# SOUTH NEWINGTON NEWSLETTER



*Who could these literary characters be? Spotted at the school bus stop on World Book Day.*
*Photo taken by Julian Barbour*

**Spring 2025**

Edited by Nicky Smith. Please send any content for inclusion to
Southnewingtonnewsletter@gmail.com or Nicky@twelvepr.co.uk
or drop in at The Barn House, Green Lane

**PARISH COUNCIL**

Yet again the village is emerging gloriously from what was a particularly hard winter for mud and ice! I'm so pleased that chatter, support, and knowledge are still being shared with great gusto on the village WhatsApp group. The channel remains an interesting and safe space for village updates and communication. Let me know if you'd like to be added.

**Community Updates**

The parish council has lots of plans this year alongside all the usual responsibilities. We will be considering much-needed remedial work to the notice board and are planning a village spring clean on 22nd March. We are also reviewing the playground equipment. Thank you to everyone who has volunteered their time and effort in the past. Your participation makes a huge difference in our village.

**Upcoming Events**

We are thrilled to announce that we are looking for volunteers to help aerate the football pitch goal areas with garden forks. I will share a date for this soon. We are also looking for volunteers to help organise VE day celebrations. Village tea on the poleaxe, anyone?

Lastly, we held a successful training session for the village focusing on using the defibrillator in an emergency situation. We had approximately 20 villagers take part and feedback was really positive. Hopefully, none of them ever put their skills into practice!

**Next Meeting**

Our next parish meeting, where we will discuss regularly occurring village issues as well as pressing planning applications, is on 18th March at 7.30 pm. You are all welcome to pop along. We promise the sessions are to the point and rarely run for over an hour. We hope to see you there and would love to hear your thoughts and suggestions.

Vanessa Doyle

Parish Council Chair

vanessasnpc@hotmail.com / 07972 324 512

**CHURCH NEWS**

Reflecting on the year that has passed, the church has hosted numerous services, concerts and events and has welcomed many into its beautiful and peaceful surroundings. It has also had significant expenditure on its fabric, totalling almost £40,000 over the last 15 months.

This was funded by an incredible £12,500 (including Gift Aid) raised from the village, grants and insurance proceeds. Without the village contribution, we would not have been able to repair the pinnacles, the building would have been declared unsafe, services would have had to stop and the church would have faced closure.

**Fantastic job**

The 49 Club is invaluable in assisting to helping fund the fabric account. Last year it contributed £1,500. It is a wonderful and hopefully enjoyable way to contribute to the church's upkeep. Zoe

Colegrave does a fantastic job managing the club, for which the PCC is very grateful and would like to extend a heartfelt thank you.

If you have not signed up to it yet, please contact Zoe on zoedavidson@sky.com, who would be happy to explain in more detail how the Club works. The 49 Club only covers costs related to the repair and fabric of the building.

The day to-day running costs for the church are significant. In 2024, the running costs were nearly £12,000, but the income was less than £9,000. Running a deficit of £3,000 a year is not sustainable and our inability to cover these costs could restrict the number of services that are offered and lead us to face closure. Who would know, for instance, that it costs nearly £800 a year to heat the church!?

Many of you, I know, will question if there is actually heating in the church as it is often colder inside the building than outside; or that the intruder alarm, that protects the roof from being stripped of its lead costs over £2,000 per year. Unfortunately, without the alarm, the insurers (£ 2,300 per annum) would not insure the building.

**Halo Effect**

According to the National Churches Trust, churches create a Halo Effect and generate £12.4 billion in value each year through their activities. £10 invested in a church, according to HM Treasury Green Book calculation, shows a return of over £160!

We hope to have some specific fund-raising events during the year to cover the non-fabric expenditure of the church. I am fully aware that the Cost-of-Living crisis is impacting very hard on people and that there are other fund raising efforts ongoing in the village, but if we could even reduce our deficit by 50% that would in itself be a huge achievement.

