issues is now, not when solar panels already cover West Oxfordshire. One solar related aviation event could have huge financial implications given the Schiphol experience. Should you consider these to be singular and radical views I can tell you that there are four other Professors of Medicine or Surgery in Bladon, all of whom share the same concerns.

Professor Stephen Westaby



The solar site at the heart of the controversy. Schiphol Airport is in the distance on the right.

Dear Editor,

Woodstock Town Council

I note with regret on Woodstock Town Council website the resignation of Nicholas Melliss, formerly a Town Councillor. This is particularly disappointing as he was only elected to the Council on 1st May 2025 - a very short tenure. He may, of course, have entirely unanticipated and personal reasons for resigning; in which case, I wish him well.

The turnover of Town Councillors at Woodstock seems to be a matter of grave concern however, if for no other reason than the cost of holding by-elections. It does cause one to wonder whether there is something else that triggered his resignation. I understand that now 4 Councillors have resigned in the last 18 months (3 of them at the same time and only 2 months after being elected), and 1 Mayor left after only 6 months in position. What is going on? Why do new Councillors leave so quickly, after only a few meetings rather than staying on the Town Council?

Why is the Town Council not doing more to flag this vacancy and encourage a by-election to bring new

blood on board? I understand that if no by-election is called for the position will either remain vacant, or someone will be co-opted on by existing Councillors - neither of these is particularly democratic!

The Council have posted about the vacancy on their website and, no doubt, have put up a notice in the Town Hall. Whilst meeting minimum requirements, it brings to mind the search for information from his council by Arthur Dent of "The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy" - he found it "on display in the bottom of a locked filing cabinet stuck in a disused lavatory with a sign on the door saying "Beware of the Leopard".

The Town Council recently saw fit to pay to put leaflets through everyone's door to highlight their concern regarding the Doctors' Surgery - they can promote something when they want to. I don't think they have even flagged the Councillor vacancy on Facebook - which is free!

I would be interested to hear what others think about what is happening at the Town Council.

Sam Dawson, by email

Dear Editor,

Is climate change the greatest issue our generation faces?

I refer to Giles Lewis' letter in the August/ September edition of WOBL.

The second quote he uses is from Prof. Alex Rogers' excellent autobiography 'The deep' in which he describes his remarkable work protecting our oceans. I recommend it. The quote is part of a paragraph explaining a key reason for writing the book. The full paragraph is as follows:

'I sincerely hope that by reading this book and seeing the damage being done to our oceans by warming, acidification and deoxygenation that you will support any efforts to reduce our dependence on hydrocarbons. Whether it be through switching off the lights when a room is not in use, cycling to work or writing to your political representative, any action we take is significant. Climate change is a global emergency and the results of ignoring it will be nothing short of a calamity on the scale of a world war for humanity and for the environment. The warnings from our geological history are clear and mass extinction will be knocking on the door of the ocean very soon unless we can get carbon emissions under control quickly.'

Whilst I agree that these words are alarming, they are not wild overstatements as Giles suggests. Year on year scientists are providing more evidence and speaking with more clarity. In terms of sources, I refer Giles and your other readers to the following:

- University of Reading's Climate Stripes - a simple graphic showing the rise in temperatures year on year since 1850.
- The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's turgid document written by leading climate scientists from around the world - 'Climate Change 2023: Synthesis Report.'
- If your readers are looking for empirical evidence of the impact of climate change, I suggest typing 'climate change and the insurance industry' into a search engine.

While I do think that Alex Rogers has been alarmist regarding BotleyWest I do not believe this is the case in this quote. Climate change mitigation is urgent and deeply important. Well done Alex for joining others in sounding the alarm.

I would be pleased to discuss these issues with Giles (and others). It is essential that decisions about climate change mitigation is based on as full an understanding of the facts as possible. Whether these facts are comfortable or not we should embrace them and make any necessary decisions and proportional actions. Based on the information available it is reasonable to say that significant sacrifices will be needed if we are going to pass on to future generations as wonderful a world as we have received from those who have gone before us. If any of your readers would like to meet to discuss these issues and how we could best respond to them, I would like to hear from them. I feel called by God to get involved in responding to climate change, and perhaps this is true for you too. My telephone number is 01993 898880.

I wish Giles and all your readers well.

Jonathan Ford

Dear Editor

And another one bites the dust...

With apologies to Queen, the rock group who wrote the song, not the monarch.

Why is it that - out of the four new Town Councillors elected in 2025 - two have already resigned? And in 2024, the three Town Councillors that were new in that year also resigned. Why can't Woodstock Town Council retain its Councillors? Is it something in the Town Hall water? The Oxford Mail reported last year of a "sinister culture", (OM 22/11/2024).

Obviously, I cannot speak for any of the others, but as one of the Councillors who resigned I can perhaps give a few answers. I think everyone in the town would like to know why their new councillors don't seem to last more than a few months.

- The Town Council has no system or method for listening and responding to residents' concerns. Council meetings work from an agenda which is drawn up by the Mayor and the Town Clerk.

Residents and Councillors actually make no impact on that agenda. I set up fortnightly Councillor surgeries in Woodstock Library so anyone could come along and raise issues with me. After three or four surgeries I felt a fraud because I couldn't respond to those issues, not meaningfully anyway.

- The Town Council has no system for self-assessment or self-improvement. When things go wrong, and they are going wrong, no Councillor says "Hey, wait a minute, this shouldn't happen, we were wrong here." So it isn't possible to put things right when they do go wrong.
- Financial incompetence. The Council is wealthy. It owns several properties in Woodstock worth about £9million overall and has about £400,000 in its current bank account. Yet it refuses to spend money where it should. So, for instance, there is no disabled access to the Town Hall. It could also, years ago, have financed a new Health Centre but that would have required more skill and know-how than the Council possesses or cares to bring in.

If you are still in doubt about whether the Council is dysfunctional, think of the Woodstock Surgery. At the moment new Health Centres are being built across the UK. It is bonanza time for Health Centres. Wallingford have submitted plans to their District Council for a new Health Centre, though their existing one looks much better than Woodstock's and is more recent. It will be built and financed by Berkeley Homes, perhaps not the most generous of developers, who will sell it back to the doctors in Wallingford for a nominal £1.

There are companies out there who will build a new health centre for you; they'll finance it, plan it, build it and probably run it with the NHS. But not in Woodstock. OK, it now looks as if we'll have a new Health Centre, possibly on the Owen Mumford site, but not because of the Town Council.

The problem is that if the Town Council is dysfunctional then things don't get done. Woodstock Surgery is a good example of this. If things don't get done then people suffer. As I'm disabled, I am sorry I couldn't do more for disabled people.

Woodstock needs good Councillors. They do matter and they can make a difference, but not the current lot, with admittedly a few exceptions, and not how they are set up at the moment.

Nick Melliss

Please send letters to editor@wobl.news
The deadline for the November issue is
Sunday 19 October

WOBL Around The World



With very many thanks to these travellers.

This month we have (from left to right):

Alex and Elizabeth in Hong Kong
Diane in Hvar, Croatia
Therese in Kalkan, Turkey
Anthony and Linda in Seville, Spain
Christopher and Jane in Woodstock, New Hampshire

Editors Note: Please think about packing a copy of WOBL in your suitcase for the next journey, and then take a photo to show us where you have been.



Woodstock & District u3a

The September speaker, local historian Liz Woolley, gave us a great talk on Oxfordshire Breweries, Oxford Sausages and Oxford Marmalade. We were led down the myriad of locations and stories of the families involved - with 319 licenced premises at one time in the city and in 1852 there were 50 butcher shops. So many of the Oxford city street names referenced to this historical past.

Our u3a branch is centred in Woodstock and attracts and welcomes members from the surrounding areas. Are you recently retired and looking for local social activity around an interest that you already have or seeking something new to become involved in. The u3a can offer much and our website gives full information: www.woodstocku3a.uk. Monthly members' speaker meetings are held at St Hugh's Centre, Hensington Road, at 1.45pm for 2pm.

Our next speaker meeting is on Thursday 2 October at St Hugh's, when we have local author and presenter Stephen Barker talking on Indians at Victorian Oxford. The first Indian students to attend the University of Oxford arrived in 1871, and the bridge between Oxford and India has grown stronger ever since. But why did Indian students begin to attend British universities from the middle of the 19th century? Do come along to learn more.

Visitors £3 to include tea and biscuits.

On 6 November the subject is Hedgerows and we welcome speaker Jessica Bouwer from Wild Oxfordshire, and on 4 December we have Anna Beer talking on Bess, The Life of Lady Raleigh.

All are welcome.

Sue Blackshaw, Chair

Council Matters

Woodstock and Bladon News has reported on Council meetings since at least 2022, and the reports are all available to view on our website. The magazine endeavours to remain professional and accurate in its representation of what happens. This month there are two Council meetings to report on.

In June 2025, the magazine started a section at the end of the Council reports, where requests were made for copy from Councils and our MP, all of whom represent residents' interests. This would enable them to speak directly to us, their constituency. In June, OCC sent copy; WODC contributed in July; and Calum Miller MP wrote last month. There was space this forthcoming issue to allow Woodstock Town Council to say something but regrettably, despite several requests from the Editor to the Clerk, no copy has been received.

Woodstock Town Council

Extraordinary Town Council meeting held at 7pm on Tuesday 19 August

Seven councillors and nine members of the public were present. The meeting was not obviously audio recorded as the OWL recording device was not lit. Rachel Peters was present to take notes, as the Clerk is on annual leave.

The Mayor clarified the situation regarding **Declarations of Interest**, noting it was up to each Councillor (only) to declare any interest or not on a topic to be discussed.

Two members of the public spoke. Further to the letter put through Woodstock letterboxes regarding the **Doctors Surgery**, a question was asked why WTC is progressing interest in the Old Police Station for the new Surgery when the Doctors and the Integrated Care Board (ICB) have stated that the site is inappropriate for their needs. The Mayor responded by saying that the Council is listening to the majority of the public.

The second speaker outlined her objections to the current planning application for **29 Oxford Road**, citing excessive development given that the initial development permission was only granted in 2023.

Consideration of planning applications

Hill Rise: Cllr Connolly considered that there were many supporting documents to these applications which needed more careful study, but considered that the Council should reaffirm its previous objections to the original applications. Cllr Wheatley noted that the upgrade of landscaping was to be welcomed and suggested more community engagement but was certainly an improvement on what was originally

planned. Overall the Council voted to reaffirm previous objections but welcomed sustainability, environmental and landscaping improvements. The Council remains concerned regarding the education provision for this development and seeks clarification regarding the eligibility of Hill Rise children to go to Woodstock Primary School [more below]. On a general point the Council will write to WODC sharing concerns that initial planning permissions are more and more being revisited with requests for changes in the original detailed application; moving the goal posts.

Black Prince: Application withdrawn

56 Oxford Street & 61 New Road - No objections

29 Oxford Road - The Council considered this an overbearing, overdevelopment of the site resulting in negative changes to the character of the site. Following the Councils previous objection, the new amendments had come back even worse and they would be objecting again. Concern was registered regarding the existing trees.

Important Survey regarding Neighbourhood Planning: Woodstock has no Development Plan (other than a partial one to achieve Green Spaces status) so are we able to complete the survey anyway? After lengthy discussion it was decided that the Council's Environment Working Group would complete the survey at their next meeting.

Licence applications: Crepe van for Woodstock Live was passed, and there were no objections to the sale of alcohol on and off the premises at the Topsy Palace in the event that the person named on the licence is not actually on site.

