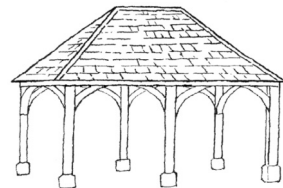


Charlbury Chronicle



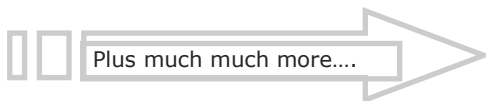
Volume 29 Number 2

Summer 2025

The Charlbury Chronicle is a free quarterly local community publication run by volunteers covering news and events for Charlbury and the surrounding area

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From the Editor

Summer is always busy in Charlbury with lots going on.

We have Open Gardens to look forward to on 8 June when several gardens will be open to view and of course the yummy teas in the Garden Room! All proceeds go towards the Corner House & Memorial Hall.

We then have the Beer Festival which is on 28 June. This will be held again on the cricket field. More details can be found on p40.

Well summer is the festival season and we can reveal that the Riverside Festival, which will be happening on 19 & 20 July and which you can read about on p.26. Wilderness is also happening on 31 July—3 August at Cornbury Park.

Sadly there is no Forest Fair this year.

Feastival is happening on 22 to 24 August at Alex James's farm in Churchill.

And of course if anyone is willing to help at Street Fair then please contact the secretary at

liz@pjohp.me.uk.

This really is something which is close to my heart and the money raised goes towards the maintenance and upkeep of the Corner House & Memorial Hall,, which they need more than ever this year because of all the renovation which has taken place this year.

The North Leigh Roman Villa is holding Open Days this year and The Mosaic House will be open 11am to 5pm on the weekends of:
June 21 & 22
July 19 & 20; July 26 & 27
August 2 & 3; August 16, & 17;
August 30 & 31

If anyone would be prepared to help out with proofreading the Chronicle then the team would be very grateful. Please contact me and I can tell you more. Its not too many times a year!

If you have any ideas on what else you would like to see in the Chronicle, please do contact me at:-

editor.chronicle@outlook.com

Happy holidays!

Susanna Finch

**Please note the deadline for articles for the Autumn issue is 1st August 2025
Please send all articles to *editor.chronicle@outlook.com***



Charlbury Museum & Heritage Centre

Exhibition News **'The Playing Close ~ through the centuries'**

For centuries the Playing Close has played a central role in the life of Charlbury. This year's small exhibition explores the history of this much-loved verdant space.

One of the earliest mentions of the Playing Close is recorded in the accounts of Eynsham Abbey for 1448; the Abbot and the Convent of Eynsham were the Lords of the Manor for Charlbury in the 15th century. Richard Asshe, the collector of assize rents for the Abbey records: *'....a rent of three barbed arrows from the tenants of Charlbury for an acre of ground called the Pleyying Place....'*

The exhibition steps back into the Elizabethan era, unravelling the story of Thomas Gifford and the Manor of Charlbury, exploring the relationship with St. John's College, Oxford and other dignitaries. A special feature on display will be a facsimile of an important document of 1592, the original is held in St. John's College Archives, it marked the start of the Gifford Trust who continue to manage the Playing Close.

Other displays take inspiration from David Olusoga's television series 'A House through Time', revealing the fascinating stories of the historic houses that still stand on the Close: 'Sycamore House', 'The Old Farmhouse', 'Egypt', 'Little Egypt', the 'Old Fire Station', 'Milton Cottage' and 3, Browns Lane. Auction details for one property in 1867 describe it *'as situated in the most healthy part of Charlbury'*! Plus tales of buildings that once stood such as the British School (built 1815) and those with intriguing names such as 'The Blind House' or 'Lock-up'.

In the 19th century the Playing Close was a quite different place with tradesmen renting areas of ground for saw-pits, timber stores, hovels and pigsties!

Markets and Fairs have taken place on the ground since the late 1600s and a Horse Fair is recorded in May 1709. Before the Charlbury Fat Stock Show moved to ground behind The Bell at the end of 19th c, animal markets were a regular event, a report in *The Oxford Times* (1876) describes over 500 sheep penned on the Playing Close!

Since the 14th century The Playing Close has been a recreational ground for the townspeople, in the Victorian era Pleasure Fairs or Fun Fairs set up camp on the ground. It was, and still is a place for gatherings, commemorations and celebrations. The museum has delved into the records of old newspapers, the Minute books of the Gifford Trust and Parish Council to highlight some of these events.

Old photographs, reportage and imaginative displays reimagine past times on the Playing Close, capturing the spirit of life on this treasured place in Charlbury

Museum open: Saturdays 10.30 -12.30 (& 2.30 -4.30 in August)
Sundays & Bank Holidays 2.30 -4.30.
Adults £2 Children free
Additional events below:

Summer Events: **Plant Sale June 7th 10am – 12pm** **Corner House Garden**

The museum's popular fundraiser returns. If you would like to donate plants, either vegetables or flowers, please bring to the Corner House garden on Friday 6th between 5.30 -6.30pm.

Bric-a-Brac & Vintage Sale August 2 **10am – 1pm Museum Garden**

Vintage & Pre-loved fashions, accessories; jewellery; china & ephemera
Donations welcome, please contact Sue:
07596 441503

Sue Rangeley
Trustee of Charlbury Museum



Seed packets and a pea pod illustration are positioned at the top left and top right of the page, framing the main title.

Museum Plant Sale

Saturday 7th June

10 am - 12 noon

Corner House Garden

Donations of plants welcome

Please bring to the Garden on

Friday 5.30 - 6.30 pm

or on the morning of the sale

Perennials, bedding, herbs

& much more!





Charlbury Probus Club

Thank you for taking the time to read a little about Charlbury Probus Club. We are a club for anyone who has a bit of free time, once a month on a Wednesday lunchtime, to meet for a friendly chat followed by a one or two course lunch and finishing up with a short, interesting presentation on a variety of subjects. This year so far the subject matter of these talks have been 'The Ladies of Chastleton House', a fascinating look at the ladies behind the men who have owned this early Jacobean Mansion, and a short, but detailed, examination on the events leading up to, and immediately following the 6th June 1944, or 'D-day' as it is more commonly known, by Chris Leworthy, a senior guide at the Battle of Britain Bunker Museum.

Our next lunch will be in May, so after the publication of this article, at our usual venue of Sturdy's Castle and will feature a talk by Kate Parrinder on 'Oxfordshire Community Foundation: Oxfordshire Uncovered Research'. Following that, in June, our speaker will be Lt. Col. (Rtrd) Robin Phayre, who will be talking on the subject of Advancements in the use of drones and robotic warfare (the ongoing war in Ukraine/Russia). For our July meeting we will be holding our annual BBQ lunch, this year to be held at Charlbury Memorial Hall on Wednesday the 2nd. After that we will take a short mid-season break, so we won't have a lunch meeting in August. We will restart in September through to our final meeting of the year in December.

Following on from our very successful outing to the Birmingham Symphony Hall in March, we are in the early stages of planning a local trip to the house and gardens of Rousham House: visits into the house are only available to pre-booked tour groups, so this will be a good opportunity to see this 17th century house with stunning gardens.

New members and guests are always

welcome and if you are interested in joining us you can contact the chair, Mike White, on 07710 296814 or mike.ewhite7@gmail.com, or our secretary Simon Handley at simon.handley8@icloud.com

Membership is currently £25 per annum and lunches at Sturdy's Castle are offered at £23 for a one course, or £26 for a two-course meal; tea or coffee with chocolate mints are provided to finish off the meal. There is no obligation to attend every meal.

Mike White



80th Anniversary of VJ Day

On the 17 August 2025 a service will be held at St Mary's Church at 10.00am. This service will include remembrance and commemoration of the 80th Anniversary of VJ day.

100 years of Charlbury Branch Royal British Legion

The Charlbury Branch was formed on the 13 January 1926. Further details will follow on how the Branch will mark its centenary in 2026.

Assistance

For further information about the work of the Legion, how to join or how to obtain assistance, please contact Nick Potter [Branch President] on 810388 or Jane Parsons (Branch Secretary) on 01993 357468. The Branch Membership Secretary is Gary Harrison on 07826 898499 who will assist anyone who has any membership question or who wishes to join.

The telephone number for the Royal British Legion Contact Centre is 0800 8028080. This is a countrywide service.



Charlbury Beer & Wine Circle

February saw Peter Tompkins from Goedhuis Waddesdon making a return visit, bringing an outstanding selection of wines from Chile, South Australia, California & France,

The evening started with a Chardonnay produced by A. d'Aussieres in Languedoc. It had a beautiful balance of smoothness and freshness and was without any hint of the 'petrol-like' taste which some people associate with the Chardonnay grape. A fine start to the evening.

Of the reds, a Cabernet Sauvignon from the Los Vascos estate in the Colchagua region of Chile was arguably the most popular.

The estate was acquired by the Domaines Barons de Rothschild 35 years ago and their Grand Reserve Cromas Cabernet Sauvignon is a blend of 88% C. S., 10% Syrah and 2% Carmenere. A beautiful rich texture with subtle spicy tastes at a remarkably affordable price.

It really was an evening of quality wines and none of them disappointed - although, with a couple of the South Australian examples with RRP of £65 and £70, they may be for special occasions or perhaps simply indulgence. Who knows.

With such an easy-going style and his knowledgeable presentation, without any talking-down to those of us less-well informed than himself, Peter thoroughly deserved the applause at the close and the invitation to return for a third time.

March saw a return by Oli Gauntlett from Eynsham Cellars, who entitled his presentation *The Next Best Thing*. His theme being wines that he believes will soon become popular.

He spoke with knowledge and enthusiasm about the six wines he brought to us and the highlight of the evening was probably the Calcada Patusco Vinho Verde with the fresh citrus

and zingy fruit flavours typical of this grape.

From Swartland, South Africa came Here & There Grenache, with ripe, spicy aromas and gently floral notes of apricot and peach. A full flavoured wine with an unusual salinity on the finish made it something of a 'Marmite' choice. Some really liked it causing others to look at them in amazement. Certainly, each to his/her own, on this one.

The Vermador Organic Monastrell was thought to be quite interesting and likely to become a popular wine. With 100% Monastrell grapes, it is a full-flavoured red, with plenty of rich, dark berried fruit and a touch of spicy oak. Many agreed with the suggestion that it could be served with roasted red meat or pork.

April saw Marcus Thornton from Haynes, Hanson & Clark in Stow-on-the-Wold, bringing seven varied wines from the Burgundy and Bordeaux areas of France. Starting with a well-received Cremant de Bourgogne Blanc de Blancs, he set a high standard with which he continued throughout the evening.

The Petit Chablis and the Vire-Clesse Quintaine Chardonnay were also greatly enjoyed, as were the Medoc, Saint-Emilion, Haut-Medoc and Saint-Estephe which followed.

We now look forward to our garden party and to our barbeque, before taking a break and resuming in September with a very brief AGM and informal social evening.