**Concerts**

We plan to arrange three concerts: Exeter College Choir; Brackley Choir; and SNOS (*Check out the later article and keep the date for next SNOS and Folky Folk performance, Sunday June 8th - Ed).*



There were a number of wonderful services held over the Christmas period. Unfortunately, Dale our vicar was unwell on Christmas Day and no service was held.

The SNOS concert was beautiful and “kicked off” Christmas. A large congregation assembled and delightful music and singing filled the church. Thank you to all villagers who joined in and SNOS and Folky Folk for a wonderful concert. This was followed by very atmospheric singing round the tree as the Christmas tree lights were turned on, supported by Folky Folk outside, photo above. Together this raised £50 for church funds, plus £50 for the Village Hall and £50 for the International Red Cross.

The Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols is one of the most recognised services over Christmas. Although not quite as well known as the service from King's College Chapel, Cambridge, which is

broadcast live across the world on Christmas Eve, a number of people have commented on how the service in the village marks the start of Christmas for them. Zoe Colegrave's solo of the first verse of Once in Royal David's City was beautiful. So too were all the readings, many people commented on how beautifully they were delivered too. Thank you to all the readers, to Zoe and  again to SNOS. We were able to raise £175 for Breadline; a wonderful project in Banbury.

The rehearsal I witnessed of the Christingle service looked like organised chaos. What could go wrong when you mix excited children, fuelled with biscuits, fire and sharp cocktail sticks? When it came to the actual service it was fabulous as the children read, paraded around the church in candlelight and bought figures up to the crib. £80 was raised for the Children's Society. An anonymous villager topped this up to £350. A huge thanks to that person and to all involved in this delightful service.

Services for Easter are listed below. Even if your faith is weak or absent, do feel you are always welcome to sit and relax, discover a chance to stop off from your busy life and reflect.

**Claire Swan, Church Warden**

| **DATE** | **TIME** | **CHURCH SERVICE** |
|---|---|---|
| 30 March | 11.15 am | Mothering Sunday – South Newington |
| 13 April | 8.00 am | Palm Sunday  – Holy Communion Bloxham |
| | 9.30 am | Palm Sunday – Palms & Passion Reading - Bloxham |
| | 11.15 am | Palm Sunday – Palms & Passion Reading - Milcombe |
| | 5.00 pm | Evening Prayer with Hymns – South Newington |
| 16 April | 7.30 pm | Service of Tenebrae – South Newington |
| 20 April | 8.00 am | Easter Day – Holy Communion – Bloxham |
| | 9.30 am | Choral Easter Communion – Bloxham |
| | 11.15 am | Easter Communion – South Newington |

**49 CLUB**

Here are the Q4 winners of the 49 Club.

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 07-Dec | 18 | Bridget Read #18 | £35 |
| 14-Dec | 3 | John Britton #3 | £20 |
| 21-Dec | 8 | Nicky Catton #8 | £20 |
| 28-Dec | 55 | No winner | |
| 04-Jan | 28 | Mariejke Jones #28 | £35 |
| 11-Jan | 57 | No winner | |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 18-Jan | 46 | No winner | |
| 25-Jan | 50 | No winner | |
| 01-Feb | 2 | Lois Atkinson #2 | £35 |
| 08-Feb | 51 | No winner | |
| 15-Feb | 1 | Julia & David Streeter #1 | £20 |
| 22-Feb | 5 | John Braithwaite #5 | £20 |

We've also now donated a total of £1,500 to the Church Repair Fund.

Subscribers for this year stand at 37. How fantastic would it be to get to 49 or even 59 members once again and be in position to make an even bigger donation to the Church Repair Fund. Available numbers include: 16, 20, 39, 46, 49 and all up to 59. Is one your lucky number?
There's still time to join! Email Zoe zoedavidson@sky.com

Zoe Colegrave

**VILLAGE HALL**

**Development project news**

We have been advised by our planning consultant that we need to carry out a survey to ensure there are no bats present that might be disturbed by the proposed work. This will need to be done in two stages, first an assessment of the building to see if it is likely that bats could be using it either for hibernation or as a maturity roost, and then an emergence survey, probably in May to find if bats are actually present.