It was noted that a previously unsuccessful planning application for **10 Hensington Close** has been successfully appealed.

Mayor's Report

The Mayor thanked everyone involved in the distribution of the Drs Surgery letter. There have been a good number of responses which the Clerk will collate on his return.

It was noted that despite WTC having no objection to the initial application for the Feathers Flagpoles, WODC have recently rejected the application on the basis that the flag poles are too large and too long and will cause stress to the structure of the building.

New Drs Surgery

Responses to the distributed letter are not yet available; however responses so far are overwhelmingly in support of the Council's position with few reservations regarding costs and feasibility. It was agreed that the results once determined should be posted on notice boards and WTC website. The

Clerk would be asked to provide costs of a feasibility study by our architects for a GP surgery on the site.

An appeal against the planning application by Macarthy and Stone has been lodged but not yet live. How should the council object in the event of the appeal? The Mayor and the Deputy Mayor will research the reasons for the refusal of the application by Macarthy & Stone in detail and advise the council how best to respond.

Efforts continue to be made to resolve the disconnect between the Council's Committee and the Steering Group of decision makers chaired by Calum Miller MP.

Land South of Perdiswell Farm

Education Implications: Councillor Connolly presented a suggested response to OCC Education consultee comments. The document was commended by Cllr Cooper for its clarity in presenting the issues. The catchment area for the primary school is deemed to be within the town of Woodstock so while Old Woodstock will be inside the boundary, Perdiswell Farm development will not, despite being 13 mins walk from Woodstock Primary School. Begbroke school construction was mentioned, but won't be built for years as was Wootton School which has closed! It is suggested the OCC Education give more time to discuss the planning application.

Water meadows: WTC realises the difficulty of finding a contractor to enable a contract to be secured without going through the usual financial quotation procedures required. Therefore a max £6,000 pounds was agreed would be made available to a contractor known to the Council who would be invited to complete the work.

Botley Solar Farm: Report for information is available in the Agenda Pack.

OCC Community Tree and Woodland opportunity:

One tree, as yet unspecified, has been proposed to be planted at Cadogan Park.

At 7.45pm, the press and public were then excluded from the meeting while the Councillors received a confidential report on previously discussed matters.

Annie Cripps

The Agenda Pack for the meeting (available on the Council's website) has background information about many of the above reports.

Town Council meeting held at 7pm on Tuesday 2 September

8 councillors and 9 members of the public attended the meeting. The beginning of the meeting (around 10 mins) was audio recorded with the OWL device.

Public Participation

5 members of the public spoke in the public participation section. The first referred to the developments at **Campsfield House**, if the Council was aware and how it may affect Woodstock. They were informed of a meeting on 4th at Exeter Hall in Kidlington. This was noted. John Wynne, a resident of Wootton, then asked the Council who to speak to regarding the **Water Meadows** as he was working on a local energy project. John was asked to go through the Clerk. I asked the Council about the survey of the roof of the **Community Centre** with regard to installing solar panels. There was no reply this time. Chris Coe spoke about the Council's campaign for the **doctors' surgery** to be at the Hensington Road site despite being opposed by the commissioning body and doctors themselves. He asked for evidence on their statement that the majority of residents wanted it at this site. He also asked what the Council were planning to do and who would fund and run the surgery if it were there as the major stakeholders involved had determined it will be elsewhere. Finally, Nick Manby-Brown referred to agenda item 11, Policies and Procedures, particularly the **Filming Policy and the Copyright Policy**. He asked the Councillors to give these their full attention before approving due to previous objections and how they will be enforced.

Clerk and Councillors' Reports

The Mayor reported that **Councillor Nick Melliss** had resigned from the Council and wished him well. The Clerk reported that he was reviewing the disabled access to the Town Hall following Councillor Melliss's report and that work needed to be carried out on the Post Office roof.

County Councillor Andy Graham then gave his report. He is supporting Wootton's campaign for a bus stop at the **Judd's Garage junction** and would support any upgrades to bus stops in Woodstock if asked. He would also support a request for a Speed Indicator Device (SID) should the Town Council make one. The Oxford Park and Rides will be free to use over the Christmas period. Regarding the **doctors' surgery**, the steering group met over the summer and a report will be available at the end of the month. It is hoped that a new surgery will be opening in Woodstock in **January 2028**. Councillor Graham explained that agreement was very close. Two sites are being considered, the **Banbury Road** housing development and the old **Owen Mumford** site. He understood the Council's thoughts about the Hensington Road site but that they have moved on. Councillor Williams expressed concerns about access to either site and Councillor Graham took these comments onboard.

From the District Councillors' report, West Oxfordshire District Council is currently developing a **new Local Plan** helping to steer future growth and development in the district. West Oxfordshire District has been named the top performing rural district in the UK for climate change, reducing carbon emissions and building resilience across the district. The District Council has extended the grant 'Coronation Community Orchard Scheme', which will now run to March 2026 for local tree planting between September 2025 to March 2026.

Planning

There was no objection for 35 Hill Rise.

Finance

The current balance is £384,305.

New Doctors' Surgery

Councillor Williams gave an oral report on the new surgery. She thanked residents for responding to the consultation, there being 152 replies which represents 4.3% of the Woodstock population. 9 said that it should be left to the steering group, the remainder were in favour of the Hensington Road site. The Council has requested a quote for plans to build a surgery at the **Hensington Road site**. Councillor Poskitt stated that things had moved on and that the Council needed to be realistic.

Christmas Lights

Only one company returned a quotation for putting up Christmas lights around Woodstock. Lights would not go on the trees in town as before as cables were cut when the trees were pollarded. There was some discussion on what the Council had agreed on. The quotation was for decorating two 12 foot trees on the square opposite the Co-Op, one outside of the Kings Arms and the usual large tree donated by Blenheim at the front of the Town Hall. There would also be additional lighting on the front facade of the Town Hall. The Council approved the cost of £5,158 plus VAT.

Environment

The repair of the river bank in the **Water Meadows** was discussed. There was only one offer to quote for the repair and it was not clear what role the Environment Agency had in this, whether a licence was required. Councillor Connolly stressed the urgency of this matter. A quote to clean the **War Memorial** was agreed.

Other Business

All of the policies and procedures, including copyright, data protection, freedom of information and recordings of meetings were passed.

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

Graham Brown

Woodstock Natural History Society

Woodstock Natural History Society's (WNHS) monthly meetings, to which all are welcome, are held at St Hugh's Hall, Hensington Road, from 7.30pm until 9.00pm on the second Tuesday of each month.

On Tuesday 9 September Dr Christopher Hoskin spoke on 'Orchids in our area and their germination'. During this well-attended talk Christopher spoke of his life-long interest in orchids. Focusing on local orchid species we learned how Christopher's teenage interest has expanded to recording many orchid species, leading to his germinating and propagating of several species. We learned where to find orchids, what ecological conditions they preferred, and the best time of year to see them. Christopher made reference to the book 'Oxfordshire's Threatened Plants' which is a must-read for anyone interested in rare local plants, including orchids. Most importantly, he stressed the need to record and report the location of orchids and other rare plants to the Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre (TVERC). Recording wild plants (and other wildlife) can be mostly easily achieved by using 'iRecord' an interactive app accessible via a smart phone. Such information can be important to monitor plants but may also be influential for planning decisions. For example, six species of orchid are known from the Kidlington 'Triangle site', which are likely to be lost if the new football stadium is built.

Christopher also told us about the complexity of germinating orchids that starts with (legally) collecting and storing the seed, preparing and sterilising a growing medium, cleaning and sowing seeds with fungus, re-plate the seeds, and then pot-out and grow on - typically within a cold frame, with adequate soil composition, and watering; a level of detail and perseverance requiring abundant patience.

Our Tuesday meetings are augmented by a wonderful programme of walks, trips, social events and visits. Our next meeting will host Professor Tim Birkhead FRS, who's talk will be about the 'Great Auk: its extraordinary life, hideous death, and mysterious afterlife'. Tim is an engaging and fascinating speaker, so do consider joining us at St Hugh's Hall on Tuesday 14 October. There is a small £3 fee for visitors, but a year's membership is only £18.

From Tuesday 28 October to Saturday 1 November, there will be an Art Exhibition at St Mary Magdalene Church. The theme is 'Our Natural World', and students from the local schools have been invited to submit their artistic interpretations; please also see the poster advertising the art exhibition in this magazine.

Adrian J Delnevo, Chair, WNHS

Portrait of the Month - Alastair McEwen



For centuries, The Marlborough Arms has been at the heart of Woodstock life!

First recorded as The George Inne in 1469, it originally served as accommodation for (Fair) Rosamund Clifford, mistress of Henry II. Other notables include Richard the Lionheart, King John, and even Elizabeth I - who is said to have slipped away to the Inne while under house arrest by her half-sister, 'Bloody' Mary. And Blenheim's most famous son, Sir Winston Churchill, was also known to frequent 'The Arms'. All are believed to have dropped by for an ale or two, or a quiet drink.

Its present name, adopted in the eighteenth century, honours the Marlborough family of Blenheim Palace.

Today, Alastair McEwen carries the tradition of welcoming everyone with warmth and good cheer. Picking up the mantle from his parents who owned and ran the Arms over 75 years. "I've lived here for so long, grew up here and come to know so many wonderful people. If I walk down the street, there's a real friendliness here in Woodstock," he reflects.

This portrait, taken by fine art portrait photographer Pippa Hetherington, intuitively captures a poignant moment with Alastair, something that will be valued for years to come. Under Alastair's steady hand, The Marlborough Arms continues to be a place where history, hospitality, and community meet.

Pippa Hetherington

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Legal 500, 2024



Your final Project Manager: How to choose your Executor

Now, Executors are not - despite the slightly dramatic name - people tasked with carrying out secret missions or organising Viking funerals. In reality, they're the individuals you appoint in your Will to make sure everything is handled properly after you die. It's a serious responsibility, and choosing the right person (or people) - someone reliable, organised, and calm under pressure - is absolutely essential.

What Do Executors Actually Do?

Executors are the ones who handle the admin after you're gone - and it's no small task. They start by registering the death and getting the certificate, which kicks off what is very much an admin marathon.

Then they apply for probate (the legal go-ahead), gather your assets (everything from bank accounts to that box of antique clocks), pay off any debts and taxes (yes, HMRC still gets involved), and finally make sure your beneficiaries receive what you intended - no mix-ups, no squabbles, and definitely no "I thought that was mine" drama.

It's not glamorous, and it's not quick. It can take months, sometimes longer, depending on the complexity of your estate and how well-behaved your beneficiaries are.

Who Can Be an Executor?

Anyone over 18 can be an Executor. You can have up to four, though two is usually plenty. They can be friends or family members. But just because someone can be an Executor doesn't mean they should be. Here's what you want in an Executor:

1. Trustworthiness: This is non-negotiable. They'll be handling your money. Choose someone who won't be tempted to 'borrow' from the estate or ignore your wishes.
2. Organisation: Executors need to keep records, meet deadlines, and communicate with various institutions. Definitely don't choose your cousin Nigel, who once lost his passport three times in a week.
3. Availability: It's no good appointing someone who lives halfway around the world or is already overwhelmed with their own responsibilities. Executors need time and energy to do the job properly.
4. Emotional resilience: Administering a Will can be emotionally taxing, especially if the Executor is also grieving. Some people cope well; others don't. Be honest about what your loved ones can handle.
5. Neutrality: If your estate involves potential conflict - say, between siblings or blended families - a neutral Executor can help keep the peace. Sometimes, appointing a solicitor or professional Executor is the wisest move.