Guests and new members are always welcome at our meetings in the Memorial Hall but we do ask you to notify us in advance.

Brian Murray, Secretary.
sec.charlburybeerandwine@yahoo.com
Ant Horn,
charlburybeerandwinecircle@gmail.com

Charlbury's own Community Workshop

Our aim: to give anyone and everyone a place where they can find help to improve their wellbeing through reducing loneliness and finding an alternative to social isolation.

Tuesdays 9.00-12.30 (woodwork)

Wednesdays 10.00-12.00 (craft)

Thursdays 2.00-4.00 (woodwork)

Come along and join in

www.charlburycommunityworkshop.org.uk



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Hook Norton Hospital Opening Hours:
Monday - Friday 8.00 am - 6.45 pm
Saturday 8.00 am - 2.00 pm

YOUR LOCAL, INDEPENDENT VETERINARY PRACTICE



Charlbury Garden Society

Some of us look out of the windows at sunshine and imagine lying on a sunbed but there is a whole section of the population who just can't wait to go out there and get their hands dirty. We are a subspecies known as gardeners and there is a whole world dedicated to us.

Here in Charlbury we have an organisation set up to enhance and encourage these people from childhood to old age known as The Charlbury Garden Society.

You may have attended our lovely Spring Show (in association with the Art Society). We had lovely exhibits and lovely exhibitors. You will have another chance to join us on August 30th at our Annual Show where there is a broad variety of classes so everyone can find something to enter. In the meantime, you can come and donate and help yourself to some plants at our Plant Swap on Saturday 10th May, 10am to 12 noon in the Memorial Hall.

We also have trips, both self-drive and fully organised through the season, open to everyone. On 8th June there are the Open Gardens organized by the Society to raise money for the Corner House. Further information will be found on the Charlbury website events page.

For people who prefer their flowers in a vase we have a new event. Hand tied bouquet workshop to be guided by Sabina Marland, a London florist now living in Charlbury. The date is 24th July to be held in the Memorial Hall.

Membership is available and gives you access to gardening discounts and reduced-price tickets to talks. Contact membership@charlburygardensociety.org.uk

Keep your eyes on the Charlbury website as all the information will be

published there.

As you can imagine, there is a lot of effort involved in providing all these activities and we are always looking out for people with bent backs and dirty nails in an attempt to involve them, even in a small way, in running the events.

If you don't like getting your hands in the soil you can spend an hour making teas or putting up tables. We don't really believe in committee meetings so we don't have many. We are nice, friendly people and gardening advice comes for free. If you fancy it, contact the Society on secretary@charlburygardensociety.org.uk

In the meantime, enjoy your summer and get out and about with us.

Nicola Morgan

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No bones about it

Romanised Britons were thick on the ground around here: Akeman Street ran just south of Finstock, and Tim Copeland's *Iron Age and Roman Wychwood* documents large Romano-British villas at Ditchley, Fawler, North Leigh, Shakenoak and Stonesfield. There is likely a villa closer still to Charlbury, yet to be unearthed. And, following the withdrawal of the Roman army in the early fifth century AD, Saxons were quick to move in.

So where are their dead? Why do we find locally so few skeletons from the late Roman and early Saxon period?

In the latest issue of the journal *Northern Earth* (edited by Andrew Chapman, who lives in Charlbury), Richard Stead provides at least part of the answer.

Although burial in cemeteries became common in the urban centres of Roman Britain, those who lived in rural areas continued the Iron Age practice of not memorialising the dead, disposing of bodies in ways that leave little or no detectable archaeology. Cremation may have been part of it, but so too was dismemberment of skeletons and the scattering of bones, sometimes in rivers.

Given that skeletons are so rare in rural settings, it is remarkable that two sets of bones were found together, close to Charlbury but on the other side of the Evenlode, in 1981. They belonged to a male aged 30-40, and a child of 5-7 years. Also uncovered – below the large stone slab -- were a spearhead and knife.

Intriguingly, this burial was close to Walcot. This name denotes the dwellings of the "wallas", the Saxon term for foreigners and used particularly in relation to the Romano-British (essentially Celtic) people they supplanted. In time, "wallas" became "Wales" and "Welsh".

It is easy to imagine the Saxons occupying the south-facing bluff above the Evenlode which became Charlbury, while the Britons (voluntarily or not) moved across to the less favoured north-facing side.

Until I read Richard Stead's article, I had assumed the stone slab over the Saxon bones was a way of marking and preserving the remains beneath. Now I am not so sure. It may have been a means of concealment.

Stead argues that the absence of "borrowed" Celtic words in Old English suggests the Britons and Saxons did not intermingle, leading at best parallel and perhaps antagonistic lives. If this is so, the Saxon skeletons found near Walcot may have been victims of violence – people who strayed the wrong side of the river. The chances of a middle-aged man and a young child dying together of natural causes are remote.

Rob Stepney

For a detailed account of the discovery of the Saxon remains, which were found by Rob Jackson, see the YouTube video [Saxon bones, Roman coins, and life on the land](#).



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Proceeds in support of St Mary's with Shorthampton

PLEASE NOTE : We are meeting in the Memorial Hall again – 3rd Wednesday of the month 7.30pm

The 2025 season got off to a great start with Jo and Dave Murphy "Dressing the Past". Jo and Dave were resplendent in Jacobite dress and gave an entertaining talk and demonstration on the period. In May we have Peter Barker from the RSPB with some amazing photos and information about the Otmoor Nature Reserve (we also hope to plan a walk here in the summer).

June is a picnic and "Second Hand Sally" – members (and guests) are encouraged to bring along (or wear) something they have bought from a charity shop, or an item made from recycled materials.

Taking us into the summer we have a "Day at the Races" where we hope members will show off their "Ascot Hats" and enjoy a day at the races WI style!! Future meetings include "Understanding the Holocaust through the life of a victim and his family", and a "Calendar of Song.

The year is full of interesting and entertaining meetings. We also arrange walks in the local area. When the mud finally dried up, we donned our walking

shoes and had a short walk from Charlbury to Taston, calling at the Old Shed for sustenance on the way back! All being well we have another walk planned for May 31st. Walks are usually around four miles.

WI runs a book club for members and some members also meet at Craft and Cuppa – which is open to anyone – at the Bowls Club on the 3rd Saturday of the month.

This month we were delighted to be able to host the "teas" in the Church at Chastleton House. We were so lucky with the weather and the tea team were kept hard at work supplying tea and cakes.

Visitors are very welcome to attend three times before deciding to join or not. Please feel free to come along and try us out – refreshments included! It's a well-known fact that the WI make great cakes!

For more information contact
charlburywi@oxfordshirewi.co.uk

Pat Court

CHARLBURY MEALS ON WHEELS

Following our appeal in the last issue of the Chronicle we are pleased to announce that we have two new volunteer cooks. However we still have capacity for new recipients. At lunchtime on Tuesdays we will deliver a hot main meal and a pudding, between 12pm and 12.45pm to elderly or disabled residents in Charlbury, Chadlington and Stonesfield at a cost of £5 per meal.

If you, or someone you know, would like to receive a meal, please telephone Susan Merry on 07979 840438 or email susanmerry2@gmail.com.



Coffee break pages

Compiled by Michele Marietta & Miles Walkden

Charlbury word search

C	R	E	S	U	O	H	R	E	N	R	O	C	L	COOP
C	M	U	V	W	G	T	N	T	G	E	G	L	I	CORNURY
O	U	C	B	H	L	C	H	H	A	R	I	U	T	GIGACLEAR
R	S	G	M	I	O	A	E	E	B	M	G	S	T	ST MARYS
N	E	R	N	T	V	N	G	B	B	U	A	O	L	CRICKET
B	U	A	C	E	E	I	B	E	S	U	C	R	E	MUSEUM
U	M	V	E	H	S	T	O	L	T	N	L	T	M	CORNER HOUSE
R	S	T	M	A	R	Y	S	L	O	M	E	L	O	LITTLE MONKEYS
Y	N	G	K	R	S	A	D	C	D	K	A	O	N	DELI
S	C	Y	A	T	O	T	A	E	C	W	R	H	K	THE BELL
M	R	E	B	N	E	B	L	I	O	G	W	R	E	THE BULL
V	H	L	B	U	B	I	R	C	O	N	E	E	Y	WHITE HART
L	E	E	P	L	A	C	E	G	P	L	L	C	S	LEE PLACE
E	B	C	N	E	T	O	A	S	E	I	Y	C	E	BACON

Walking through Charlbury's gloving history

Charlbury once had a thriving gloving industry but little remains now, except records of the people involved, found in the parish registers and census records, old maps, the names of some houses and streets, and an exhibition of gloving artifacts in the Museum.

We can explore this history through a series of walks through our town, and rediscover the links to this industry. Here is the first one.

Walk 1: Egg yolks and bleaching grounds: Dancers Hill to the Playing Close

Start at the top of Dancers Hill and walk carefully down, passing Woodfield Drive on the left, and then notice **Knaves Knoll**, a house on your left. Go round its yard to a small alley way (the end of Narrow Lane) and walk a few steps up. There are two more cottages joined to Knaves Knoll. Stand with your back to these cottages, and notice (just visible) the late 19th century houses in front of you. These are the houses in **Mount Pleasant**.

Philip Dance (1780-1862) lived in one of the three cottages, possibly Knaves Knoll, but we're not sure. He was one of the first glovers bought to Charlbury by **William Albright junior** (1777-1852) in a (successful) attempt to revive the gloving industry in the early 1800s. He came here from Tewkesbury in about 1806-1808: He probably then set up on his own account, married a Charlbury lady, had at least 4 children and is recorded as one of Charlbury's 5 glovers in Pigot's 1830 trade directory.

He moved back to Cheltenham before the 1841 census in Charlbury, so very little else about his time in Charlbury has been found out about him. Is Dancers Hill named after him?

Other glovers lived in the cottages:

William Brice (1832- 1885) and **Frederick Farmer** (1841-1900). William Brice had moved from Woodstock to Charlbury, probably in search of work: in 1881, his sons were also glovers while his daughters were glove machinists. Specialists gloving sewing machines were clearly being used in the trade by then. Frederick Farmer was a partner of the gloving manufacturers **Dyke Boots and Farmer**, started in the 1880s, and another partner, **George Boots** (1854-1929) lived opposite him at No 1 Mount Pleasant.

Gloving was part of their early family life, the mothers and sisters of both of them were gloveresses at one time or another

Walking a little further down the hill is a house on the corner with Tanners Court, called **Hawthorn Villa**. It was lived in by yet another glove manufacturer, **William Bowen** (c1845-1910) by 1891. The wider Bowen family has long been associated with gloving in West Oxfordshire: this William Bowen was the son of a glove manufacturer in Over Norton, and came to set up his business with his brother in Charlbury in the late 1870s. He had left Charlbury by 1901 possibly due to a downturn in business.