We are in discussions with a local joinery firm about the design of a new staircase to the gallery because the planning consultant has advised that applying for consent to replace the stairs would be best done as part of the wider improvement project rather than as a standalone project. We are also working with the same firm and a specialist glazing company on designs for replacement windows for the main building to improve its energy efficiency whilst maintaining its historic appearance.

John Braithwaite

**Village Hall Bookings:**

For all bookings contact Louise Hands – either by phone 07813 901616 or by

e-mail: louisehands80@hotmail.com

**HELP!!**
**WANTED URGENTLY**
**TWO NEW VOLUNTEERS**

Two volunteers are needed to take on the roles of chairperson and buildings manager/vice-chair.

I shall be stepping down as chair at the end of July but intend to remain on the committee for the rest of the year, fulfilling my other roles of representative for the yoga, choir and circle dance groups and gardener.

You would be joining an excellent friendly team – Rob Waters, our treasurer, Louise Hands, our booking secretary, Dale Gingrich, our representative for the church, Dorcas Cassimjee, our secretary for minute taking and James Durley, our archivist.

It has been a real pleasure to be a member of this team, in particular because I have met people I hardly knew in spite of having been in the village for so many years, but also, of course, because it feels so right to be helping to sustain such a delightful venue, with its characterful features and benign atmosphere.

Please give serious thought to joining us – even in a job share with a partner or neighbour. We aim to share the work so that no one finds it burdensome.

**Chairperson Job description:**
To provide leadership by facilitating informed discussions and decisions that promote the objectives of the management committee which are :
a) to maintain and run the building efficiently to serve the needs of the village community.
b) to encourage communal activities.
c) to promote good governance practices such as risk management/health and safety compliance.

We meet approximately 4 times per year and meetings last approximately one and a half hours.

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John Braithwaite, current vice-chair and buildings manager is leaving the village within weeks.

**Buildings Manager Job description**

To ensure that the hall is maintained in good condition and presented in a way that meets the needs of users, taking into account the age and limitations of the building.
This will involve dealing with/arranging contractors employed to resolve any issues concerning the condition or usability of the building.

The role of managing the building day to day is separate from the development project but the building manager will need to advise and work with the development team.

Please contact me to discuss these roles in more detail.

Stella Darke (Chair)

darkestella@gmail.com. 01295 720096

**VILLAGE COFFEE MORNINGS**

The third Thursday of the month is an important date for our diaries. This is, of course, the day for the village coffee morning. (Coincidentally also the date for the village book club meetings!)

Julia Streeter and Jane Lennox started this year's events and helped to banish the winter blues with delicious bakes and fabulous raffle prizes provided to a packed village hall. Stella Darke and Louise Hands followed in February and despite a wet rainy day, filled the village hall and bowled us all over with the selection of home-made cakes (the upside down berry cake made with spelt was a great favourite) and more great raffle prizes.

Roz Rapp and Kirsten Suenson-Taylor will be hosting on 20th March so make sure the date is in your diary; 10.30 to 12 in the village hall.

These mornings are a wonderful chance for villagers to get together in a warm and relaxed setting and catch up over delicious home bakes and fresh brews. The hosts give their time, bakes and raffle prizes for free and the donations received help toward the running costs of the village hall. So make sure you've got the dates in your diaries and a huge thank you to everyone who hosts them.

**SOUTH NEWINGTON BOOK CLUB**

**Who we are**



The South Newington Book Club assembles on the third Thursday of each month at the Duck on the Pond at 7:30pm to discuss our book or theme for that month, as well as having a jovial catch up over a drink. We are always keen to receive new members, so if you like to read and are interested to join us, we'd love to see you there. Even if you don't manage to read the book – you're more than welcome!