Should You Appoint a Professional Executor?

In some cases, absolutely. If your estate is on the complicated side - think multiple properties, business interests, or assets scattered across borders - then having someone who knows their way around the legal maze can be a real blessing. Likewise, if you suspect there might be a bit of family drama (and let's be honest, there often is), a neutral professional can help keep things civil.

At our firm, we often act as executors. Sometimes we do it alone, sometimes alongside family members, and occasionally we're brought in as a backup when things get a bit complicated. Why? Because we know what we're doing. We've got the experience, we understand the emotional side, and we're rather good at keeping things calm and orderly. It's a bit like asking a seasoned pilot to land the plane rather than letting Uncle Dave have a go because he once flew a drone.

A professional executor takes the pressure off, keeps things moving, and makes sure everything's done properly - which, let's face it, is exactly what you want when dealing with HMRC, legal documents, and family dynamics.

Should your Executor get paid?

Not necessarily. If your Executor is a friend or family member, they'll often take on the role without expecting payment. That said, it's perfectly fine to leave them a gift in your Will as a thank-you. If you appoint a professional - like a solicitor or trust company - they'll charge a fee, which is paid from your estate.

What Happens If You Choose Poorly?

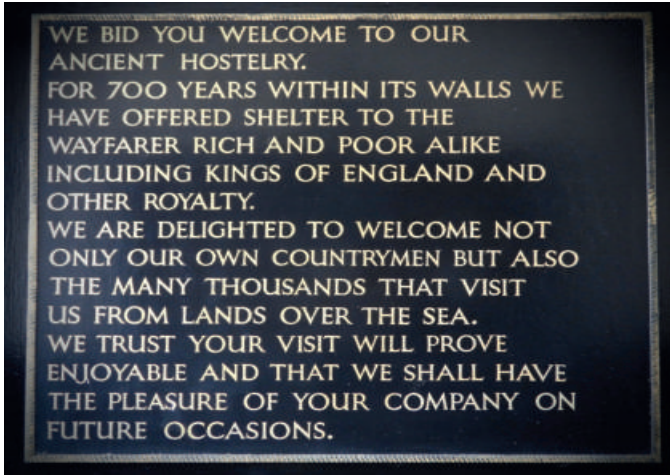
If your Executor refuses to act, dies before you, or turns out to be unsuitable, it can cause delays and complications. That's why it's wise to name substitute Executors in your Will - a sort of backup crew, ready to step in if needed.

Choosing your Executors isn't the most thrilling part of estate planning, but it's one of the most important. Think carefully, talk to your candidates, and don't be afraid to seek advice. A good Executor will make sure your wishes are respected, your estate is handled swiftly and properly, and your loved ones aren't left in a muddle. And if you're still unsure, pop into the office for a chat.

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.

Woodstock: A Hotspot for English Pub Culture

Renowned for its winding streets, Cotswold-stone cottages, and of course, the grandeur of Blenheim Palace, Woodstock is also something of an unsung hero of England’s public house culture. For centuries, our little Oxfordshire market town has been a refuge for weary travellers, thirsty tradesmen, curious tourists and loyal locals alike, who have found comfort in the glow of a pub fire and the promise of a pint. Today, residents are positively spoiled for choice; few towns of its size can boast such a rich tapestry of inns, taverns and alehouses.



The welcoming sign under the arch at The Bear

The story begins in the Middle Ages, with the Bear Hotel welcoming guests since the 13th century. Once a coaching inn, it has hosted Hollywood royalty in the form of Richard Burton and Elizabeth Taylor (in the same room), political titans in the form of Harold Wilson and Edward Heath (not in the same room), as well as a ghost, who is said to permanently reside in room 16. Over the road, the Star Inn has its own long history, too. With its late 17th-century origins and 18th-century frontage, it has been a convivial meeting place for generations of townsfolk and travellers, part of the tapestry of Woodstock life for over three centuries.

The King’s Arms on Market Street is another Woodstock fixture with a long pedigree. The building dates to the 16th century and first traded as The Corner House, later becoming The Compasses, before adopting its current name in 1795. With its thick stone walls and centuries of history, it has seen Woodstock change around it many times, including the construction of Blenheim Palace. Today, under the watchful eye of Fuller’s pubs, the King’s Arms is a safe bet, combining the comfort of a smart inn and restaurant with the reassuring familiarity of a well-poured pint of London Pride.

Primarily marketed as a bed-and-breakfast, The Marlborough Arms is a handsome and historic

coaching inn whose origins stretch back to the 15th century, appearing in the Woodstock borough rent roll in 1469 under its former name, the George Inne. The story goes, the building was constructed to accommodate Rosamund Clifford, Henry II’s mistress, as she could not be housed in the Royal Manor House (for obvious reasons). After the Duke of Marlborough’s victory at the Battle of Blenheim in 1704, it was aptly renamed the Marlborough Arms, and much of its historic character remains today. It remains a quiet cornerstone of the town’s hospitality scene.



The Bear, a century ago

On the topic of inevitable evolution, The King’s Head on Park Lane earned the nickname “the Spud Pub” in the 1970s for serving a generous offering of baked potatoes, well before the recent resurgence of the keto diet. It has certainly come a long way since then. The same building was reinvented in 2021 as the stylish Back Lane Tavern, a reinvention that has since paid off handsomely. In 2024, it was awarded two AA Rosettes for culinary excellence, retained them in 2025, and was recently crowned Best Gastropub at the OxInABox Awards. Today, its chicken wings are approaching legendary status in their own right.



The Marlborough Arms in bygone days

The Grade II listed Crown Inn at 31 High Street tells a similar tale of continuity and change. With 18th century origins as a classic coaching inn, it would

once have been alive with stagecoaches. Today, while the fabric of the old coaching inn remains, its interior has been transformed with bright, contemporary décor. The result is a pub that feels modern and welcoming, yet still carries the weight of almost three centuries of Woodstock history in its walls.

The provision of superb pizzas is also not an original feature of the place. Other long-standing inns continue to thrive too. The Woodstock Arms, a characterfully rustic inn on Market Street, is now under new management and promises to build on its reputation for hearty food and comfortable rooms. The Punchbowl has its own unique backstory within the town: the building was once the town’s grammar school and master’s house until 1901, before its reincarnation as a popular pub, restaurant and perfect location for soaking up the last of the evening sun.

Time, however, has claimed its share of casualties among local establishments. The Rose & Crown, built circa 1830, closed its doors at the turn of the millennium, and the much-loved Queen’s Own pub disappeared a decade later. But others have held fast. The riverside Black Prince in Old Woodstock was a stalwart of the town’s real ale scene for decades, famous for summer pints beside the Glyme and community traditions like the duck race. Though its future is uncertain after closing in 2023, its story

remains deeply etched into Woodstock’s history.

With locals typically remaining loyal to their chosen haunt, it is too easy to forget how extensive the selection of pubs is in Woodstock. Each carries its own legends, offerings of food and drink, and ghosts. Together, they keep alive a tradition that stretches back centuries - the English pub at the heart of community life. So, whether you’re seeking history, hospitality, spicy wings, or all of the above, Woodstock certainly has you covered. Anyone fancy a pint?

Matt Donnelly

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Dr Robert Edwards: Sixty years on

Sixty years ago, on Friday 1 October 1965, I joined the GP Practice at Woodstock aged 26. Medicine was a world away from 2025. Then there were 20,000 GPs. Now there are 80,000. I concede that many are now part-timers.

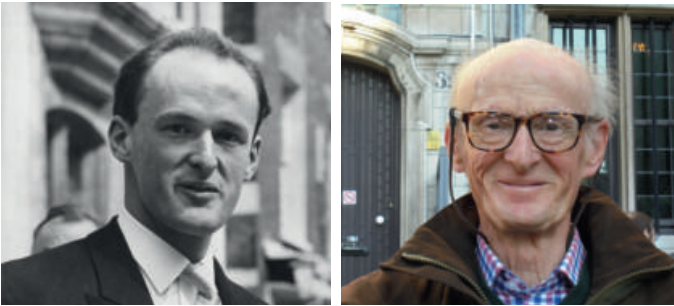


This picture was taken before 1967, when the larger windows were installed

The Surgery was in 24 High Street which now contains the Pharmacy. Two consulting rooms were shared between four partners and more time was spent on home visiting than in the surgery. The senior partner, Dr Bevan, had a grand room with sash windows onto the High Street. Behind him on the book case stretched thirty volumes of The Practice of Medicine by Lord Horder indicating the doctor's wisdom. Patients could see that Volume I was titled Abdomen to Anus. This implied a vast pool of knowledge in the other twenty nine volumes. Graham Swift and I worked in a windowless cupboard under the stairs.

We repaired injuries with needle and thread in the old kitchen. The surgical instruments were washed and placed in much used surgical spirit. No sterilizer; no autoclave. Dr Bevan had been a surgeon in the Eighth Army in the North African desert where water was scarce and sterility would have been hard to maintain.

There was no appointment system. Patients could arrive until 7pm at which time Betty Clifford locked the front door. The dozen people still in the waiting room had to be seen. We worked fast. The sign on a back windscreen claiming that GPs do it in four minutes was only a modest exaggeration. Betty ruled the waiting room where she plucked the record cards from her shelves without asking for names. She knew nearly all the 9,400 patients and their family trees. The waiting room chairs had come from the Rectory Lane junk shop (in which I now live) and they looked like it. Morning and evening surgeries still took place every Saturday.



Dr Robert Edwards in 1963 and 2025

At 11am Betty would take a bag of blood and urine specimens to the bus stop and hand it to the driver. He would get off his bus at the old Radcliffe Infirmary and take the bag into the pathology department which was where the glistening new Mathematics building now stands.

There were two branch surgeries. The main one was in Kidlington High Street across the road from the Sterling Cinema (now Tesco). This was manned six afternoons per week. Dr Bevan decreed that he would only agree to see the pharmaceutical representatives, aka drug reps, at the Saturday afternoon surgery at Kidlington. Only one ever came. The other branch surgery was at Kirtlington where many older villagers had no cars and no bus to Woodstock. Consultations took place at the table in an unheated billiard room. There was a tin bowl and a thermos flask of warm water for hygiene. Neither the doctor nor the patient took off their overcoats.

The present surgery, opened in 1967, was a palace in comparison to 24 High Street. When we opened it, one could by then usually get an appointment for non urgent business on the same day. From 1 to 2 pm the surgery closed and the phone was minded at home by the doctors' wives who also had to take the calls for the doctor on duty at night and through the week-ends. As the junior doctor, I had to cover two nights every week and to work through the following day.

The families whom we visited could live as far afield as Middle Barton, North Aston or Hampton Poyle. I drove an unroadworthy Ford Popular of 1940s vintage with erratic steering, wooden floor boards, a clothes peg to control the choke and unreliable flip-up indicators. In winter we fitted chains to our wheels to enable us to get through snow to the villages. Winters were colder sixty years ago. A few years later we were all driving Austin minis. Much better in the snow but they rusted shockingly. Many visits to the long term unwell and disabled were not aiming to cure but to seek an, often small, improvement in their self management, to try to raise spirits and to support their carers, reducing their feeling that they were isolated in their adversity.

We treated heart attacks and strokes at home without admission to hospital, visiting frequently. Measles

and chickenpox were seen at home and after nine months in Woodstock I caught mumps from a child, much to the amusement of my partners. Home births were common and all four partners attended deliveries. I once asked a young woman why she was looking so grumpy. She replied "have you ever tried getting out of an E-type Jaguar when you are thirty weeks pregnant?"