So Dancers Hill was a popular area for glove masters to live -perhaps it was a quieter part of the town?

Stop by **Tanners Court**, and crossing the road, find the little path by the side of a stream, the Sandford Brook. This stream starts above the Slade, runs down to the bottom of Dancers Hill, then continues under Tanners Court to Hixet Wood and eventually flows into the Evenlode.

It provided the water used for tanning the skins -probably sheep and deer- to make the leather for the gloves. In April 1736, a Glover **Francis Coleman junior**

Walking through Charlbury's gloving history (contd)

(1701-1758) obtained the land on which were recorded 'two **Water Pitts for a Glover's Use**' which had existed for 'many years past'. Sometime later, 6 Pitts were recorded. In 1880 the OS map for Charlbury showed a '**Tannery**' in the same area, though it is still not certain whereabouts along the stream between Pooles Lane and Hixet Wood the Pitts were located. **Tanners Court** was built on at least part of that tannery.

The men working in the Pitts were called '**leather dressers**' or a similar phrase: they had to make the skins into soft and pliable leather. Part of the tanning process was to soak the skins in 'tubs of egg yolks, cod liver oil, soft soap and water' and then the men (and boys!) would trample on the tub's contents for some hours in their bare feet. Imagine that!

Baptism records from 1813 onwards in Charlbury show that a number of leather dressers, as well as glovers, moved to Charlbury to work in the expanding gloving industry. **The population exploded**, as almost 400 extra people moved into the town by 1821, joining the 965 already here in 1801. Many sheds, barns, hovels and even malshouses were turned into 'dwelling places' to accommodate everyone. It must have been both exciting (more jobs for both men and women) and disconcerting (so many people everywhere) for the existing inhabitants!

Walk past Tanners Court, and turn left into **Fishers Lane**. A few doors down is a cottage called Glovers Cottage. Along with No 4, this used to be the workshops of **Dyke, Boots and Farmer**, as shown in a map of 1910. There is a lovely photograph in Charlbury Museum of the firm's glove cutters outside their premises here. Interestingly, **George Dyke** (1850-1925), the third partner in the firm, was a 3x great grandson of Francis Coleman junior who had the

tanning pits.

Go back and turn up Pooles Lane. Just before Baylis Yard, there is a group of modern houses. They are on the site of **an old gloving factory** built in the 1920s by **Charles Hughes**, who took over **Dyke Boots and Farmer**, probably in 1926. As it was a factory, and not a workshop, it would have accommodated seamstresses who made up the gloves on specialised sewing machines, a different one for each task. This factory closed down in the 1960s, and was demolished for housing in the 1990s.

Walk up Pooles Lane and go across the Playing Close to **Merrys**, a house on the topside. In 1820, a map located a **Bleaching Ground** in the garden here. Once the leather had been tanned, it was put out in the sun to 'bleach' or whiten, to prepare it for dyeing at later stages. Any field with a sunny aspect could be used: there are records of fields beyond the station being used in this way from the mid 19th century

We can end our walk there. Do go into **the Museum** and look at the gloving exhibits there, and read more about the making and sewing of gloves which occupied the lives of so many Charlburians years ago.

Barbara Allison April 2025

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Cotswold Line Promotion Group

The Spring 2025 Newsletter (delivered free to members) is available at the station at a cost of £2, where you can pick up an A4 page, produced by Carl in the ticket office, showing on which trains the Off Peak and Super Off Peak tickets are valid. The new pocket timetables produced by CLPG and Vale Bus and Rail are also available there.

On a recent walk on the South West Coast Path, when passing the cemetery opposite the early-Norman church of St Uny at Lelant, my attention was drawn to one particular grave. The sun was reflecting from the GWR logo on the headstone of James Albert Reeves but there was no other reference to a life spent working on the railways.

This prompted me to search for more information in Find My Past and, true enough, James and his father had both been signalmen at nearby St Erth. Later, whilst waiting for a train at Newton Abbot, I saw a memorial to all the GWR employees who lost their lives during WW1 listing their names, railway departments and locations. Quickly scanning through C 2,700 names, I was unable to find anyone from Charlbury –

the closest being Kingham. It made me think that there must be people in Charlbury whose father, grandfather or other family member worked for GWR, during war or peace, and they may like their railway service remembered. If you have a family story to tell and would like it featured in the CPG Newsletter, please get in touch.

I am trying to persuade CLPG's webmaster to introduce an 'events page' on which events along the line can be publicised. This would be ideal for attracting more visitors to Charlbury's Open Gardens, Beer Festival, Artweeks, Riverside and Streetfair.

CLPG is again planning to be at Streetfair looking to attract new members and with a competition fitting the day's theme of Magic, Mystery and Legends. I'll leave you to decide whether that's the **magic** and the **mystery** of finding the cheapest fare between Charlbury and Llanfairpwllgwyngyllgogerychwyrndrobwlllantysiliogogoch or the **legend** that Great Western's trains ran on time in the days of steam.

Brian Murray
bee.emm100@yahoo.com



**OPEN GARDENS FOR
NATURE RECOVERY
will be on 8th June 2-
5pm .**

Tickets £5 available on the day from the Memorial Hall Gardens.

This is a lovely opportunity to be inspired by seeing other people's gardens. There will be activities for children too and teas with delicious homemade cakes will be served in the Memorial Hall all afternoon. If you can help bake, please contact csfsecretary@charlburystreetfair.org or

ring me on 07800 744787

We are working hard for the Street Fair which will be on 20th September with Egg Throwing the previous evening as usual and we are also planning an exciting new event for 2025 which will be a 'Bake-Off' on 15th November.

Please save the date and watch out for more details nearer the time.

As you know, all these events raise funds for our Memorial Hall and Corner House particularly the ongoing refurbishment of the Corner House itself.

Charlbury Open Gardens for nature recovery



Sunday 8th June

2pm to 5pm

£5 per adult (card or cash)

Tickets & map from the Corner House Garden

All welcome

children's quiz - free entry

Delicious, homemade teas and cakes



Charlbury
Garden Society

Proceeds towards the Corner House and Memorial Hall



News from the Charlbury Deli & Café

Community owned, Community run since 1991

Perhaps the most immediately welcome news is that we now stock pre-prepared rolls & baps – not imported, just ‘ones we made earlier’ (well, by our lovely staff obviously!). So no excuses if you need to ‘grab & go’ – and I hope shorter waiting times if you’re going ‘a la carte’.

As I reported in the winter edition, it’s no secret that our lease now has only 2 years to run and we’ve been engaged in talks over a possible move out of the Old Bank House.

As anyone who’s ever been involved in a conveyancing transaction will know, ‘moving house’ can take far longer than you ever thought possible! I hope by the time you read this (it’s still April as I write) we’ll be somewhat further down the line – but for now it looks like we’ll be staying put at least through the summer.

Consequently, the directors – with help from some volunteer advisers – have been reviewing the business set-up and our strategy for the summer. Again, I’m confident we’ll have made progress on that by publication date.

Which brings me again to the question of directors. We’ve appealed before for possible new directors but so far without success. It’s a purely voluntary role which means working as a team as no one person can or should do everything.

Equally we’ve been grateful for offers of help on say, individual areas or events, but what’s needed is to be ready – to be fully involved and to work together as a team! That doesn’t mean endless talking – we need to get things done – but it does mean coming to collective decisions and ‘mucking in’ – it needs to be profitable, obviously, but has always

been seen more as a facility for the community than a single owner business. So if that appeals to you and you have relevant skills and experience, especially but not exclusively in business management, do get in touch.

In the meantime, we’ve held a couple of meetings of the ‘Friends of the Deli & Cafe’ which have been very successful in giving us feedback on how we’re doing – and have been pleasant social occasions in themselves. Watch out for future meetings on the forum.

Finally, a big thank you to all our regulars – and if you’re not one, do call in and try our ever changing selection of goodies and wines.

And literally this morning we received this review on Google:

Had a fantastic breakfast perfect eggs and avocado on toast. The cappuccino was the real surprise though!...smooth, creamy, and just really well made. Such a nice find in the heart of Charlbury!

Food: 5/5 Service: 5/5 Atmosphere: 5/5

*Rod Evans
Chair, Charlbury Deli & Café*

CHRONICLE ADVERTS

Advertise your business in the **Charlbury Chronicle** and reach over 1600 residences.

To place an advert please ring
Graham Jowett on 01608 810666 or
email:
adverts.chronicle@outlook.com



Charlbury Men's Group

Members of the Charlbury Men's Group recently visited a Men's group based in Faringdon. Here we spoke with the group's organisers about the formation of the group and then we took part in the groups monthly meeting. Members of the group talked about their interests and concerns. The group offered their support towards our efforts here in Charlbury and provided us with some very helpful contacts.

Members of Charlbury Men's Group also met recently with a representative from Healthwatch Oxfordshire who offered some good advice and support towards our next meeting for our group which we hope will be sometime in the near future - possibly in late June. The date, time, and venue for this meeting will be publicized on the Charlbury Website under the Events page.

Please also look out for posters on Notice Boards. If you would like further information or are interested in attending please send a message to Alan at mensgroupcmc@gmail.com.

Alan Jenkins

sustainable Charlbury

A principal objective of *Sustainable Charlbury* (SusCha) from the outset was to use surplus funds generated by **Southill Community Energy** to improve the long-term energy performance of our community buildings.

For Charlbury Primary School, this has meant we have provided funds for energy-efficient lighting and new cavity wall insulation. Next, we will provide funds insulate the loft and replace doors and windows to reduce energy bills, lessen environmental impact, and reinforce the message to our children that we all share responsibility for protecting the environment.

We are also funding additional staff time to increase work with pupils and staff to implement a curriculum focused on biodiversity, energy and nature recovery. We are also ensuring the school's partnership with Little Wild Things continues, taking the youngest children to forest school in Cornbury Woods.

We are fortunate to have a Head who is passionate about delivering sustainability education. Kate Robertson has become a true champion of creating a more sustainable Charlbury. Her background as an environmental scientist is a bonus. Given the current pressures on school budgets, we are pleased to support her efforts,

The school ultimately aims to achieve the Eco-Schools Green Flag Award - a seven-step programme involving action planning, monitoring, evaluation and an eco-code. Go team!

A cosier Corner House – future proofing our community buildings

In other news, we are excited to report that we have been able to support the installation of secondary glazing and repairs to the Grade II listed windows some of which probably date from the 1720s.

See the old windows from the inside, followed by the renovated versions:



sustainable Charlbury

This was no small task due to the complexity of the work and the listed status – the grants from SusCha have totalled around £35,000 with over £30,000 for the secondary glazing alone and the Corner House spending around £10,500 of its own reserves toward repairs. We are sure you will agree that the restored windows now look smart - inside and out - and should have a significant impact on the comfort and heating costs from next autumn. We will be working with Roy Scott and the Trustees to monitor the energy savings.