No two months are the same, and we don't commit to all reading the one book every month. Every other month we choose a theme for the group to explore. We can interpret the theme in any way we like, so we can read something already on our shelf, or shop around for something that seems interesting. On alternate months we go traditional, and select one title which we all endeavour to read.

**What we've been up to**

After a festive break over Christmas, the Book Club gathered again in January after reading...

***The Island of Missing Trees* by Elif Shafak**

★★★★★

Enjoyed by the majority of the group, *The Island of Missing Trees* was a thought provoking, root finding (if you'll pardon the pun) novel.

Based across London (2010's) and Cyprus (1970's onwards), the novel follows a family shaped by the civil war in Cyprus.

2010: When an estranged relative comes to visit, the previously clouded past becomes clearer for Ada, a teenager living in London with her father. This unexpected visitor helps Ada to understand her family background and the forces which drove the family apart.

1970s: Taking us back to understand the events that lead to the family arriving in London and the familial estrangement, a window into the past relationships of the characters, at a time of oppression and political strife is opened. Following Ada's parents in their relationship across a religious divide, we learn of the struggles for many and the terrible consequences of the war.

The political unrest is explored across the religious divide by a neutral commentator, in the form of a tree, which has followed the family and now resides in their garden in London.

This novel broached a difficult time in recent history with a new and eye-opening perspective. It was widely enjoyed at the book club and many have other novels by this author on the to-read list!

In February, we chose the theme "Supernatural" for our individual ventures. We had a good turnout with some interesting titles presented.

**Recommended:**

***The picture of Dorian Grey* by Oscar Wilde**: The young and beautiful Dorian sells his soul in order to keep his youth forever. Influenced by his acquaintances, he becomes corrupt and indulges himself at the expense of others. Meanwhile, a portrait of himself begins to show signs of his secret decadence.

***The Ghost of Canterville* by Oscar Wilde**: A couple buy a haunted estate. Despite the premise, this is a light-hearted and fun novella.

***The Good People* by Hannah Kent**: A historical fiction set before the famine; the story is inspired by a real court case in 1825. Set in a time of supernatural fears and superstitions – three women go to extreme and disturbing lengths to try and heal a young boy. Though this is not a light read, it came strongly recommend.

***Dark Matter: A Ghost Story* by Michelle Paver**: Set on an Arctic Expedition to study weather patterns in 1937, our protagonist finds himself alone on a deserted Island at the onset of the winter darkness, when the sun will not rise for 4 months. He begins to realise, however, he is far from alone here.

***Metamorphosis* by Frans Kafka**: A travelling salesman in 19th century wakes up one morning to find he has been turned into a beetle. A surreal journey exploring the human reaction to suffering and disease.

**What we've got planned**

Over the next two months, the Book Club will be reading *Intermezzo* by Sally Rooney for our March book. We have had previous Sally Rooney recommendations such as *Beautiful World, Where Are You*. I am keen to find out whether *Intermezzo* will be as popular.

In April we have chosen Leadership as our theme for the month. The theme, as always, can be interpreted however the reader would like. We hope to see some lively discussions that month.

**Come and see us**

If you would like to be added to the Book Club WhatsApp group, and join in the literary fun, feel free to email Sue Robertson and Cherry Durley at the Book Club with your phone number, and we'll get you added. Alternatively, feel free to just show up at the Duck on the Pond, we'll be delighted to see you there.

southnewingtonbookclub@gmail.com

**SOUTH NEWINGTON OIL GROUP**

The South Newington Oil Group is run by Stephen Anderson. By consolidating your oil order with those of other members you benefit from obtaining a more competitive price per litre than if ordering directly from a supplier yourself.

Orders are prepared at the beginning of a month, typically, between September and May, inclusive. Towards the end of each month an oil request invite is sent round to all members asking if they need oil. Using a link to an online form, those who need oil submit their quantity by a cut-off date. Once that date arrives the quantities are amalgamated and the bulk quantity is used to obtain a best price from suppliers.