We treated hypertension unsuccessfully before the modern list of medications had been invented. Not even beta-blockers had reached the market. I knew a row of old ladies at Rye Grass who walked around for years with blood pressures over 200mmHg. Cholesterol was not high on the agenda. Cardiac Ultrasound, CT scans and MRI had not been invented. No hip or knee replacement. No surgery or stents for coronary arteries. No chemotherapy for cancer. Hospices had not reached Oxfordshire so terminal care was provided by the GPs and District Nurses working as a team.

The conditions of work for GPs were tough and morale was desperately low. If they chose to employ a receptionist or nurse they had to pay them from their own pockets. Pay never quite kept up with inflation. No other young doctors wanted to join General Practice but I could see that the system was about to get much better. For example the doctors would soon only have to pay thirty per cent of their staff's salaries. I was interviewed by twelve practices and turned them all down before discovering Woodstock. I had served two years as a junior doctor whereas now they have to train for at least five years after basic qualification.

Barbara and I bought 12 Meadow Walk on the half completed Hensington Gate Estate for £7,300 paying 7.5% interest on a fixed rate mortgage. We then had £300 left of our savings to equip and furnish the whole house. My starting salary in Woodstock was £100 per month; very similar to pay on the production line at Cowley.

Dr Robert Edwards

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Wootton Talks

Our next speaker at 7.30pm on Friday 10 October is **Harriet Rix**, a leading tree scientist formerly based at the Tree Council. Before joining this sector, Harriet worked in landmine clearance in the Middle East and is a trustee of the Iraqi environmental charity, Hasar.

Harriet will be talking about her widely-praised book, 'The Genius of Trees', which one reviewer described as a mesmerising global story showing how trees have learned to use the soil, air, water, plants, fungi, fire, animals and people around them to shape our world - possessing powers beyond anything we might have imagined.

From oaks growing in Devon and Amedi in Iraq to the laurel rainforests of the Canary Islands, metasequoias in California and fossil forests preserved from hundreds of millions of years ago - trees not only farm the landscape in which they grow, but also manipulate the fundamental elements, other species (and even humans) to achieve their ends.

Leading scientists claim 'The Genius of Trees' restores trees to their rightful position - not as victims of our negligence but as ingenious, stunningly inventive agents in a grand ecological narrative. Some have been using fire as a reproductive tool since prehistoric times - others have gone to extraordinary lengths to make sure their fruits reach large primates, who can spread their seeds over vast distances, while poisoning smaller and less useful mammals.

Harriet adds that some trees can split solid rock and create fertile ground in barren landscapes, effectively building entire ecosystems from scratch. There are countless inventive and astonishing ways trees sculpt and even master their environment - and Harriet will explain the science of how they achieve these feats.

Entry for this event in St Mary's Church (with an upgraded sound system and elevated screen) is £10 in cash - and includes free food. (Children over 16 welcome). Cards can be used to buy copies of 'The Genius of Trees'. To reserve seats please contact us through our website www.woottontalks.co.uk.

Andy Morgan



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The Oxfordshire Museum

The OM Open Art Competition 2025

Our popular annual art competition is back! The call went out and artists from all over Oxfordshire submitted their artworks. This year's theme is animals, and the top 50 works will be displayed in this special exhibition. You'll also have the chance to vote for your favourite in our People's Choice Award.

Exhibition Opens Saturday 27 September until Sunday 2 November. Free entry.

Mosaic Workshop



We welcome back talented tutor Jane Ellison for another mosaic workshop in November. During this fun and easy-going workshop, you will have the opportunity to create a number of mosaic stars using mirrored and glittery tesserae and broken china. On Saturday Jane will guide you through all the skills and techniques required to create your mosaic, and on Sunday how to grout and finish them to a high standard. These twinkly stars will make ideal gifts, should you be able to part with them! Please visit our website for booking information and ticket prices.

Saturday 8 November & Sunday 9 November.

Wreath Making

Tickets are now available for our annual Christmas wreath making workshops. Oxfordshire florist and tutor, Sandra, will guide you in constructing the design using seasonal foliage, natural decorations, and materials. Make a sustainable wreath that your door will be proud of. Mince pies are included in the course price as are all floral materials and tuition. Book early as places are limited. Ages 18+. You will need to bring with you a pair of strong scissors or secateurs. Please visit our website for booking information and ticket prices.

Saturday 6 December (morning and afternoon sessions available)

For details on all our workshops please visit our website: www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/museumworkshops

Friends of the Oxfordshire Museum

Monthly Talks at The Coach House at the Oxfordshire Museum, Woodstock at 7.30pm

Wednesday 1 October

Note: Talk changed from advertised programme to:

‘One Saturday afternoon on the Home Front - stories from an aerial photograph’

Speaker: Cathy Stoertz

A single frame from a run of aerial photographs taken by the US Army Air Force on 27 May 1944, centred on Moreton in Marsh, evokes stories ranging from the personal to the international. This single image encapsulates the impact of the European war on civilian life in an English market town and shows how aerial photographs can open a window on both individual experience and broader social and political history.

Wednesday 5 November

World War 1 - paintings and poetry

Speaker: Alice Foster, Art historian and lecturer

Poignant images from WW1 artists such as Paul Nash and Stanley Spencer will be complemented by poetry from the trenches.

Wednesday 3 December

William Turner of Oxford and Shipton-on-Cherwell

Speaker: Colin Harrison, Senior Curator of European Art, Ashmolean Museum

Discover the Victorian artist and architect William Turner, who was instrumental in the reconstruction of Shipton-on-Cherwell parish church.

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 to 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.

Children's Creative Writing Competition - The Winner

This year the Friends of the Oxfordshire Museum launched a Creative Writing competition for children aged seven to eleven.

Their challenge was to write an imaginative story in up to 500 words, relating to, and inspired by, an object they have seen in the museum. The prize was £50.

The winner was 10 year-old Linus, whose story is shown below.

Additionally, the judges were so impressed by the story written by 7 year-old Maya that they added a Highly Commended award to her. She received a £20 book token, kindly donated by Woodstock Bookshop.

Congratulations, to Linus and Maya!

The Ridgeway Pendant, by Linus

Jonas glimpsed some rusted metal out of the corner of his eye, lying near the path. He was on a family walk along The Ridgeway. Intrigued, he picked it up. It was a circular pendant, with beautiful animals crafted on it. Jonas slipped it into his pocket and ambled on before his parents could question him. A light suddenly started spiralling around him. He couldn't see his family. Jonas anxiously searched around for clues. After a few agonising miles a village skyline appeared, and clutching the pendant, Jonas continued. The village had very little light, there were men pulling carts and in the centre of the village lay rundown shops. An eerie silence hung in the air. No birds were singing and no livestock chewed grass in fields. There were mouldering haystacks here and there. This place doesn't have any animals, Jonas thought, not daring to make the comment out loud. The pendant buzzed. Jonas's quivering hands dropped it, letting it shatter on the floor. The artifact glowed and animals burst out, hundreds and hundreds of them. "What the...?" a nearby farmer exclaimed, staggering backwards. Delighted by the news, he ran off and called, "The animals are back! The animals!" The farmer's barn was as deserted as an abandoned ship; looming in corners were thick spider webs which had not been brushed in weeks. The stench of manure lingered in the air. Jonas held his nose. The barn was dilapidated. "You've found it!" the farmer exclaimed. "Long ago our village lost this. Like a magnet, it pulled our animals with it. Now it's here!" the farmer jumped giddily. "Why did the animals get sucked into it?" Jonas asked. "The energy in the magic, animals love energy."

"Where are we?" Jonas questioned, deciding to move on. "Oxfordshire of course!" Jonas' mouth dropped open cavernously. "O-Oxfordshire", he mouthed. Villagers' faces materialised from the shadows. Some came from behind shops, many from behind wagons and a handful from their tumbledown wooden huts. They began closing in on Jonas. "Uh-oh" he mumbled. Then, unexpectedly, they all started clapping and chanting excitedly, "Here at last! Our hero!" This was possibly the happiest moment of Jonas' life. A massive grin spread across his face.

Inhabitants waved their arms ready for the announcement and joined hands shouting in unison, "We have a new leader!" Jonas felt tears welling in

his eyes and his mouth dropped into an "O". The days following this were perfect: Jonas got whatever he wanted. The village seemed to be magically in a better shape; lanterns lit each building, and life was much easier for the villagers now that they had their animals back. Even the barn was liveable! But as time went on, Jonas knew he had to make a crucial decision: would he stay to help the village with future problems or try to get back to his family? He knew they would be worried, and he was missing his family so much he wondered if he could bear to stay.

Woodstock Probus Club

We have had two talks since the last issue.

On 7 August, Ann and John Ford, came dressed appropriately for the period of early Morris cars to give an informative and entertaining talk on "Morris Minors in the Media". They had a lucky break when they took a Morris Minor to a car show and found a business card on their windscreen asking if it could be hired for a film. This led to their building up a collection of Morris Minors and other classic cars. They have 25 years' experience of providing cars for TV/Film industry, magazine photo shoots, weddings and VIP charity work, in one case, helping to supply a fleet of 32 cars for one film.

On 4 Sept, Micheal Riordan, talked about the archives of "St John Baptist College in the University of Oxford", giving us an interesting reflection on the early history of St John's. The college was founded by Thomas White, a wealthy merchant, and ardent catholic who wanted to encourage catholicism after the protestant era of Henry VIII and his son Edward. The irony is that the college was not open for business until 1558, towards the end of the reign of Bloody Mary and just before Elizabeth I came to the throne and the fervour for a catholic reformation declined.

We were shown many of the archive documents and given an interesting take on the history of the time, reminding us of King Philip of England. (Maybe you, like me had forgotten we had such a king). One of the oldest documents in the archive turned out to be a fake, as it was signed by someone who was already dead! It is thought to have been written by monks at Osley to protect their ownership of the monastery.

St John's bought St Giles fields which turned out to be a very good investment as it became North Oxford, and made the college rich. In fact until recently it was the richest college in Oxford, but has since been overtaken by Magdalene.

David Anderson, Past President

Updates on 'Botley West'

What's Happening Now?

Heritage Alert & Examination Latest

By the time you read this the Planning Inspectorate's Examination of the proposed Botley West Mega-Solar Power Station will be reaching the final stages. Go to stopbotleywest.com and read on to understand how you can still make your voice heard!

ICOMOS: MAJOR CONCERNS EXPRESSED IN NEW REPORT

The World Heritage Convention, created by a 1972 UNESCO treaty, aims to protect cultural and natural sites of "Outstanding Universal Value" for humanity. Blenheim Palace was inscribed on the World Heritage List in 1987. The World Heritage Committee in 2008 adopted a Statement of Significance for the property and subsequently in 2013, a Retrospective Statement of Outstanding Universal Value.

Blenheim Palace is internationally recognised as an important heritage asset.

However, in **February 2024**, UNESCO's advisory body, ICOMOS (International Council on Monuments and Sites) issued a Technical Review report that stated the 'Botley West proposal will affect the wider setting of the Blenheim Palace World Heritage property, and therefore **MAY** have an impact on the maintenance of its Outstanding Universal Value...'