Funding has already been provided for a comprehensive review, by Cosy Homes, of potential measures to reduce heat loss. In the future the kitchen walls will need to be insulated and significant repairs to the ground floor areas are required before we are able to bring a new tenant into this wonderful community space.

Additional improvements are being considered for the Corner House. The SusCha trustees are keen to be part of these plans as part of our original commitment to funding ongoing energy efficiency measures in public spaces and to reduce emissions and waste in our town.

The Corner House has so much potential to be a warm and welcoming community hub, as well as generate income to boost the reserves and create a sustainable future operating model for the Corner House and Memorial Trust.

As always, any plans will take time and money, and a good deal of committee time and fundraising. We hope the whole community will rally round this cause and support upcoming events to ensure the Corner House continues as the thriving heartbeat of Charlbury for future generations.

*Lucy Carmody,
Trustee, Sustainable Charlbury*



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Corner House back in business

If you've wandered into the centre of Charlbury any time in the last month you probably spotted the Corner House looking a bit like a Ukrainian building suffering from a nearby bomb explosion.

Thankfully, we do not have to put up with that sort of thing in Charlbury but the windows of the Corner House were frequently all missing when you looked at the building in recent weeks.

The windows were benefitting from a very major refit. The final result is sash windows with secondary-glazing, but the work was much more comprehensive than that might suggest. Each window was removed and thoroughly renewed, including new timbers where necessary and replenishment of the workings of the sashes.

Although the structure of the heritage windows has been retained, along with the authentic original glass, each window required repair, the removal of previous filler, and replacement with new timber.

The glass was cleaned, and the window frames sanded and then repainted. The individual glass panels were resealed. Insulation brushes were added, all to eliminate drafts.

After all this work, the clever system of secondary glazing was installed. That system has retained everything worthwhile of the original windows but added an exceptionally neat system of secondary glazing.

The system is integral to the facing windows, so the top and bottom panels open and close so easily without ever needing to remove the added glazing.

The secondary glazing is actually clear

acrylic, which is light but 30 times stronger than normal glass. The acrylic is contained in slim, nearly invisible metal frames.

The windows are now in better shape and quality than they have ever been and, in addition to the insulation values, the look of the building is also improved. Public appreciation is delight.

The project has been possible mostly because of two substantial grants received from Sustainable Charlbury (profits from the solar farm), plus CPRE Oxfordshire Buildings Preservation Trust.

What next for the Corner House?

The trustees are now trying to put together a scheme to transfer the community café from across the road, where the deli lease is to expire, and bring it into the Anne Downer room at the front of the Corner House where coffee mornings have been held for many years.

In good weather, patrons will also have the benefit of use of the Corner House garden.

This project needs investment to prepare rooms in the Corner House, especially the former kitchen, none of which can be done unless we can find donors willing to finance the development.

We are on the lookout for supportive members of our community who want and are able to help make a big difference.

Please contact me if you are willing to help the fund: roy@royscott.uk

Roy Scott, chairman of the trustees.



News from the Charlbury Patient Participation Group.

Staff Changes at Charlbury Medical Centre (CMC)

Dr. Caley has joined the Practice and works on Wednesday afternoon and all day Thursday.

Dr. Alexander Woods is a locum doctor who works on Mondays and will be in post until mid-summer.

Liz Woolven has joined CMC as a social prescriber or primary care well-being worker. Liz is on call on Wednesday and is available for face to face consultations on Fridays. Patients can self-refer and book an appointment via CMC.

An outline of her role is given below:

'Primary Care Wellbeing Workers take a person-centred approach in the delivery of 1-to-1 sessions for people who are experiencing mental health issues or other social or lifestyle issues that are impacting on their wellbeing. The support provided aims to encourage and enable people to link in with existing support services, use the support available in their local community, and develop tools to increase their ability to manage their own wellbeing'.

For further information visit the Mind website.

<https://www.oxfordshiremind.org.uk/support-for-you/primary-care/>

Julia Burgess is a Dementia Advisor supporting families in and around Charlbury and can be contacted for help, advice and support for people diagnosed with dementia, their family and unpaid carers. Call Dementia Oxfordshire on 01865 410 210 to make an appointment or complete the referral form at www.dementiacare.oxfordtogether.org

Repeat Prescriptions

Some patients who do not have access to digital technology and cannot get down to the surgery to post their request slips have reported difficulty in ordering repeat prescriptions. We do not know the numbers who are affected. If you know of anyone affected in this way please contact CPPG via the e-mail at the bottom of this page. CPPG are working with Health Watch Oxfordshire (HWO) to look into the impact on patients of moving from telephone to digital access to NHS services.

Blister Pack Recycling

Charlbury Town Council has kindly funded a recycling box which is in place in Averose Pharmacy. However, this is just a one off. We are looking into ways to continue this service to prevent landfill from blister packs which cannot be recycled with other waste.

To contact or join CPPG to obtain up to date information regarding your Medical Centre email charlburypatientgroup@gmail.com

CHARLBURY FARMERS' MARKET on the Playing Close between 9am and 1pm on Saturday, 14th June

Charlbury Farmers' Market is administered by Thames Valley Farmers' Market Co-operative Ltd. and organised by Geoff & Janet Burroughs.

Any queries, please contact Geoff or Janet on the contact details below.

Email: burroughs871@btinternet.com
tel: 07969 208518, 01608 810260



CHARLBURY Community Centre

Charlbury Community Centre

Wondering what's been happening down at the community centre? Wonder no longer – here's an update. And you can always pop in and find out in person – you will be assured of a warm welcome.

Sports and Fitness

Attendance at our weekly sports and fitness sessions is growing as our offers grow, and the Sports Hall, TG room and café are full of the sounds of happy activity day and evening, 7 days a week. Notable current successes include our Youth Basketball club and Adult Basketball sessions which now draw people from across the county thanks to the amazing efforts of our volunteer leaders Andy, Kit and Alfie, and Jason's Line Dancing classes which are now offered several times a week, due to Jason's enthusiasm and wish to meet demand. From Toddler Gym and music classes to seated fitness classes for seniors, we cater to every age group, and from Gentle Pilates to Super Circuits we have something for every fitness level.

New classes this year include Pilates for Men and Saturday morning Bootcamp! Please visit our website www.charlburycommunitycentre.org - or better yet, come on down for a visit and pick up one of our leaflets, updated monthly, to get details of all our sessions.

Social hub

And while we are certainly the town hub for fitness and sports, we also aim to be a social and cultural hub. Juliet's Art History group runs twice a week now, again due to popular demand. The Charlbury Library is open for browsing and borrowing every day, and the children's corner is nearly always occupied by our youngest community members exploring and having stories

read to them. Friday morning coffee club is a place for retired people to meet and catch up over a very reasonably priced cup of tea or coffee and slice of home-made cake. It is worth mentioning that our delicious baked goods are created and delivered to us week-in, week-out by Charlbury residents Mizue and Emily – a brilliant example of how the centre is truly a community endeavour.

Youth Programme

An important focus this year is on expanding and improving the provision of activities for our town's young people. In the past year, we were pleased to employ Bryanna as Charlbury's Youth Ambassador, and she has been working hard with some highly engaged local teens to develop a varied programme. In addition to the weekly Friday evening drop-in session, there is now a badminton club, art club and 'pizza and philosophy', all of which run weekly during term-time - they welcome all who are secondary school-age. Recently, they have elected members to the new Youth Council who will work directly with Charlbury Town Council to ensure that young voices are heard when community matters are discussed.

They are currently busy planning Charlbury's first Tree Hugging festival so watch out for details and do come and support their efforts – there will be something for everyone.

Development of the centre

Behind the scenes, the Thomas Gifford Trust trustees have been working on more practical matters that will ensure the centre's sustainability and growth in the coming years. Plans are progressing to install new solar panels on the roof of the centre. The plan is to install 4 rows of solar panels as per the original planning application, and these will be supported

with battery back-up to improve their versatility. And the exciting gym project is very much alive and well - the detailed design is now complete and is with building contractors for pricing. The building regulations submission is also with WODC for review, and we're now working on clearing the various planning conditions. Once the building contractors have returned their prices, we can then set a realistic budget and begin the fundraising push. Please watch out for information on how you can be part of this!

Open Door Programme

Our newest development is the Open Door Programme. We are really pleased to be collaborating with Cornerstone and YouMove to ensure our facilities and programmes are fully accessible to everyone in Charlbury.

Local families are registered through Cornerstone, and once registered, all family members will have access to CCC programmes and classes at half price, and youth programmes will be free. If you are not yet registered with Cornerstone, but think you might be eligible, please pop into the Corner House to find out how you can sign up. We always love to see new faces in the centre.

And finally, as always, if you have any ideas for collaborations between the Community Centre and any other local group you're involved in, or you want to explore the idea of offering a class in our TG Room or a session in our sports hall, just let us know. Please get in touch with our amazing manager Daniela: info@charburycommunitycentre.org.uk.

*Catherine Ball
Trustee, Thomas Gifford Trust*



Charlbury Town Youth Football Club will be holding our annual youth football tournament at Nine Acres Recreation Ground on Sunday 22nd June.

This is a much needed fund-raiser for the youth football club, and matches will be on between 9am and 6pm, so please pop down and support our youth teams.

If anyone wishes to sponsor the event, then please get in touch with Gareth Hollinshead. gareth.h75@btinternet.com



CRAG News

We've been able to make grants of almost £30k since September 1st 2024, largely from our incredibly successful winter concert programme.

This means we've been able to continue our regular donations to our partner charities: Safe Passage, Refugee Community Kitchen, Care4Calais, Asylum Welcome, Collective Aid, The Hope Project, Refugee Resource and Global Roots.

These organisations are all doing amazing work supporting asylum seekers across various parts of the world.

We already have a brilliant programme lined up for 25/26, starting on Sunday October 5th with Fretwork.

This will be the first of six concerts, performed by world-class musicians who all donate their time and extraordinary talents to raise funds for CRAG over the winter months.

Somerville College Choir will be here on Sunday December 7th - so don't forget to save the date! Please visit our website at charlburyrefugee.org.uk for details of the full programme.

In the meantime, we are arranging a number of speaker events. Philippe Sands, author of *East West Street* and other books on international human rights should be giving a talk in October/November on the topic of Crimes against Humanity and Genocide.

Next spring we are hoping to screen the film "One Life" starring Anthony Hopkins as Nicholas Winton, who ran the kinder

transports in 1938-9 rescuing children from Nazi-occupied Europe. The screening will be accompanied by a conversation with the screen-writer, Lucinda Coxon.

CRAG also sends a collection of donated items about twice a year to the charity Care4Calais, where clothing and warm blankets, sleeping bags, tents etc. are always desperately needed.

Thanks to everyone who responded to our recent call for items. We know that anything you can give will be received with gratitude and great appreciation.

Lastly, another way to support CRAG is to set up a regular donation.

This ensures that we can always send money to the charities working in areas of greatest need, which will vary from month to month.