The overall timescale for an order from receiving the invite until delivery is up to 3 weeks. The Oil Buying Group does not get involved in the payments for deliveries – this is the responsibility of the individual members. Other queries about a delivery are also down to the member once the order is placed.

If you would like to join the Group or obtain more information about it, please contact Stephen Anderson by email at *sn.oil.club@gmail.com*

**FLOWER SHOW 2nd AUGUST**




The best traditional flower show in North Oxfordshire, yes our show - the 'jewel in the crown' of South Newington village events - is taking place this year on Saturday 2nd August.

Please note the slightly earlier date this year.

The brochure will be printed soon and distributed to every house in the village, plus local garden centres and allotment societies.

All your favourites will be there so do get planting or crafting ready for showtime! Details of categories and how to enter will be in the brochure and you can always ask any committee member for more details.

If you fancy joining the committee (very sociable and lots of fun and laughter [plus some blood sweat and tears – Ed]) please contact our chair: amandablythesmith@gmail.com.

We already have some very generous donations of raffle prizes including

- **Heath Farm Holiday Cottages**, near South Newington
  www.heathfarm.com
- **The Duck On The Pond**
  www.theduckonthepond.co.uk

- **Fisher German Property Consultants**
  www.fishergerman.co.uk
- **Dubarry**
  www.dubarry.com
- **Clarimore Beautique**
  www.clarimorebeautique.co.uk

Please show your support for these local businesses by giving them your trade. Heath Farm Holiday Cottages, just up the hill towards Chippy off the A3561 has a special offer of £50 off for villagers who make their first booking. Please use the code HFCF50 and see the advert later in the newsletter for more details.

**Sponsor or support our show**

If you have a local business or service could you offer a raffle prize or other form of sponsorship for the show in exchange for good publicity and love? For example, we urgently need to buy new pop-up gazebos, either for protection from the sun or rain during the show.

- Would you like to sponsor a gazebo (starting price £100 up to £500 according to size) and have the gazebo named after you?
- Could you offer a gift or cash prize for the raffle, in return for publicity and friendly shout-outs?
- Could you give the gift of your time to help bake, serve, set up or tidy up?

Again, please contact any member of the committee. Amanda Blythe Smith, Graham Fewster, Miles Colegrave, Penny Price, Julia Streeter, Cherry Durley, James Durley, Tracey Schilling, Nicky Smith, Roz Rapp.

**HISTORY OF THE SOUTH NEWINGTON FLOWER SHOW**

*Peter Perry from the Old Bakehouse has very kindly researched the history of our Flower Show. This is the first of three snap-shots looking back at the early days of the "Floral and Horticultural Society" as it was then known.*

As can be seen in the early days, the event was in partnership with other surrounding villages. I am grateful to Michael Salt (the Wiggington historian) for the material for the three articles.

When looking back there is no better start than to look at the article in the Banbury Advertiser reporting on the first show:

"Banbury Advertiser August 2nd 1894"

South Newington

South Newington, Milcombe, and Wiggington Floral and Horticultural Society

To the Rev. C.J Whitehead the village of South Newington owes a great debt of gratitude, as since his residence at the vicarage, of only some few months duration, this exceedingly quiet parish has had a greater share of enjoyment than it has ever had previous.

The reverent gentleman, being very fond of horticultural pursuits, had no sooner entered on his spiritual duties than he conceived the idea of a flower show for this and its neighbouring villages, and with the help of J Harris Esq, (president) and a committee (Rev. J Goodwin, and Messrs W. Checkley, W. Parsons, A. Tustain,

Springall, E. Wyatt, E. Stanbra and J Turvey), with the vicar of South Newington as honorary secretary, the preparations culminated in the show of Wednesday last.