Fast forward to August 2025, and after reviewing the current Botley West proposal (taking into account the developer's small changes), ICOMOS have now taken the step of issuing a damning follow up, saying in their latest Technical Review that:

- 'It considers that the proposal **WILL** likely have an adverse impact on the Outstanding Universal Value of the World Heritage property and,
- 'It advises that the proponent (ie. the developer, PVDP) consider **ALTERNATIVE** locations for this development to avoid these negative impacts on the Blenheim Palace World Heritage property.'
- 'ICOMOS also expresses its concern at the level of development pressure on the immediate and wider setting of the property, specifically in the context where the property has **NO** buffer zone defined to provide it with an extra layer of protection.'

ICOMOS also state that:

- 'The continued erosion of the landscape character of the immediate and **WIDER** settings pose an imminent **DANGER** of erosion of the contribution of the setting of the property to its Outstanding Universal Value.'



HISTORIC ENGLAND CHALLENGE

Historic England (HE) are the UK Government's OWN expert body that looks after England's historic environment. They champion historic places to help people understand, value and care for them.

Whilst HE state in their Representation that they 'do not object in principle to Botley West', they also say:

- Historic England expresses **significant concerns** about its impact on highly designated heritage assets,
- 'Particularly the World Heritage property,
- 'and several listed churches and scheduled monuments' (**including St Peter & St Paul at Church Hanborough, St Peter at Cassington and St Michael at Begbroke**)

HE go on to say that the World Heritage property is of the highest significance and therefore should '**attract particularly great weight in the planning balance...**'.

WHEN ARE THE DEADLINES?

Hearings will be conducted week commencing 6th October, with further interim deadlines for summaries and comments from interested parties (that's all of us who registered previously) before the enquiry closes on 13th November.

The Planning Inspector will issue a recommendation to the Secretary of State (currently Ed Miliband) within 3 months of the end of the examination process. The Secretary of State has a 3 month period to issue a decision.

HOW SHOULD YOU RESPOND?

Send your comments to the Examiners - you can do this until 13th November. Numbers are very important so please keep sending these in. We have produced a list of some of the key questions the Examiners have asked the Applicant - go to stopbotleywest.com to see this and for more help and 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.



Sustainable Woodstock

Time is Running Out - PVDP's Community Benefit for Botley West Solar Farm does not reflect the scale or the impact of the project - what you can do

If Botley West gains approval from the Secretary of State, it will generate clean energy and significant profits for investors, and yet, local communities are being offered far too little community benefit. We have to hope the various statutory consultees of Botley West have not given up on ensuring a much better community benefit. We have tried our best by speaking at council meetings, at the May Inspectorate hearings and will speak again at the October hearings; we've also written to all the Oxfordshire MPs, OCC's CEO, relevant councillors at OCC, WODC and Oxford City, Woodstock TC and many more.

A reminder that while community benefits are well established for renewable energy projects, there is no legal requirement in England for developers to offer a community fund and so communities have to rely on voluntary offers from developers, PVDP in this case.

Botley West application is proceeding towards the final stages of the Examination Phase and the next hearings will take place the week of 6 October in Oxford. Just days after the May hearings, the media released information that PVDP had doubled their community benefit offer to £440,000 per annum. The Inspectorate doesn't consider community benefit as part of the application, even so when comparisons are made with other projects this amount is derisory. The Inspectorate did question PVDP on community benefit on the final day of the hearings but I cannot remember anyone speaking on the subject from the County or District.

When the proposal was announced in the Autumn of 2022, the size and location quickly led to loud opposition, and local politicians found it difficult to do anything other than oppose or remain neutral. With a focus by many on opposing the proposal during the 2023/24 consultations, there is a real risk that discussion and negotiation on community benefit may have been seriously overlooked.

This has been a new experience for our MPs, councillors and officers at all levels and it concerns us that they might accept the current offer of £440,000 per annum. Before it is too late, we have asked the statutory consultees to do all they can to continue to negotiate on behalf of the communities they represent. Negotiate/campaign (or whatever you'd like to call it) for a benefit that is fair and could offer an opportunity to support people and the places they live during a transition to clean energy. PVDP's offer is not close to reflecting the scale or impact of Botley West.

The recent Government Working Paper 'Community Benefits and Shared Ownership for Low Carbon Infrastructure' compares with other projects and proposes a figure based on £5000 per MW (Botley West is 840 MW) - this would be the equivalent of £4.2 million per annum. Is it possible that PVDP are looking 'to slip this unfair offer under the wire' while the Government continues to develop a process of funding in England?

Settling for £440,000 per annum means that local communities would miss out on millions of £s over the 40year lifetime of the project. PVDP's offer isn't proportionate - it isn't fair - it should be 10 times more i.e. £4.2 million per annum. Over 40 years this equates to £168 million (compare to just £17.6 million). Imagine how much good this amount could achieve for the county/communities at a time when most needed.

Before it is too late, and whether you want Botley West or not, we are asking you to do what you can for Oxfordshire communities by writing to your MP ... ask him to do more. Woodstock's MP is Calum Miller and his email is calum.miller.mp@parliament.uk.

Hilary Brown, Sustainable Woodstock

Combe Community Cinema

Friday 31 October 2025, 7.30pm, at the Combe Community Hub



The Consequences of Love (2004), directed by Paolo Sorrentino, is a slow-burning psychological drama about Titta Di Girolamo, a middle-aged man living a monotonous and isolated existence in a Swiss hotel. For eight years, he has observed life at a distance, carefully concealing his past and avoiding human connection. His rigid routine begins to unravel when he becomes drawn to Sofia, the hotel barmaid, sparking a quiet yet transformative desire for intimacy. As his secrets come to light - including ties to the Mafia - Titta's life descends into danger. The film explores loneliness, alienation, and the risks of breaking emotional isolation.

The Marlborough C of E School

A Level success for Marlborough students
We are delighted to announce another set of outstanding A Level results at The Marlborough School. Once again, our Year 13 pupils have done themselves, their families and the school proud by achieving such amazing grades. This is a result of their years of hard work and commitment - and that of their teachers and families. They have done so well.



Year 13 students' on A Level results day
There are so many individual success stories that really show the value of perseverance and ambition. An incredible 93% of our students achieved their first, or insurance offer. Students are leaving us to go to a wide range of destinations across the country, from Edinburgh and York, Liverpool and Birmingham, Cambridge and Loughborough, to Bristol and Exeter, to name just a few. They will be reading some amazing courses, ranging across all disciplines, including Architecture, Art, Music, Criminology, Law, Economics and Psychology. A bright and exciting future awaits them all.

However, we are not just proud of what they have achieved, but proud of them for who they are. We know that they go to their next exciting destinations as respectful, well-rounded, articulate and confident young men and women. We wish them all the luck in the world and hope they will always feel part of our Marlborough Family. They are a credit to the school.

Amazing GCSE Results at The Marlborough School

We are delighted to announce the latest outstanding results achieved by Marlborough pupils, this time our GCSE students, class of 2025. As a school, we are significantly above national benchmarks in every measure, and have achieved some of the highest outcomes in our history - a remarkable achievement.

Our Year 11 students deserve every credit for what they have achieved during the past two years of their GCSE courses, and indeed over the last five years of being at the school. We are so proud of the way they



Year 11 students' on GCSE results day
have never given up, always maintained a positive attitude, and met every challenge that came their way. Our students, their supportive families and our committed staff have worked incredibly hard, and these results are a testimony to their ambition and perseverance. These results once again demonstrate that Marlborough is a school where you can fulfil all your ambitions and that we can compete academically with any school in the country.

Behind all our results and data are so many individual stories. Our students have been able to secure their next stages of their educational journey, including some high-quality apprenticeships or College courses. To those pupils leaving us to take up College places or begin Apprenticeships, we wish them every success in their lives after Marlborough. They can be really proud of what they have achieved.



(L-R) Mrs Strivens (Examination Manager), Dr Ockenden (Examination, Data & UCAS Administrator), and Principal, Mr Hanlon.

Of course, we are delighted to see so many pupils returning to us in a few weeks' time to be part of our thriving and highly successful Sixth Form. We will be welcoming record numbers of pupils into Sixth Form next year, as the cycle of success and achievement continues. Thank you to all our families, young people and staff – it is a great team effort and such a testament to all the hard work of the past few years.

Mr. A. Hanlon

History Curio Corner
This is a new section where we showcase a historic piece of curiosity. This month it is a scan of a letter to the Daily Telegraph in 1998, telling a fascinating story of intrigue involving toilets, the Star, and our Town Council. With thanks to Mike Farley for this gem - please scour your own archives and send them to the editor.

'Stealing' trade
From Mr William L. B. Walker

Sir, Shortly after the war, when many coach parties were arriving at Woodstock, Oxfordshire, queues used to form outside a ladies' public convenience with a turnstile entrance opposite the back of the Star Inn.

One very hot afternoon, when the pub was closed, the landlord suggested to the long line of ladies that if they wished they could use the toilets in his yard. Several accepted his kind offer.

I was managing the brewery that owned the pub. With some disbelief I received a letter from the clerk to Woodstock council complaining that our tenant was "importuning" its trade [letters, June 1, 2, 9] and asking me to tell him that the practice must cease.

Yours sincerely,
WILLIAM L. B. WALKER,
145 Coleherne Court,
Redcliffe Gardens, SW5 0DY.
June 3.



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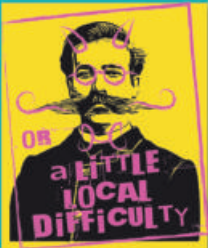
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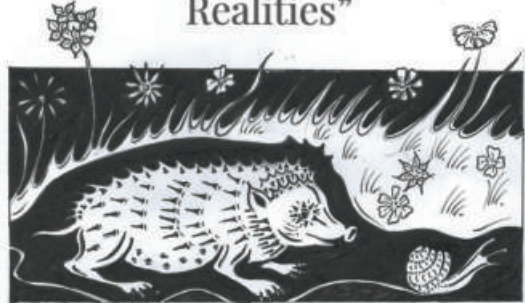
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Bladon Gardens Society

Guest Speaker Event
The Church Rooms, Church Street, Bladon
16th October 2025 7.30 pm

Steve Head

Wildlife Gardening Forum
"Wildlife Gardening: Myths and Realities"



£3.00 entry for non members

Parking is difficult in Church Street and we must leave space for the Speaker. The school has given permission to park in the playground for meetings.
Access to this is from Grove Road.
Bladon Gardens Society Membership details
Annual Subscription: £15 Visitors to monthly meetings £3

Inaugural Golf Day

Woodstock and Bladon News held their inaugural Golf Day at Witney Lakes Golf Club on Friday 5 September.

Nine players and the Editor (as an observer) met in the clubhouse for bacon baps before going out on the course to commence the competition.

The weather was extremely kind, which made the rounds enjoyable. The greens were fast and a number of putts did not stop where they were supposed to!!!

The scores were close and the eventual winner was Michael Bowles, on countback from Stuart Temple.

The 'Nearest the Pin' prizes were won by Martin Kay (2) and Paul Kay (2), and the 'Longest Drive' was won by Brian Kay.

With very many thanks to Witney Lakes for hosting the event and providing a Round For 4 for the winner as first prize, to Mev at Brothertons Brasserie for supplying the wine prizes, and Paul from Paul Kay Hair Salon for providing other prizes.

We will be arranging another Golf Day next year, so watch this space, as they say.



The winner, Michael Bowles, with his prize

Woodstock in Bloom

Our annual Summer planting of white Cosmos and Creeping Jenny made strong demands on our gallant band of waterers during yet another long hot Summer. We hope that Pelargoniums, aka geraniums, which we plan to plant next year will be kinder to us.