You can either transfer money directly to our bank account: Charlbury Refugee Action Group, Sort code: 089299, Account no: 65789036, or set up monthly payments via our JustGiving page at <https://www.justgiving.com/charlburyrefugee> - just click on the 'Donate' button in the top right.

Please email info@charlburyrefugee.org.uk to let us know.

Find out more about CRAG and sign up to our newsletter by visiting our website at: www.charlburyrefugee.org.uk/collections/

Vicky Buser



A forthcoming opportunity to access a range of information about support for quality of later life

Would you like to find out more about information and practical help available from a range of local statutory and voluntary agencies to support independent living and care at home?

Age UK Oxfordshire Services, including Dementia Oxfordshire and Carers Oxfordshire are organising an Information Fair on Tuesday, 15 July from 10.30 to 2.30 in the Glyme Hall, Burford Road, Chipping Norton OX7 5DZ and we will be encouraging local residents to go along.

We understand from the organisers that over 20 different organisations will have displays and information stands there offering opportunities to pick up information and speak face to face with service providers. Topics covered will include the following:

- Understanding hearing and sight impairment and what resources and services are available to support people affected
- How to get alarms and gadgets (assistive technology) that can support you in everyday life. Assistive technology can promote independence and autonomy, help manage potential risks around the home and improve the quality of life of carers and those they are caring for.
- Help with practical support such as: toenail cutting, gardening, cleaning, meal preparation, collecting prescriptions, de-cluttering for older people
- Home care support
- How to get advice on legal issues

relating to sensible planning for later life

- Advice on community safety and how to avoid being scammed

The Glyme Hall is an accessible venue with wheelchair access and parking adjacent to the hall including disabled parking.

It is located next to the Leisure Centre on the Secondary School site on the A361 Burford to Chipping Norton Road before you reach the Town Centre. The site is served by the Pulhams X9 Witney to Chipping Norton bus service which runs through Charlbury. There is a bus stop outside the Chipping Norton School site – ask for Chipping Norton School.

For further information about the Fair, contact Katie Smok at katiesmok@dementiaoxfordshire.org.uk
Tel: 07827 235441

Help from ATIC and for ATIC

And finally, don't forget – to ask for ATIC help with transport to an appointment, with a practical task or someone to come to have a chat from time to time call **01993 776277**. The phone line is staffed from 9.00 a.m. to 1.00 p.m. Monday to Friday with a regularly-checked answerphone when Volunteer Link-Up staff are not available.

We will always welcome new volunteers to help us provide our service.

If you would like to find out more, please contact ATIC on our organisational mobile number - 07487 413892 - or email: charlburyalltogether@gmail.com.

Meryl Smith



RIVERSIDE FESTIVAL 2025

Mill field, Charlbury 19th & 20th July

Naturalists amongst you will note that July sees the return of the hardy perennial *Riversidia Festivus*, spreading vigorously, briefly, for it's mayfly-esque 2-day burst of energy down on the Mill Field.

This astonishing natural phenomenon first appeared in 1996, a small gathering of the music loving local fauna lashed a few planks together to make a stage and sewed seed in such fertile soil that, like Kieth Richards, Riverside appears immune to conventional weapons.

What makes this species of culture so unusual, and is perhaps the key to its continued success, is that it started - and remains - fully, defiantly, non-profit, non-corporate and free at the point of use. Everyone who helps this organism to thrive is a volunteer, no one gets paid - and the audience don't pay either, a truly symbiotic relationship between host and symbiont.

The stewards, build crew, committee, bar staff and even the kids who help the clean up crew, all do it for the good of the festival. Of course, Riverside doesn't exist in a complete vacuum, the Town Council has always generously tended it and provided the permissions and grants necessary for it's continued survival, so the cycle of life continues.

Be under no illusion though, Riverside is a fully fledged festival experience, a veritable charismatic mega-fauna; 4 stages, well over 50 acts, craft displays, free children's entertainment, amazing food vendors, and 3 bars supported - and partially staffed - by the wonderful Hook Norton Brewery, providing the necessary nourishment.

Participation is always a major part of what makes riverside flourish, and this year's theme is Wild West Oxfordshire,

so any kids, big kids or other pupae can dress up as any kind of Wild Thing from a cowboy to crocus, prizes will be given....

Whilst it is true that Riverside has a single entity at it's centre, it can only live through the continued efforts of those who nurture it.

So, anyone who wants to join the hive is welcomed no matter how small an amount of time they can give. Some work on it all year, others pop up to help put the stages up, sell programmes during the event, or importantly, work on the bar. Information on how to get involved is on the website www.charlburyriverside.org

The website also contains all the information you'll need in order to experience this glorious beast in its full flowering, however as a sensitive and sensible organism, Riverside does have to be aware of its surrounding ecosystem and conform to its license requirements. So, music finishes at 10pm on Saturday and 8pm on Sunday, alcohol can't be brought into the festival site (but is plentiful for those allowed it, from the bar) and sadly pets can't be accommodated.

However, there is now access to a proper car park just at the bottom of Pound Hill, where the landowner will charge a small fee to park for as long as you like. This has allowed Riverside to be much more access friendly with a footbridge over the Mill Stream as well as the main entrance down Mill Lane off Dyers Hill.

The hive-mind producing this year's show communicated to us that this year, Riverside's flowering is back with its best ever line up of music, arts and crafts:

Remarkably in an age of spiralling bills and global economic chaos, Riverside is



RIVERSIDE FESTIVAL 2025

Mill field, Charlbury 19th & 20th July

free and remains fun, fierce and family friendly.

The lineup features the very best indie, folk, rock, electronica and party music from Oxfordshire and beyond.

Oxfordshire's soon-to-be-stadium kings Kanadia headline the festival, delivering enormous alt-rock power and massive tracks from their album June and releases Hold It Down and All Is Lost. Expect (sonic) fireworks.

The team are also immensely proud to have the wonderful David Celia grace the stage, the phenomenal singer songwriter joins us as part of his European tour.

On the Quickfix stage you can see The Unbelievable Truth, The Rock of Travolta, Liv Luce, Secret rivals, Samurai 7 - Yes Samurai 7 one of the first bands to play the festival are back! - and recent guests on the Riverside Radioshow, United by Sadness (the Riverside Radioshow can be found on windrush.radio or on DAB in Oxford)

We are hugely pleased to have the first festival appearance of the re-formed Black Hats, creating an entirely

respectable bespectacled indie riot on the main stage.

Riverside isn't Riverside without the godparents of the Oxford music scene the MIGHTY Redox, expect fun, frolics and love for you all, from Phil and Sue. Not only are Jamie Hyatt and friends back as Bedd, but Arthur Turners Love Child have reformed, we are reunited with Dead Like Harry and Peerless Pirates are back together for more, well, pirating.

All of this is not to mention the most exciting band you can see this side of the Sunset Strip, The Standard. They will be wrapping up the festival with a blistering party set unmatched by any other live experience, other than their previous sets of course....., bring your boogie shoes - or dancing wellies.

To experience this Ipomoea Purpurea "Riversidea Festivius" in all its glory, be down at the Mill Field from 2pm on July the 19th - or noon on the 20th. If you miss it this year, then 'sic biscatus disintergratum', but you should, with luck, see it again next time it emerges.

Fergus McVey



Photos from last year's festival

Charlbury Church Services



Charlbury Baptist Church, Dyer's Hill

Contact: Secretary (01608 810107)

Sundays 10.30am. Weekly worship with Communion usually on the first Sunday of each month

Join our **live-streamed services: see our church website on charlbury.info**

Tuesdays at 7.30pm Bible Study/discussion in person or on zoom

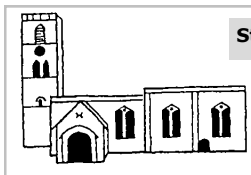
Friday Film Night 23rd May. Join us at 7pm for "The Case for Christ". An investigative journalist and atheist sets out to disprove Christianity, with unexpected consequences.

We plan further film nights on 13th June and 18th July

Our garden. A place to sit quietly and enjoy at any time.

charlburybaptistchurch@gmail.com

www.facebook.com/dyershill/



St Mary's C of E Church, Church Street

St Mary's Church, Charlbury and All Saints Shorthampton

Full details of all church services are available in the

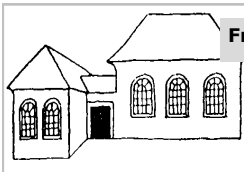
Leaflet or in the Church porch

Parish Office (01608 810230)

www.stmaryscharlbury.co.uk

Messy Church 3pm 8th June

Summer fête 21st June



Friends' Meeting House, Market Street

Meeting for Worship at the Friends Meeting House

Sunday mornings 10.30am

For further details contact Sue Terry (01608 811033)

email: sueeterry@btinternet.com)

You are very welcome to join us



Methodist Chapel, Fishers Lane

Sunday services at 10.30am

Further information from Gill Grason (01608 810154)



St Teresa's R.C. Church, Fishers Lane

Wednesday Mass: 9.15 am (followed by Adoration/ Benediction) except in Lent when Stations of the Cross)

Friday Mass: 9.15 am

Sunday: 9.15 am Parish Mass.

Priest. Fr Clive Dytor, The Old Drapery, Church Street, Charlbury. Tel: 07484 158642.

Closure of Charlbury Methodist Church Building

A Thanksgiving service on the 20th. July this year will mark the end of over 200 years of continuous worship and outreach at the Methodist Church on Fishers Lane, as the building will be closed. All are welcome to come to the service.

We'll miss our building. It is not only used for worship but hosts clubs and societies for the town, promoting the arts, wellbeing and education, for all ages.

Nevertheless, it has become an inevitability for the few Methodists who are still worshipping here that the upkeep - financial and practical - of such an extensive building is unrealistic and that our energies must now be directed outwards and put to wider and better use.

The Methodist congregation have adapted to changes over the years and shall continue to do so.

From the first licensed meetings in Grace Cottage just off Market Street, to a Primitive Methodist congregation in the building that is now St Theresa's, we have sought to respond to the gospel of God's love in Christ and to live out its discipleship in worship and mission.

The building and its people were at the forefront of changes for social justice from the early 19th century, long before state education and the welfare state.

Charlbury's early Methodists opened schools both in the chapel schoolroom and around the town, and members

oversaw a library of over 500 books. The way Methodist churches are organised meant that Victorian adults gained many useful skills such as confidence in debating and public speaking; organisational skills in management and financial affairs; and increased the scope of women who were able to take roles normally closed to them.

More recently, responding to societal calls for inclusivity, we installed a ramp and internal lift and have registered to conduct same sex marriages.

Notable early Methodists include well-known names: the Gatfields, Clary sisters, Mr Lardner, Mr Harwood, the Cliffords, the Kibbles, Thornetts and Griffins. More recently in 1995 we were delighted that, in addition to her extensive preaching role, Stella Bristow was appointed as Vice-President of the Methodist Conference, which is the governing body of the Methodist Church.

Whilst we shall miss our beautiful Chapel, we remember that it's the people who make the Church, not the building.

We shall continue to meet in Charlbury and with our Methodist friends in Chipping Norton as well as at joint events and worship with other denominations in town through 'Churches Together in Charlbury',

"We'll praise him for all that is past, and trust him for all that's to come" *St F 67*

Sue Tokumine

Come to relax, unwind, read the papers, catch up with friends and colleagues and enjoy some delicious home-made cake along with a steaming cup of Fair Trade tea or coffee

Font Cafe

St. Mary's Church, Charlbury
10am to 12 noon every Thursday

For smaller children we provide a play area with toys. Free Wi-Fi available



Charlbury Garden Society

Some of us look out of the windows at sunshine and imagine lying on a sunbed but there is a whole section of the population who just can't wait to go out there and get their hands dirty. We are a subspecies known as gardeners and there is a whole world dedicated to us.

Here in Charlbury we have an organisation set up to enhance and encourage these people from childhood to old age known as The Charlbury Garden Society.

You may have attended our lovely Spring Show (in association with the Art Society). We had lovely exhibits and lovely exhibitors. You will have another chance to join us on August 30th at our Annual Show where there is a broad variety of classes so everyone can find something to enter.

We also have trips, both self-drive and fully organised through the season, open to everyone. On 8th June there are the Open Gardens organized by the Society to raise money for the Corner House. Further information will be found on the Charlbury website events page.

For people who prefer their flowers in a vase we have a new event. Hand tied bouquet workshop to be guided by

Sabina Marland, a London florist now living in Charlbury. The date is 24th July to be held in the Memorial Hall.

Membership is available and gives you access to gardening discounts and reduced-price tickets to talks. Contact membership@charlburygardensociety.org.uk

Keep your eyes on the Charlbury website as all the information will be published there.

As you can imagine, there is a lot of effort involved in providing all these activities and we are always looking out for people with bent backs and dirty nails in an attempt to involve them, even in a small way, in running the events.

If you don't like getting your hands in the soil you can spend an hour making teas or putting up tables. We don't really believe in committee meetings so we don't have many. We are nice, friendly people and gardening advice comes for free. If you fancy it, contact the Society on secretary@charlburygardensociety.org.uk

In the meantime, enjoy your summer and get out and about with us.

Nicola Morgan

CORNER HOUSE AND MEMORIAL HALL

Office: 07826 056496

Office hours: Mon 9.30am - 11.30am; Wed & Sat: 9am to 12 noon

Emergency Contact:

Roy Scott (01608 810562)

Opportunities for social contact

Opportunities for social contact

The Dementia Friendly Charlbury group have been reviewing ways in which, as community volunteers, we can support local people living with dementia and their carers in close liaison with Dementia Oxfordshire's local adviser, who provides professional support.

We have compiled a list of opportunities for carers to meet other people in a similar situation and this is posted on our page in the Community section (Health and Wellbeing) of the charlbury.info website. We are also aiming to have copies available at key locations around the town including the Surgery, Pharmacy, Corner House, Library and Deli.

information and practical help available from a range of statutory and voluntary agencies to support care at home

We have also been looking at ways of promoting awareness of and access to information and practical help available from a range of statutory and voluntary agencies to support care at home.

The Memory Handbook

This handbook is published by the Alzheimer's Society, who introduce it as follows:

"Memory loss can be frustrating and difficult to cope with. However, there are ways of managing the problems you or someone you know may be facing. Many of the ideas in this booklet are suggestions from people who have problems with their memory. Everyone has their own way of coping, and what works for one person does not always work for another. Use the suggestions in this booklet to find what works for you. You might want to discuss some of the suggestions with friends and family."

The handbook can be downloaded from

the Alzheimer's Society website here: www.alzheimers.org.uk/get-support/publications-and-factsheets/memory-handbook or you can order a free copy by post using an online form here <https://www.alzheimers.org.uk/form/order-free-publications>.

If you are not good at accessing material online, contact us and we will try to help – see contact details below.

Special BBC series: Memories and Dementia

The BBC is launching a special new season across TV, iPlayer and Radio called Memories and Dementia: Starting the Conversation. The season aims to help start conversations between those living with dementia and their friends, families and carers by evoking memories of their past through content from the BBC's archive. Programming and support for the season will come from across the BBC, including specially curated collections and a pop-up channel on BBC iPlayer, special films on Morning Live and The One Show, and features across the BBC's radio network. Additionally, a major plotline on EastEnders has been furthering the conversation about young onset dementia. To find out more about content and activity that forms the Memories and Dementia season look here: <https://www.bbc.com/mediacentre/2025/memories-and-dementia-starting-the-conversation-season> and visit the website: bbc.co.uk/memoriesanddementia

Dementia Friendly Charlbury (DFC) is a group of volunteers who want Charlbury to be a friendly and welcoming place for everyone to live, especially people with memory and thinking problems. If you have any comments or concerns to pass on to DFC, you can contact us on 01608 810192 or email us at charlburydf@gmail.com.

Meryl Smith

Our Chair, Nikki Rycroft, and our Membership Secretary (formerly Treasurer), Angus Bentall, have left the committee after years of dedicated service. We're very grateful for their hard work and wish them an enjoyable, and well-deserved rest – but hope we can still tap into their expertise

They've left the Society in excellent shape. Membership - up on 2023/4 - is the highest since Lockdown. Our finances allow us to donate £2,000 to the *Charlbury Exhibition Foundation*, which gives grants to young people for apprenticeships or higher education. We ended the season with three excellent talks.

- Alison Butler reviewed how Charlbury's different religious traditions have changed baptism rites – and how long the traditional font will prevail.
- Simon Randall described the Civil War in Oxfordshire, displaying his extraordinary archive of documents retrieved from a rubbish skip
- The Wychwood Forrest Trust's Neil Clennell looked at initiatives for increasing biodiversity around Charlbury, and the Trust's success in bringing new plant, amphibian and butterfly species to Wigwell.

The Committee's currently working on next season's programme and would love to hear anyone's ideas for possible speakers or topics. We'll publish full details of the 2025/26 programme later in the summer, but we'll probably keep our hybrid pattern of Memorial Hall talks in October, November, March, April and May and Zoom in December, January and February.

Mike Flanagan's joined the Committee, and for now we won't appoint a Chair – but we'd love more people to help us plan and organise all those events. While that's going on, the Committee will manage the Society collectively.

www.charlburysociety.org.uk



I am writing this just as we return after the Easter break, and look forward to summer activities.

Spring term activities included a District Funday for Beavers, who have also been making catapults and pancakes (not in the same evening!). Cubs concentrated on First Aid and Road Safety badges, whilst Scouts gained their Astronomy badge and practised Navigation skills.

We were very happy to help out at Charlbury Preschool in March, as Beavers, Cubs, Scouts, parents and leaders (including a young leader) joined in with gardening and playground spring cleaning – pressure washing was very popular...

Closer to home, we were very grateful to parents and trustees who helped with essential pruning and maintenance at the Hut, where our next projects will be painting and flooring, thanks as ever to generous grants from the community.

The month of May is when Oxfordshire Scouting celebrates the achievement of young people in gaining the Chief Scout Award for their age group, so we are delighted to congratulate Bryony, Stanley and Tolly (Bronze), Thomas (Silver), Miles and Joe (Gold).

Looking ahead, we are holding our Group Camp in the New Forest in July, more about that next time.

Cheryl Horsey, Group Lead Volunteer



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Charlbury Library phone number has changed to 01865 815129

A plea for volunteers – **especially for those willing to work occasional Saturday mornings...** the library couldn't manage with our many volunteers who help out approximately once a month for a 2½ hour session to shelve books, assist customers and generally keep things tidy and running smoothly.

If you are thinking of volunteering and would like more information, please contact the Library Manager in the first instance.

Joining the library is free and just takes a couple of minutes to complete a registration form in branch or online. Once you have your card it can be used in any of the 44 libraries that we are lucky enough to have in Oxfordshire. With a library card you can also access all of our digital platforms such as ebooks, music, newspapers and magazines, family history research, and many other educational and recreational options.

The Summer Reading Challenge will be starting on Saturday 5th July and is free to join in the library. It's aimed at pre-schoolers and primary school-aged children and aims to encourage reading for pleasure throughout the summer

holidays. There are rewards along the way and a medal and certificate at the end for those completing the challenge. It will be advertised in libraries soon and local schools will be contacted to spread the word. Each child only needs to read six library books in total to collect all their rewards and finish the challenge, though of course they can read more if they want. We hope to see lots of you signing up!

There will be at least one free Stories & Craft event during the summer holidays but the dates haven't been fixed yet, so do look out for posters in the library and listings on the Events page on the charlbury.info website.

With the holiday season upon us, don't forget to borrow a few books to take away with you. You can borrow them for up to three weeks at a time and this can be extended if necessary so there's no excuse not to indulge in some holiday reading. Just try not to drop them in the pool!

Julie Ward

*Library Manager
01865 815129*

charlbury.library@oxfordshire.gov.uk



All Together In Charlbury – a local helping hand

If you need:

- Transport to appointments or activities/ visits
- Occasional household tasks/gardening
- Shopping
- Help with a form or letter or something else
- Someone to pop in for a chat

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adverts.chronicle@outlook.com

Charlbury School May 2025

Spring has truly sprung at Charlbury School bringing with it exciting developments across our play areas, grounds and for young leadership opportunities!

The initiatives started by our proactive School Council last autumn, have blossomed into vibrant new play zones.

Our children now enjoy dedicated spaces for badminton and the fast-growing sport of pickleball, alongside a creative den and obstacle course construction zone, imaginative small world play, and a lively performance area buzzing with music, circus skills, and dance.

We've also introduced a core strength fitness zone, tranquil quiet areas for reading, and our ever-popular games area.