For Spring 2026 Andy Mills, the Head Gardener at Blenheim Palace, who very kindly supplies the bulbs, advises that both the squirrels and the muntjak are



The three 3-ball teams at the first tee

aware that daffodil bulbs are poisonous and will leave them alone. We will therefore learn from experience and say goodbye to the annual display of tulips. Daffodils will give a new look to the centre of Woodstock in the Spring.

If any resident would like to join the watering team for next Summer I will be delighted to hear from you: wrobertedwards3@gmail.com

Robert Edwards

Oxford Bus and Morris Motors Museums

Hallowe'en and half term: Fun for the Family.
Come and be scared!

On Sunday 26 and Wednesday 29 October we shall be decorating the museum and buses and laying on some surprises for our visitors.

For children there will be a 'Pumpkin Hunt' in the museum with prizes for those who find all of the dozen pumpkins. (Adults are also allowed to take part.)



There will also be a display of live spooky owls brought to the museum by Alan Charlett, who runs Al's Owls. For a small extra charge visitors will be allowed to hold the owls.

We shall run regular bus rides from 11.30am. The buses will be dressed appropriately for Hallowe'en. On Wednesday 29 October we shall run an additional evening twilight bus ride. More details will be on our website nearer the date.



Recently we had an unusual bus visiting. No, your editor has not reversed the photo!

This 1953 AEC Regent, made in Southall with a Weymann body, was designed to have a left-hand drive as it was exported to Lisbon in October 1954, where it operated for the (then) British-owned Carris company. It remained in service with Carris for 29 years. It was one of 112 built between 1950 and 1957 for Carris.

In 1966 extra seats were inserted: two on the lower deck and five on the upper deck. In 1983 it was withdrawn and made the long journey home through Portugal and across Spain to Santander, where it boarded a roll-on/roll-off ferry to Plymouth to undergo preservation in the UK.

The bus visited our museum on 25 August, where running repairs were made to its injection pipes and an oil leak identified.

Frank Collingwood



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www.oxfordbusmuseum.org.uk



Alex's Creperie - A Review

Our local OXINABOX.CO.UK founder, Katherine MacAlister, has reviewed Alex's for her website, and she has kindly agreed to allow it to be included in this magazine. Please go to their website to see the full review. All photos credit to OXINABOX



Alex at Alex's

"These are happy tears, even if it has been an emotional journey. It's just better than I could ever have imagined," Alex Sopilnik says looking around her brand new premises Alex's Creperie in Woodstock.

A dream 15 years in the making, it's an emotive subject. "I just haven't had time to process it all yet, because we've been so busy since we opened, but I am so proud of our new business," she adds, nodding at her husband Marek making crepes behind the colourful counter and her two daughters Olenka and Laura, there for moral support.

"Its been blood, sweat and tears to get here, but we have enjoyed every minute of it. We love our customers, they are so loyal, but look at it, we have been busy from the word go, and on the first weekend we had people queuing out of the door. Can you believe it?"



Alex with her family

Anyone who knows Alex can, but the bright, fun, colourful interior is still a breath of fresh air, a world away from your conventional tea and coffee shops. And while crepes are her thing, whether you fancy a cup of golden chai, a slice of banana cake, a croissant or an ice cream, it really is aimed at the community.

"We want it to be somewhere you can pop in to everyday, to bring a bit of glamour, something a bit different, somewhere relaxing, a go-to," she explains.



Apple and Cinammon Crepe at Alex's

We're chatting at 'Alex's' in Park View, the surrounding tables full of families eating crepes and drinking milkshakes, friends catching up, and locals enjoying a cup of coffee and a piece of cake, as we reflect on how we first met when Alex opened juice bar Squeeze in Woodstock 15 years ago.

"I've been planning this ever since," she said, Squeeze closing soon afterwards to make way for housing, as her search for a more permanent base began.

Starting off small with a gazebo making crepes at fairs, festivals, private events and gatherings, Alex's reputation grew. A staple at Blenheim Palace events, she then invested in a food truck and bided her time for the right premises.

And while a new private housing estate may seem a novel location, with hundreds more houses being built, Alex is delighted with her spot: "We have looked at several potential venues over the years, but my heart is in Woodstock. It's where I live and where my children go to school. So when we heard these units were coming up we jumped at the chance. We know we will be happy here. New Woodstock has got it all going on."

Using local suppliers and artisans to furnish the cafe and supply everything from the coffee (Ue), to the cakes (Barefoot), fruit, veg and flowers (The Worthy Earth Garden Team at Blenheim Walled Garden), the personal touch is everywhere. Which means the milkshakes are made with fresh fruit not syrup, the

pesto made on site and the crepes stuffed with fresh produce and made to order.

"We value every customer and want them to enjoy it here as much as we do, and we have 15 years experience behind us so we know what we're doing," Alex adds.



Alex gathering herbs and flowers with Harrison from The Worthy Earth Garden Team at Blenheim Walled Garden

"I'm so proud of all our hard work and we aim to make a big impression. Our customers might come for the crepes but they get so much more, all served with a smile, because we've been planning this for a long time, so I want to do a good job of it," she adds.

Open seven days a week, we decided to stay for lunch. Fresh banana milkshakes appearing instantly, some sterling coffees and then a variety of crepes, beautiful to behold, presentation everything here, decorated with edible flowers.

From the extensive savoury crepe menu – the pizza crepe – with pepperoni, cheddar, mozzarella, tomatoes, mushrooms, spinach and sweetcorn (£13) (you can remove or swap any of the ingredients you don't fancy), the Pesto – (home-made), tomatoes, mushrooms, spinach, sun-dried tomato and sweetcorn (£13), bursting with goodies, neatly folded, the crepe light and crisp but satisfyingly chewy.

The organic apple with cinnamon and sugar (£9) was equally as delicious with a dollop of vanilla ice cream, and we had to order a slice of summer fruit cake with blueberries and a sour, creamy icing.

Happy? We were! But not as happy as Alex! "Well of course," she says as we left. "When you've dreamed of creating something like this for 15 years, you want to make sure it's the place to be." Looks like she's in luck!

Alex's Creperie is at 63 Cowells Road, Park View, Woodstock. OX201GB.

Instagram @alexscreperie

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Friends of St Martin's Bladon

With the arrival of the new electric cooker in the Church Room the Committee of the Friends of St Martin's breathed a sigh of relief, the renovation of the Church Room is complete for the time being. Fingers crossed. The kitchen has had a complete refit, including a new commercial dishwasher which completes its cycle in 3 minutes. Since the Friends was founded, the Church Room has gained toilets, a new floor, new chairs, tables and most recently of course the new kitchen.

Bladon had a village hall once but it had asbestos in it and was lost to the village many years ago. Now the Church Room serves as the venue for Bladon Toddlers, where children under school age and their mums can meet on Wednesday mornings from 9.45am to 11.30am and enjoy lots of toys or a cup of coffee (depending on age and taste) during term time. Bladon Lunches also regularly use the Church Room. These lunches are held on the first Tuesday of every month from 12 noon - all welcome. You get a main course a piece of home made cake and coffee for £5 and, best of all, the company of what is usually a jolly group. The Bladon Garden Society meets monthly, usually on the second Thursday evening of the month at 7.30pm, but they do have outings, so do look at village posters for events. The Church Room is often used as a venue for children's parties and of course for refreshments after Church Services. It has also been used for exercise classes in the past. If you would like to use the Church Room, please contact jbenyon@hotmail.co.uk.

The Friends is financed by members who have donated a one off sum of money or signed up to give a regular monthly amount and by holding events. These events not only raise funds, but bring the community together. The Friends are registered with the Charity Commissioners and can claim gift aid if you are a tax payer.

One of the reasons the Friends was founded was to bring together the village community and include everyone, those who went to Church and those who prefer not to. The Committee met recently to plan future events. There will be the annual St Martin's Feast on 15 November at 7pm - posters and publicity will be around the village later. This will include a two course meal, entertainment, a glass of wine and coffee for £20. During the afternoon of 2 January, if our plans work out, we shall have a New Year Concert for family and friends, again details later.

If you have any suggestions for events or would like to become a Friend, do not be shy; contact Robin Jones, our Chair, on 07739 900689 or have a word with him if you see him in The White House.

Mollie Hance

Panniers

Everyday cycling in Woodstock and Bladon

For those who aren't yet aware, there is a new - and very good - stretch of cycle path that makes a ride between Woodstock and Kidlington all the more pleasant and easy.



It runs between the north-east corner of Begbroke Science Park, across fields, to the Oxford Canal and really is an example of what good cycling infrastructure can look like. It even includes a few twists and turns to make it more interesting - and the views are lovely.

To reach it from Woodstock and Bladon take the A44 shared-use path as far as the science park. Cross at the lights and head towards the park, following the route to the left until you reach the far corner and then pick up the new path.

Once over the canal and the level crossing, follow Lyne Road all the way to Kidlington High Street. We sometimes use this route on Saturdays to visit the market - if Woodstock market isn't on - and return with fully laden panniers.

The new stretch is a permissive route so can be used by all. Oxford University tells me that the route through the science park has not yet been formally adopted as a permissive path but members of the public are welcome to use it as long as they show courtesy to others. Cycling is not allowed on the service road at the back of the park because of delivery lorry movements. Happy cycling!

David Walker

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The Arts Society Cotswolds

Lecture on Wednesday 8 October 2025

A Photographic Odyssey: Shackleton’s Endurance Expedition

On Ernest Shackleton’s third Antarctic expedition in 1914, his ship, the Endurance, was trapped and eventually crushed in the pack ice. After camping for five months on the ice, Shackleton’s men rowed to the remote Elephant Island. From there, Shackleton sailed for help to South Georgia over 800 miles away. Over three months later he returned to rescue the crew of the Endurance.

Frank Hurley, one of the great photographers of the 20th century, was the expedition’s official photographer. His photographs are a visual narrative of an epic journey which capture with great artistry new and amazing landscapes within which a remarkable human drama is played out. The aim of the lecture is to capture Hurley’s achievements as a photographer of the Antarctic in the first flush of human contact when it was still essentially terra incognita.

About the speaker: Mark Cottle was born on the Isles of Scilly and educated at Truro School, Cornwall, and Birmingham University. His career has been spent in education and training at home and abroad. He has lectured at Exeter College on Medieval and Tudor history, St Mark's & St John's University College, Plymouth, and at Bath University on Anglo Saxon and medieval England. Currently runs two small companies providing training and study breaks.

This hybrid lecture will be held at the Warwick Hall, Church Green, Burford, OX18 4RZ at 11am and via Zoom. Please be seated by 10.50 for notices of upcoming events. Numbers are no longer restricted but booking is recommended to reserve a place via our website (see below) Non-members are welcome (space permitting) at a charge of £10.

To learn more about The Arts Society Cotswolds and to see what lectures, Special Interest Days and other activities are planned, please log into the website www.theartssocietycotswolds.org.uk

Or contact Alison Morgans on 01993 823159

Bladon Snippets from the Past

Knock 4 of 4” by 4” posts into the ground. Clad with corrugated iron, then put on sheets as a roof and more to make double doors. This is how garages were built in days gone by.

Mary F. Sitch

Woodstock Bus Stops - A History

Woodstock has an abundance of bus stops but I can remember when there were only four. Two in the centre of the town, one going north and the other south; likewise in Old Woodstock.

The town centre one coming from Oxford stopped much as it does now outside what was Tripey Walkers faggots & tripe shop. First thing in the morning, Tripey was the local postman, returning to assist his wife after all the post was delivered in the spotlessly clean shop.