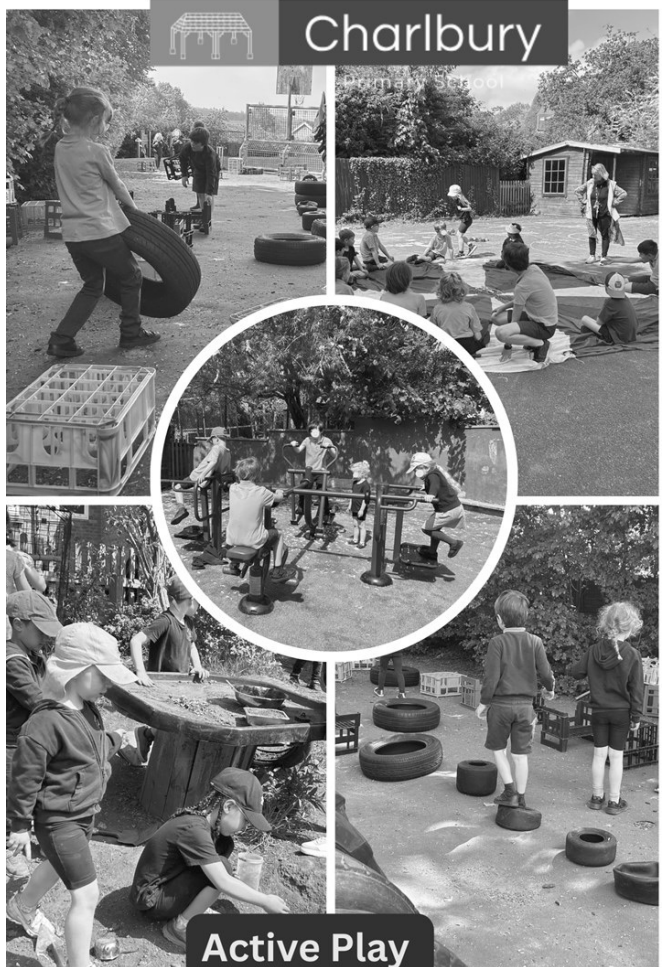
Cultivating leadership is also a key focus this term. Our dedicated young leaders – play leaders, sports captains, team captains, and eco leads – are shining examples for our younger pupils.

They embrace their vital roles with enthusiasm and responsibility, making a real difference to our school community.

Finally, our "Little Wild Garden" is bursting into life! Following the initial clearance in winter, the hard work of volunteers is paying off.

We've seen incredible progress with weeding, digging, path laying, and fence painting.

Now comes the exciting stage of planting, with herbs, perennials, trees, climbers, and shrubs promising a



beautiful and enriching space for learning and exploration. We extend our deepest gratitude to the many organisations

and individuals who have generously helped, donated, and volunteered their time to bring this vision to life. Our enthusiastic Eco Team, alongside dedicated volunteers, are now nurturing the garden with regular watering and care.

Kate Robertson - Headteacher



Charlbury Town Council News

Contact: Lisa Wilkinson, Town Clerk at
charlburytownclerk@gmail.com or 07311 259412.
c/o Corner House, Market Street, Charlbury, OX7 3PN.
www.charlbury-tc.gov.uk

Charlbury Town Youth Council

The Youth Council is up and running! For some time, the idea of an independent youth council, run by the youth of Charlbury, for the youth of Charlbury has been on the horizon.

The Town Council has provided funds and expertise towards this exciting development. Crucially, the Youth Council is not part of the Town Council, it is independent and intended to give young people in the town a much needed stake in the future. As of now, five Youth Councillors have been elected, with more to come.

Meet the newest Town Councillor

Charlbury Town Council has recently co-opted Gilliane Appadoo into its ranks. A long term resident of the town, Gilliane will bring a lot of experience and understanding to the council.

We are still one councillor short should anybody feel like getting involved. If you would like to put yourself up for co-option, please contact Lisa, the town clerk, via the contact details above.

Saturday Market

The Saturday market returns from the 3rd of May, outside the community centre.

We have a new bread and pastry supplier, in the shape of Gatineau, an award-winning artisan bakery. The market is weekly, Saturday morning, 9.30am until noon, and there is the promise of a monthly cheese stall in the offing. Regular favourites Styan Farms will be providing fresh veg of the highest quality and the regular bread stall will be there, staffed entirely by volunteers as usual with all proceeds going to local charities.

Walkers are Welcome

The Town Council has been supporting a successful relaunch of the Walkers are Welcome initiative, with new maps and leaflets and improved waymarking on the routes. We are working on additional bus and train -accessible walks.

There is also a reprinted town trail. Simply use one of the handy the QR codes to access. Alternatively, find details of the improvements at <https://charlbury-tc.gov.uk/walking>

Land and Nature (LNG)

The work of the Town Council Land and Nature group continues, building on the well-attended 'Year of Nature recovery' January meeting. The LNG have been taking practical, visible steps, including seeding some of the town's verges, after the Town Council took the step of taking over verge maintenance from the County Council. For a look, check out the 'demonstration verge' on the Slade.

Charlbury Community Works!

The CCW!, aided by a dedicated band of volunteers, have been out in force, working with the LNG to re-seed the verges on Dancers Hill and the Slade.

The Town Council have been out weeding paths and cleaning kerbs. Future plans include cleaning the Victoria Fountain, funding the top-dressing on the Nine Acres football pitch and maintaining the excellent condition of the recently cleared footpath between Crawborough and Wychwood Paddocks.

Planning on the Town Council website

Charlbury Town Council acts as a



Charlbury Town Council News

statutory consultee on all planning applications within the parish. Although West Oxfordshire District Council (WODC) remains the local planning authority responsible for approving or refusing applications, the Town Council's Planning Committee reviews each submission and provides comments reflecting the interests of the local community and the objectives of the Charlbury Neighbourhood Plan.

Members of the public are welcome to attend committee meetings as observers and may also address the committee by prior arrangement with the Town Clerk.

To support greater transparency and participation, improvements have been made to the Planning Committee page on the Town Council's website:

<https://charlbury-tc.gov.uk/planning->

committee

Residents can now view:

- New Planning Applications: Due to be considered at the next committee meeting.
- Planning Outstanding: Applications previously considered by the Town Council but pending a decision from WODC.
- Planning Decisions: Recently determined applications, with links to official decision notices.

Cllr Tom Greenwood



Age UK Oxfordshire's Summer Information Fair

Come and join Age UK Oxfordshire and a host of other services to find out what support is available in your community.

There will be lots of information stalls to explore, plus the chance to speak face-to-face with those who are offering support.

Along with the Age UK Oxfordshire services, including Dementia Oxfordshire and Carers Oxfordshire, other organisations will be offering information about:

- Home support services
- Sensory Impairment Support
- Assistive Technology Support
- Legal Advice
- Scam Advice and lots more!

Do come along on:

Tuesday 15th July from 10:30am – 2:30pm

At Glyme Hall, Burford Road, Chipping Norton, OX7 5DZ

Contact Katie Smok on katiesmok@dementiaoxfordshire.org.uk 07827 235441

From County & District Councillor Liz Leffman

01608 810153, 07741 073088 liz.leffman@oxfordshire.gov.uk

I am delighted to have been re-elected as your County Councillor, and I would like to thank the other candidates for standing, and my neighbours in Charlbury for their support. For the first time since 2009, Oxfordshire County Council has a majority administration, and for the first time ever this is a majority Liberal Democrat administration.

However, this may well be the last election for Oxfordshire County Council as the next elections we have will probably be for a new unitary authority. These are scheduled to take place in 2027. Councils in areas which still have both County and District councils are required by government to present fully costed proposals for new unitaries by November 28th this year.

In March we submitted early outline proposals for Oxfordshire, and we await the government's response before moving to the next stage.

There are currently three proposals on the table in Oxfordshire; first of all, a single unitary authority for the county, which is the County Council's preference; secondly two unitaries, one in the north and one in the south of the county, which would include West Berkshire and which is being proposed by the Vale of White Horse and South Oxfordshire councils, and a third proposal which would create an enlarged Oxford City plus two other authorities, which is being proposed by the City and which would probably mean that nearby villages, such as Eynsham, Kidlington and Wheatley, would be absorbed into the City.

Over the next few months there will be extensive consultation on these proposals, and I would urge everyone to get involved and have their say. The

business cases for each of these proposals will be developed and submitted, but in the end, it will be the government which decides which of these proposals for Oxfordshire will go forward.

Alongside local government reorganisation, Oxfordshire and Berkshire councils are in regular communication about forming a strategic mayoral authority and OCC is hosting a meeting at the Said Business School for leaders and chief executives in early June to progress this.

More locally, the introduction of controlled parking in Charlbury has been very helpful to many residents, but there are probably adjustments that need to be made, and there will be a review of the arrangements in a few months, which again I would urge people to participate in. I know from residents in the surrounding villages that they are having trouble finding parking at the station, so I have recently been exploring opportunities for a bus service from the Wychwood villages to the station to take pressure off parking there. I have also looked with GWR and with Cornbury at whether additional parking could be provided nearby, but as the available land tends to flood, this is probably not an option. GWR recently looked at adding a second storey to the existing car park but the estimated cost of £4 million means this is not a viable option.

My thanks to everyone in Charlbury for the support you have given me in the recent elections.





With less to do by way of keeping footpaths from becoming overgrown, wintertime gives the Cotswold Voluntary Wardens the opportunity to focus more on the maintenance of some of the publicly accessible woodland in our area. Too often neglected these days, this is a really important aspect of countryside management, helping to keep our woods healthy and attractive.

In Centenary Wood, we have continued with the programme of coppicing hazel that was begun probably ten or more years ago. Each winter, we cut back individual trees in different areas of the wood, harvesting the timber and shoots that are suitable for hedge laying. We cover the cut stumps with trimmings, as prickly as possible, to stop the deer from eating the new shoots that grow back – once the rotation is established, each tree will be coppiced again every seven years or so.

Dieback is continuing to devastate the ash trees in the wood, and you may well

have noticed that a number of them have been marked with red paint for felling. This winter, we cut down diseased ash trees closest to the main pathways, as well as logging up some that had been blown down by the storms. We also cut back another area that had been infested with blackthorn. Happily, the oak trees in the bottom of the wood seem to be thriving, and a couple of years ago there was a major thinning-out there to give the remaining oaks more elbow-room to grow.

Elsewhere in the district, the Wardens have been involved this winter in maintenance in Dean Grove and at Breach community wood just outside Hailey.

For more information about the Wardens, what we do and how to get involved, our contact details are in the Directory at the end of the Chronicle.

Simon Walker





Charlbury Beer Festival 2025—28th June

Raising a Glass to Support: Charlbury Beer Festival Thanks Its Sponsors!

Mark your calendars! The 27th annual Charlbury Beer Festival returns on **Saturday, 28th June, from noon 'til late**. This beloved community event is more than just a fantastic day out enjoying a wide array of drinks, food, and entertainment; it's a crucial fundraiser. Over the years, the festival has proudly raised over **£300,000** for vital local causes – a significant achievement made possible by the support of our community.

Putting on a festival of this scale involves substantial costs, covering everything from infrastructure to liquid stocks! This is where the incredible generosity of our sponsors comes in. Their support is absolutely vital in helping us cover these operational expenses. By securing sponsorship, we ensure that a much larger portion of the money raised on the day can go directly to the deserving local charities and groups we proudly support each year.

We simply couldn't make the Charlbury Beer Festival happen without this fantastic backing, and we want to express our deepest gratitude to every single sponsor who helps bring the event to life.

Our Headline Sponsor: Howden

We are thrilled to announce **Howden** as our headline sponsor for the 27th Charlbury Beer Festival. Their significant contribution provides the essential foundation upon which the entire festival is built.

About Howden: Howden is one of the largest specialist insurance distribution groups in the UK - their unique high street branch and office network continues to grow, with over 200 branches and centres, supporting clients

in communities nationwide. In Oxfordshire they have branches in Witney, Oxford, Carterton, Banbury, Abingdon and Bicester.

We extend our most sincere thanks to Howden for their leading support this year.

Sponsors Making Every Area Shine

Beyond our headline sponsor, many other generous businesses and families step up to sponsor specific areas. A huge thank you goes to:

- **Bronsens Chartered Certified Accountants** for sponsoring the World Aunt Sally Championship.
- **Finders Keepers** for supporting the Wine and Gin Bar
- **Cornbury Park** for making the engaging Culture Tent possible.
- **Sonnox** for sponsoring the Music Stage, bringing you great bands.
- **Banbury Hill Farm | The Old Shed | Cotswold View** for supporting the Craft Beer area.
- **Charlbury Garage** for sponsoring the Cider Bar.
- **The Glasgow Family** for their support of the Tea Tent.
- **The Theatre Chipping Norton** for sponsoring the Children's Tent (featuring activities from Charlbury Pre-school, The Theatre, Little Wild Things, and Kevin's Community Circus).
- **Cornbury House Horse Trials** for sponsoring the Pimms Bar.

Sponsor a Barrel and Get Involved!

You can also directly support us by sponsoring one of the 60 barrels of beer! It's a fantastic way to get involved,



promote your name or business, and receive complimentary tickets. Email me or visit charlburybeerfestival.org/sponsors for details—your barrel sponsorship is hugely valued.

We couldn't do it without the generosity of all our sponsors, volunteers, and attendees. Thank you for your vital support!

The Charlbury Beer Festival Committee

(Message from Co-chair, Sean Hosking)

Email:

seanhosking@charlburybeerfestival.org

Website: charlburybeerfestival.org



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Spring Sunshine and Outdoor Fun at Charlbury Pre-School

The warmer weather has brought lots of smiles at Charlbury Pre-School, with the children spending more time exploring and learning outdoors.

In the Garden

Thanks to a generous grant from Charlbury Town Council, we've been busy planting seeds in brand new troughs to boost biodiversity.

The children water them daily and are keeping a close eye on their growing sunflowers—fingers crossed for a bumper crop!

We've also been learning about the life cycle of frogs and watching with fascination as our frogspawn turned into wriggly tadpoles. And our new recycling role-play area in the garden has sparked lots of great learning about sorting and looking after our planet.

A big thank you to Charlbury Scouts, Cubs, and Beavers who joined us for a big Spring tidy-up.

Their sweeping, painting and very enthusiastic power-washing helped get the space ready for all this activity—and it was lovely to see some familiar faces return.

Inside the Classroom

The Monster Phonics programme continues to be a fun and engaging part of our literacy learning. We've also been exploring Space and carrying out mini science experiments—like mixing colours with pipettes.

A new Physical Movement Area has helped the children express their feelings through movement, supporting both emotional development and active play.

Special Events

For Mother's Day, we hosted a cosy lunch in the classroom, complete with blueberry muffins baked by the children—what a treat! This term we also enjoyed a parent-led music session, full of rhythm, singing, and joyful noise.

You'll see our volunteer committee out and about at community events this summer, including the Charlbury Beer Festival and Street Fair. Come say hello and support us if you can!

Celebrating Our Staff

Congratulations to Kerri, Dawn, and Mizue for passing their latest qualifications—staff training is a vital part of our commitment to great early years care.

Join Us

At Pre-School we run sessions from 8:30am to 5pm, Monday to Friday during term time. Find out more at www.charlburypreschool.org.uk—thank you to Matt Brock for his brilliant help with our new website!

For September enrolments or to arrange a visit, get in touch at **01608 811200** or **admin@charlburypreschool.org.uk**—we'd love to hear from you.

Charlbury Pre-School Committee

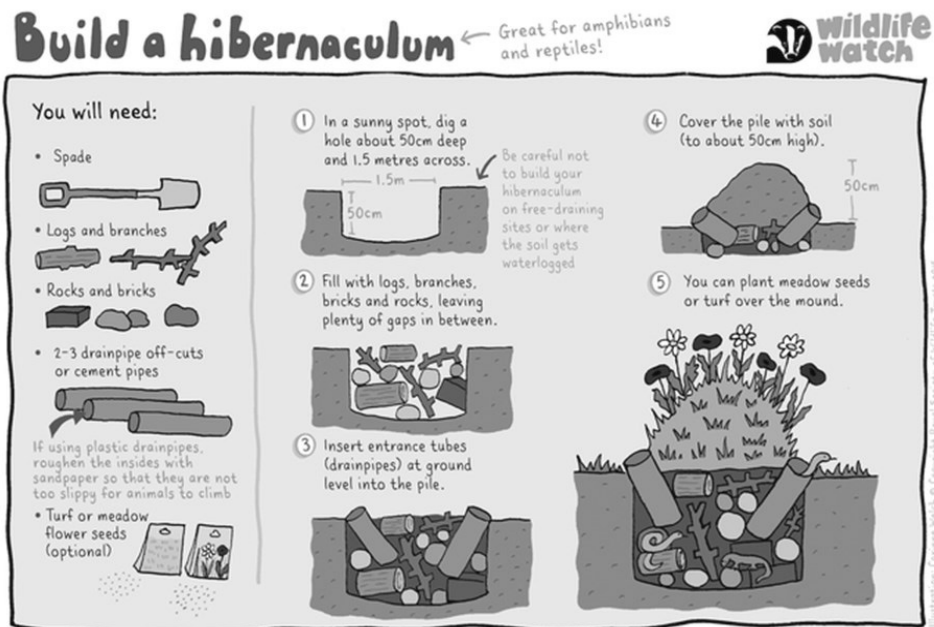
Put out and top up water

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

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

Create a cool, damp spot for amphibians to take shelter

Make a log pile or 'hibernaculum' in a shady corner. If doing a log pile, bury the bottom layer of logs and fill nooks and crannies with fallen leaves and moss to make it good for amphibians. Or use the Wildlife Trust's 'how to' to make a hibernaculum.



Noye's Fludde a great community success

The weekend of 5th-6th April 2025 marked the culmination of months of hard work, with three performances of Benjamin Britten's community opera Noye's Fludde drawing an audience of over 400 people from near and far.

St Mary's church echoed to The Voice of God from high up the bell-tower steps at one end, and the fanfares from the army buglers at the other. In between, the ark took shape as Noah's family tuned their carpentry skills, and the backdrop swung round to reveal the ark's inside as the story progressed.

As befits a community opera, this was a true community project: advice on how to build the ark and the scenery came from of the Community Workshop, the Art Room in The Corner House was transformed into a paint shop, and a significant number of kitchen tables around Charlbury became the assembly lines for the wonderful costumes and animal masks worn by the members of the chorus, young and older.

The sight of the ark components making their way down Church Street was something to behold!

And the preparations involved not only building the set, but also obtaining or making the props to go with it.

Organiser-in-chief Tony Lloyd's requests ranged from the straight-forward ("Have you got any axes we can borrow?") to the more obscure ("Does anybody have a length of really heavy rope around six metres long?"), but as usual Charlbury seems to have met his needs satisfactorily. (And no, they didn't use real axes in the end!)

Under the direction of Nicola Baylis, the three performances themselves were each preceded by a selection of their favourite pieces by Arne Richards and The Oxford Concert Party, which is

bowing out after 33 years of providing community music-making. This paved the way for the Concert Party's members to join the orchestra for the opera – conducted by Benedict Goodall – that was largely made up of musicians from Charlbury and the surrounding district. Percussion, handbells and a strong recorder section brought added impetus to the storm section of the story.

As Isabel Knowland, the event's mastermind, wrote in her programme notes, St Mary's was an ideal venue for a community project like Noye's Fludde.

Isabel, as well as several others involved, had been in Noye's Fludde as a child and it had always been her dream to recreate this experience.

There was plenty of space for pairs of bears and hares, sheep and goats, cats, mice and the rest of the birds and animals to parade on to the ark before



the flood and troop out again afterwards, with the children involved able to keep their masks—which were displayed at the Art Society's exhibition in the Memorial Hall the following weekend. Perhaps one of these children will relive their experience by organising a performance one day in the future?

The hard work paid off: Noye's Fludde was a great success, and as Isabel said afterwards, "It was a truly memorable weekend!"

Rhona Walker



CADS News

Charlbury Amateur Dramatic Society (CADS) still entertains audiences today after 50 years. Following the AGM in March this year there has been a change of Chairperson to continue the joy and challenges of live performance.

The outgoing Chair completing her third term of office, is Olive Woods. At the age of 7 Olive joined a dance class at Corona Academy in Chiswick. London. Her first tutu being made from parachute material by her Aunt. Acting and dancing became her career on film and stage until she hung up her glamorous high heels to be a pig farmer of all things!

In 1977 Olive was asked to help CADS with the movement for their pantomime Mother Goose. Her passion for the stage resulted in her saying yes and has stayed with this friendly bunch ever since. Amongst the twelve productions Olive has been a thespian, her favourite is *Move Over Mrs Markham*, a farce by John Chapman and Ray Cooney; performed in 1988 and appearing in a baby doll nighty. She has Directed an amazing twenty-three productions eg *Outside Edge* by Richard Harris in 1987, *Lock up Your Daughters*, adapted by Bernard Miles in 1994, *When we are Married* by J B Priestley and her much cherished *The Matchgirls* by Bill Owen and Tony Russell in 2005. Not stopping there, Olive has designed and built stage sets, made numerous costumes, washed up after the interval and swept the hall after full houses.

Retiring at the age of 87 she remains on the Committee and will be acting in the forthcoming Gala Evening of Drama, Song and Poetry being performed on Friday and Saturday, 16th and 17th May 2025, 7.30pm at Charlbury Memorial Hall.

John Paul Cregan is our newly appointed Chair. Joining the Society in 2023 and the Committee in 2024 John Paul studied Drama at the Brendan Smith Academy, Dublin and The Royal Irish Academy of Music. He also studied in London at RADA where he graduated with a MA in Text and Performance Studies. He completed a scriptwriting course also at RADA and a rehearsed reading of a play he wrote was produced by RADA Graduates. He was also part of a production team and stage manager for fringe productions in London. Earlier this year John Paul performed in *Tall Tales* at The Burton Taylor Studio, Oxford. He is now an active member of CADS, . and has appeared in many of their productions. For example, *An Englishman Abroad* by Alan Bennett and *The Real Inspector Hound* by Tom Stoppard. He is a Trustee at Chipping Norton Theatre.

Both live in Charlbury so do talk to them to find out more about our plans and how to become involved in the Society. New members are always welcome, whatever age or ability. Contact jpaulcregan@gmail.com.



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All Together In Charlbury (ATIC)

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Charlbury Beer & Wine Circle - Brian Murray
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Charlbury Cricket Club -

www.charlburycricketclub.co.uk

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Charlbury Green Hub - Christine Elliott (01608

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Charlbury Garden Society

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