The next stop was in Old Woodstock near the Rose & Crown or the New Buildings.

The return journey pick up points were Old Woodstock outside Billy Knibbs Barn and in the town centre between what was Smiths Stores and Roadnight Carters antique shop. 34 Oxford Street, a private house, had a lobby at its front door. What a blessing that was, as many as 8 people could cram into that lobby on a cold or wet day. However, what a problem it was for the residents when they needed to go in or out of their own home asking people to move once the residents were inside their home it was silent. One day they could hear the constant noise of the traffic which wasn't normal. They went to the hallway to find someone had opened the front door and a queue had been generated in the hallway. This was in the days when you never locked your doors; needless to say the lobby was blocked off with a second front door.

As your WODC & Town Councillor, I was aware of how people suffered in all weathers waiting at the bus stops. The development of Barn Piece was a turning point realising how cold and wet you and children could get waiting in Old Woodstock to get into the town or schools.

At that time, I was fortunate to be able to get the very first bus shelter installed, in Old Woodstock, as it is now, on what was the A34 just off Westland Way. What an asset it has been for many years now.

I come now to thank Stan Scott for his sterling work on painting the Old Woodstock bus shelter. I know Stan that you are no longer 21 years of age, so much more appreciated for your effort and determination to keep everywhere clean and tidy, by me, and I trust many others. Thank You.

Putting that aside do you know Stan how old the bus shelter is? I estimate it as being +- 30 years old. There was never a plaque put onto it like the Woodstock Stocks so it will take years of research to find out.

Pauline Thurman

Churches Together in Woodstock and Bladon

The perceived wisdom is that plants produce more fruit in times of stress. This means that if the adult plant dies because of that stressor there would be the maximum chance of its genetic offspring being propagated. With the sustained warm and dry weather of this spring and summer we are seeing many instances of stress induced high fruiting plants around us.

What fruit, though, do we produce when we are put under stress in our lives?

Jesus, in the Sermon on the Mount, says, referring to people’s lives: ‘... every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a bad tree bear good fruit.’ (Matthew 7:17-18)

So what kind of fruit are you producing in your life?

It’s easy to be kind and caring when things are going well, but much harder when you are put under stress and are having a difficult time in life. But, by the fruit of our lives will we be known.

In this season of harvest take a moment to consider the kind of fruit you are harvesting in your life. Whether it is good or bad fruit? And if you don’t like the taste you are left with, maybe to choose to do something about it by producing something different.

Rev. Andy Mills,
Minister of Woodstock Baptist Church

Upcoming Events at Woodstock Baptist Church

The Start Course

Have you got questions about life and the Christian faith. If you’re looking for answers, then maybe it’s time to make a Start. Run in a small group, each session of the Start Course involves video clips, group discussion and time for reflection. Each session lasts about an hour and is free to attend. Organised by Woodstock Baptist Church and starting in early October 2025 if you would like to find out more contact Andy Mills at andy.mills.wbc@gmail.com.

Tearfund Big Quiz Night 2025

Everyone is welcome to come along to a quiz night being hosted by Woodstock Baptist Church.

Saturday 15 November, 6.30pm for a 7pm start, at St. Hugh's Church Hall, free entry, free food, bring your own drinks, donations welcome for Tearfund. Maximum team size 8 people. Should be fun!

If you would like to come along just email ‘wbcenquiry@woodstockbaptistchurch.org.uk’ so we know numbers for food.



Art Exhibition

“Our Natural World”

Theme:
School-aged students are invited to submit your own artwork (pencil, pen, paint, charcoal, crayon) or photograph on the theme of ‘Our Natural World’. This is not a competition but an opportunity to have fun thinking about and painting/drawing etc., your view of our natural world.

Details:
One entry per person to be submitted on one-side of A4 paper. Write your name, school, and age on the back, and if you want it returned include the word ‘RETURN’.

Dates:
The work must be finished and taken to your school collection point by Monday 20th October. The work will be collected from the school and displayed at St. Mary Magdalene Church, Park Street, Woodstock from Tuesday 28th October until midday on Saturday 1st November.

Contact:

If necessary, you can obtain additional information at contactWNHS@gmail.com



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Walking Church

First service of worship on site for 75 years - Woodstock Methodist church worship at Hensington House Memorial Garden.



On the second Sunday in August Woodstock Methodist held a ‘Walking Church’ service. This is when we take our service of worship out of our normal building and into the community and this year we walked to the Hensington House Memorial Garden to continue our worship with the kind permission of the trustees. This site seemed a very fitting place to worship as the garden is on the site of the former Workhouse Chapel.

Woodstock Methodist church hold a more relaxed all age service on the second Sunday of every month when we do not have a preacher assigned to us and members of the church organise the service themselves. Our next all age service will be on Sunday 12th October at 10.30am when we will be holding our annual ‘Pet Service’. A chance to bring your pet to church and celebrate all the creatures in our world. Look out for posters advertising this.

Back on Sunday 10th August most of the congregation gathered at the Methodist church for a prayer and a song before walking to the gardens, while thinking and talking about things we wanted to thank God for along the way. On arriving at the gardens we joined further members who had already gathered there along with John Banbury from the Chapel Trustees.

We shared times of prayer, reflection and music in the gardens and had the opportunity to explore the beautiful space as well as talk to John and view his collection of photos and documents relating to the history and development of the site. A number of people passing by also came in to join us when they saw something was happening in the gardens.

As John mentioned to us on the day this was the first service of worship on that site for 75 years, so we felt privileged to be there and were grateful to John and the trustees for allowing us to use and explore this peaceful corner of our town.

This is the reflection we shared during the service, adapted from Iona Abbey Worship Book©

*This was a place where God was found,
a special place, a holy ground,
where scripture, song and fervent prayer,
work and discussion, food and care
have shaped the heritage we share.
This was a place for God.*

*This was a space where lives were grown,
where faith was shared and love was shown,
where those who came in through the door
were aided to a life restored,
whatever help they did receive
they shared with Christ the air we breathe.
This was a place for God.*

*This is now a place of quiet and peace,
where rest can be taken and busyness cease,
where people wander day by day,
to pause, to look, to think and stay.
This is still a place for God.*



Improving Your Home Part 2

Garage Conversions

Converting a garage into a habitable space can be a cost-effective way to add value and functionality to a home, providing an additional bedroom, a home office, a home cinema, (although extra soundproofing will be required), a gym or simply a quiet space separate from the main house. For households with off-street parking or unused garages, it's a logical first step in improving the usability of the property. Integral garages generally offer easier access to services and may already have insulation on shared walls, whereas detached garages may be more complex to convert.

The first thing to check is whether the existing structure is sound. Most garages are constructed with a single skin of brickwork and an uninsulated floor slab and possibly without a damp-proof course (DPC). Garage floors may also be slightly sloped or uneven. Older garages may require structural reinforcement. Floors in integral garages are usually lower than the house and will need raising to improve access. The converted garage will need adequate natural light and ventilation, as required by Building Regulations.

In most cases, garage conversions fall under Permitted Development, provided that the work is internal and doesn't enlarge the structure, the property is not a listed building or in a conservation area, the conversion doesn't remove the only parking space especially in areas with parking restrictions. You do need confirmation from the local planning authority that the proposed work is indeed permitted development, for which a Lawful Development: Proposed Use application is required to confirm that PD rights apply.

Building Regulations approval is mandatory. Key requirements include the structural stability and suitability for the new use. Where loadbearing walls or beams are affected and possible reinforcement may be needed, or if removing a load-bearing wall (eg between the house and garage), a structural engineer's assessment and structural calculations are required. Walls, floors, and roofs must meet minimum U-values, and you will need to extend the central heating system or install separate heating. If the garage is attached to the house, fire-resistant doors and walls will be required and escape routes must comply with regulations. Mechanical extract ventilation will be required in kitchens or bathrooms, and all electrical work must be carried out by a certified electrician. If adding a bathroom, plumbing must meet water efficiency standards.

Replacing the garage door is usually the most visible alteration, usually with a window similar the those of

the rest of the house with infill matching the existing masonry. It's important that the new façade treatment integrates sympathetically with the original elevation. Other design considerations include adding windows or roof lights to improve liveability. Garages are often used for storage, so if you will be losing garage storage, consider built-in solutions elsewhere in your home. Ensure privacy if the garage faces a public area and ensure that there is no loss of parking. Try to match the interior style to the main house for cohesion and consider future-proofing (eg wiring for smart home tech).

Converting a garage can deliver a return on investment of around 10-20% for terraced and semi-detached homes at an average cost of between £10,000-£20,000 according to the RICS, depending on size and quality of finishes, which can be cheaper than an extension but offering similar benefits. A low-cost basic conversion costing around £5,000-£12,000 would typically add 5–10% to property value (HomeOwners Alliance). For larger semi-detached and detached homes an average cost of between £25,000-£45,000+ for a luxury home, office or guest suite, the ROI can add 15-20%+ to property value (Savills), with the potential for rental income (if compliant with regulations).

Jan Liberadzki BA Arch (Hons), MSc, JLDA

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Helping You Create a Better Home

Answers

The answers to the Titfield Thunderbolt Quiz in the Aug/Sept issue are:

1. The ITV sitcom was 'Bless this House'
2. The Studio was 'Ealing'
3. The part of the UK is 'Wales'
4. The doctor responsible for the closure of the railways was 'Dr Beeching'
5. The film was 'My Fair Lady'
6. The Woodstock garage was 'Youngs'
7. The restriction during, and after, WW2 was 'Rationing'
8. The 2 cities were 'Liverpool and Manchester'
9. The two phenomena occurring simultaneously are 'Thunder and Lightning'
10. The bird holding the speed record is a 'Mallard'

The answers to the Aug/Sept Crossword are:
The event happening in Blenheim in August was 'Salon Prive Concours'

Across: 8. in situ, 9. neaten, 10. apologetic, 11. orbs, 12. sci-fi, 14. Vesuvius, 18. lion, 19. under, 20. okay, 21. notepads, 22. cynic, 24. echo, 26. ragamuffin, 29. nowadays, 30. stereo.

Down: 1. inspection, 2. dial, 3. bulge, 4. knot, 5. sanctuary, 6. depository, 7. kerb, 13. functional, 15. ended, 16. stabilised, 17. bumper car, 23. amuse, 25. cool, 27. gosh, 28. free.

Calling all brave students in Year 4-6!



Join us for a spooktacular night of trick-or-treating at

GHOST-FORD HILL SCHOOL
(Gosford Hill School, Oxford Road, Kidlington)

Tuesday 21st October (4:30pm to 6:00pm)

This spooky season, children in Years 4-6 are invited to wear their best fancy dress and explore our classrooms in search of sweets and treats. Who knows what Ghouls and Goblins roam the Ghost-ford Hill School corridors at night-time? Parents and carers are welcome to accompany or sit back and enjoy tea and coffee.

Scan here to register!



Allotment's edge

In warmer days, red fescue high about the plants new hatches fly, a darker flicker in the light spells marbled, not a cabbage white.

It hints a thrill throughout the day casting star dust along its way though edging nearer to the beans it stops in rough grass' safer seams, outside the plot and roundup-free, safer for slow worms and the bee just here the marbled white can fly its two tone fanfare in July.

This summer calling holds in thrall, builds an orchestral insect call. low-register bees hum en masse on lavender near tough rye grass.

Fast moving visitors pass through, a hairstreak and a common blue. Ground-hugging little skippers' light on lavender in orange flight.

Winged travellers not always seen start out from deep inside the green. An elongated slim blue flash: a damselfly darts in a dash.

No planned spreadsheet created this tableau in dry grass-waving hiss, unfolding evolution's charm across a summer daytime calm.

Mason Beah



Bladon and Woodstock Flower Club

Hello everyone, I have quite a lot to report this time. We had a wonderful evening on 11 August at our Social. The weather being very kind to us, we had the whole event outside in our chairperson's beautiful garden. The buffet was delicious as always provided by the committee and the entertainment fun.

On 8 September unfortunately the demonstrator we had booked was unable to come as she had had a nasty fall but a colleague of hers, Christine Long, stepped in with her title 'Loosely round the Solar System'. Christine arranged flowers beautifully and the quality and colours was perfect. We, 'saw' the Sun, Crescent Moon, Earth, a Ring from Saturn, Mars and lastly Venus. Very different and well interpreted.

Next month, Monday 13 October we have a very experienced member of the Club, Ninon, who will demonstrate dried flowers, arranging them also telling us how to preserve them. We look forward to that very much.

Monday 10 November, we look forward to welcoming Fiona Harrison with her title 'A French Affair'. Another very interesting title.

The Club meets on the second Monday of the month, and visitors are very welcome at a charge of £10 which includes a raffle ticket. The meetings start at 7pm and the doors open at 6.30. We meet in the Bowls and Tennis Clubhouse, Cadogan Park, Woodstock. If you would like to know further about us, please contact Ann on 07701-000977. You can also find out a lot about other clubs in the area and what we all get up to by going on the website:- www.bbandoflowers.org.uk.

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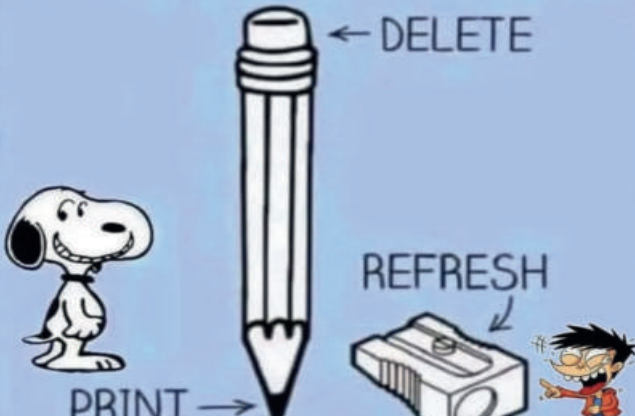
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Oxfordshire & Home Counties

Meme of the Month

WHEN I WAS A KID, THIS WAS MY COMPUTER:



Fitness What's On

Exercise and movement classes in and around Woodstock. Please report errors and discrepancies.

Monday

9am - Strength and Stretch with Rachel at St Hugh's Church Hall, Hensington Road (energitraining.co.uk)
9.30am - Cardio Tennis at Woodstock Tennis Club
12pm - Age UK Stretch and Balance Class (open to all) at Woodstock Community Centre
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
6pm - Jim's Fitness Bootcamp in Tackley (Jim Brown PT)
7.30pm - Zumba with Rhonda at Woodstock Youth Club

Wednesday

9am - Boot Camp at Tackley Playing Field with Energi Training.
7pm - Pilates for Sport and Functional Activities at Woodstock Community Centre
8pm - Hatha Yoga with Kira at Pilates Studio on Hensington Road (07887 512523)

Thursday

6.15pm - Mountain Bike Club with Project Active
6pm - Strength and Stretch with Rachel at Woodstock Town Hall (energitraining.co.uk)
7pm - Beginner 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
9am - Bazza's Bootcamp at Kirtlington Village Hall

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Regular Events

This section tries to list regular events. If you would like your event included here, please email editor@wobl.news.

Culture

Bladon Garden Society

The 3rd Thursday of every month at 7.30pm, usually in the Church Room in Bladon

Friends of the Oxfordshire Museum

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

Woodstock 50+ Cinema Club

Monthly films hopefully starting again

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

Music

Kings Arms / Mandolirium

Listen to our local group in our local pub, usually every third Thursday at 6.30pm. Next date 24 July

Singing for Fun

For July, August, and September, this takes place at the Woodstock Baptist Church at 2pm on the 1st Monday of the month

The Crown

Live music every Friday nights from 7.30pm

Woodstock Jazz

Usually on the last Friday of the month at St Hughs

Social

Bereavement Cafe

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

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

St Mary Magdalene Church coffee morning

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

Woodstock Lunch Club

Lunches are held in the Community Centre every other Wednesday at 12 noon. Next dates 16 and 30 July

Sport

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)

Woodstock Bowls Club

Every Tuesday from 6pm until 8pm. Beginners coaching for anyone who would like to try this sport. All ages welcome.

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 26 Sep 2025, 19:30

Woodstock Jazz - Music
Andy Panayi Quartet: Multi award winning saxophonist plays 'Cannonball' & More
St Hugh's Centre

Wednesday 01 Oct 2025, 19:30

Friends of the Oxfordshire Museum - Talk
One Saturday afternoon on the Home Front – stories from an aerial photograph: Speaker: Cathy Stoertz
Oxfordshire Museum

Thursday 02 Oct 2025, 14:00

Woodstock and District u3a - Talk
Stephen Barker: Indians at Oxford
St Hugh's Centre

Thursday 16 Oct 2025, 19:30

Bladon Gardens Society - Talk
Steve Head: Wildlife Gardening: Myths and Realities. Wildlife Gardening Forum
The Church Rooms, Church Street, Bladon

Friday 17 Oct 2025, 19:30

Woodstock Literature Society - Talk
'Oscar Wilde on Stage': Professor Sos Eltis with the assistance of students from The Oxford School of Drama
St Mary Magdalene

Monday 20 Oct 2025, 20:00

The Woodstock Society - Talk
Malcolm Brecht: Culturally Aware Leadership
St Mary Magdalene

Friday 31 Oct 2025, 19:30

Woodstock Jazz - Music
Denny Ilett Band: An 'American Songbook' special from one of the best in the business!
St Hugh's Centre

Wednesday 05 Nov 2025, 19:30

Friends of the Oxfordshire Museum - Talk
World War 1 - paintings and poetry. Speaker: Alice Foster
Oxfordshire Museum

Thursday 06 Nov 2025, 14:00

Woodstock and District u3a - Talk
Oxfordshire Hedgerows: With Jessica Bouwer
St Hugh's Centre

Saturday 22 Nov 2025, 15:00

Woodstock Literature Society - Talk
'The Medieval Christmas in Literature': Dr Helen Appleton
St Hugh's Centre

QUIZ - Compiled by Richard Stockwell

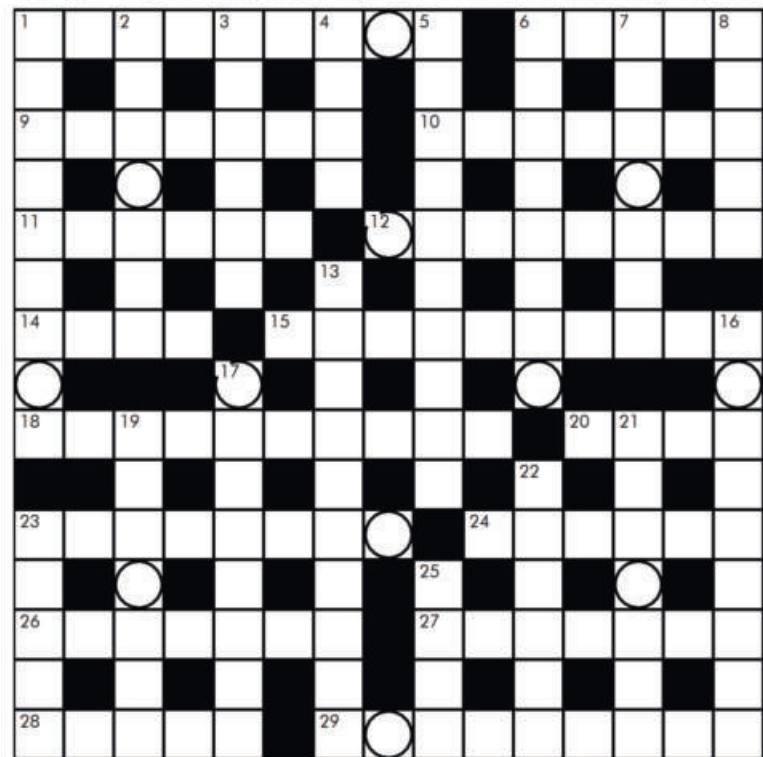
Hanover Street was filmed in Woodstock in the late '70s. Here are 10 quiz questions about the film. Answers next month.

- 1. In Hanover Street, Max Wall takes on the role of an expert safe cracker. He was best known for a character featured in his music hall act, Professor Wallofski, who strutted across the stage in an eccentric manner. John Cleese has acknowledged that this inspired which famous Monty Python sketch?
- 2. With which song would you associate Christopher Plummer, one of the two heroes in the film? It was probably the only song he ever performed.
- 3. Woodstock Town Hall plays a starring role in this film, as the Gestapo HQ in France. Which emergency service was once based there?
- 4. Vital documents are kept in a safe at Gestapo headquarters, which must be retrieved by Plummer. In which TV comedy would you find Herr Flick, of The Gestapo?
- 5. Lesley-Anne Down stars alongside Harrison Ford. She also appeared alongside Donald Sutherland and Sean Connery in The First Great Train Robbery, a story based on The Great Gold Robbery of 1855. In which year were Bruce Reynolds and Ronnie Biggs involved in what we now refer to as The Great Train Robbery?
- 6. In which film, set in New York, did Harrison Ford star alongside Melanie Griffith? The theme tune, Let The River Run won an Oscar for Carly Simon
- 7. Hanover Street doesn't actually have an Underground station, the assignation point for the lovers in the film, but is a real street, associated with which square on a Monopoly board?
- 8. The plot of Hanover Street involves a married woman falling in love and beginning a secret affair, not without significant guilt. This mimics which famous 1945 film starring Celia Johnson and Trevor Howard, written by Noel Coward, with scenes shot at Carnforth station?
- 9. Many of the scenes featuring The Town Hall were shot at night. Which restaurant would you see in the background?
- 10. Patsy Kensit played the junior lead, Sarah Sellinger in Hanover Street. Her son with Liam Gallagher is named after which iconic musician and peace campaigner, who was murdered in December 1980?



Harrison Ford and Cristopher Plummer filming in Woodstock. Credit: IMDB

Solve the clues to this straight crossword. Read through the letters in the marked squares to reveal the title bestowed on William Morris, founder of Morris Motors.



Puzzle courtesy of the
PUZZLERS Club

- | Across | Down |
|------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Large spider | 1. Shaking |
| 6. Enthusiasm, relish | 2. Italian rice dish |
| 9. Resulting | 3. Sounds |
| 10. Regular customers | 4. Impel; impulse |
| 11. Baking mixture | 5. Be thankful for |
| 12. Moves out of line with | 6. Abolish (3,3,2) |
| 14. Press clothes | 7. Abbreviate |
| 15. Western US state | 8. Desert haven |
| 18. Basic, fundamental | 13. Condiment |
| 20. Aid in crime | 16. Post meridiem |
| 23. Pasta tubes | 17. Computer login |
| 24. Navy man | 19. Dialects |
| 26. Language spoken in India | 21. Champagne cocktail |
| 27. Spanish sausage | 22. Oriental temple |
| 28. Ski run | 23. Clean a floor (3,2) |
| 29. Teaching | 25. Very light brown |

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