Wednesday morning opened very ominously, rain falling until noon, but in the afternoon it cleared, and the sun shone, though towards evening the clouds again gathered. This rather spoiled the success of the show as far as attendance went, but in the afternoon there was a very fair number of visitors in the field adjoining South Newington Vicarage, which was increased during the evening. The Bloxham Band was in attendance, and enlivened the proceedings with its music.

Of the show itself (judged by Mr J Steward, Oxford horticultural instructor to the Oxford County Council), the cottagers class was a very good show, broad beans and cabbages being particularly good, and Mr White's carrots, with which he took a first , was very fine; of potatoes the white round shown by Mr E Hawkins sen'r, and the coloured and white kidney grown by Messrs C. King and J. Timms respectively, must be mentioned. The collection of wild flowers by the children brought out a large entry; the whole of the exhibits reflecting great credit on the juveniles for the taste and skil shown, particularly those from Wiggington.

In the amateur class the coloured kidney potatoes shown by the Vicar were most worthy of mention, and the gooseberries were very fair. Mr J Turbitt, of Newland Gardens, Banbury staged a very fine collection of dahlias especially as the season is yet early for these flowers. During the afternoon Mrs. Harris presented the prizes."

While 1894 was the first show in the current format, Michael Salt is of the view that there would have been such shows perhaps going back to Elizabethan times. Particularly for vegetables. Michael explains that the growing of vegetables was a matter of "life and death", i.e. a time before a Co-op in Bloxham or Tesco's in Banbury. Indeed, there is a reference to an "amateur" class, which suggests that the show was well attended by local market gardeners.

Finally, even in 1894 there was the omnipresent rain, or threat of rain.

Peter Perry

The Old Bakehouse

**EXTRAORDINARY SOUTH NEWINGTONIERS**

People ("outsiders") are regularly amazed by the strength of the community in South Newington and the remarkable things the people who live here get up to.

**Julian Barbour**

Did you know for example that this month, our very own Julian Barbour from College Farm hosted a physics symposium in the village? Scientists from the United States, Germany, Portugal, Iran and the UK gathered at College Farm to discuss foundational issues relating to physics, cosmology and quantum mechanics.

Podcasts in which Julian explains ideas he and his academic collaborators have developed during the last few years can be watched on his website platonia.com.



*This is a photo of Julian enjoying the sunshine on his doorstep recently. He told the story of how he and his wife Verena were sitting on the step when some people came by to view Little Forge, Mr and Mrs Prebble, "Rhymes with pebble."*
*They later told Julian they were so taken by the charming site and a village where people enjoy sitting in the sunshine on the doorstep that they decided to buy the house that very day and stayed for ten years.*

**More Barbours**

Julian has lived in College Farm for over sixty years, but he grew up just across the road in the Barn House with his three brothers and sister Carmen. Carmen has also been busy recently, you may have passed her holding a placard at a quiet demonstration in Bloxham in February, or saw the event reported in the Oxford Mail and Banbury Guardian?

Carmen (*full disclosure my Mum – Ed*) was amused to be referred to as "woman," in this article shown on the next page. She was born in 1934 in Bethlehem, Palestine and Julian was born a few years later in Jerusalem. Their parents (*full disclosure, my Grandparents, obvs, - Ed*) lived in Jerusalem from 1933 to 1939 and for six years their father, Nevill Barbour, worked as a correspondent for the Times. On returning to the UK, he became Assistant head of the Eastern Service of the BBC and lived in the Barn House, Green Lane. In 1947, after working with a group of Christians, Jews and Muslims he published a potential constitution for a federal state of Palestine with equal governance between all faiths. An exclusive Zionist state, he argued "would cause a turmoil in the Near East of which the results cannot be foreseen."


Future plans f
the Banbury a
Woman, born in Bethlehem, holds Peace for Palestine demo for 91st birthday
FINMER
AERODRO
BOOTSA
The largest Saturday C
in Buckinghamshire M
OPEN
EVERY SATURD
BANK HOLIDAY M
Public Entrance
Before 7.30am - £5 pe
After 7.30am - £1 pe
Children are FR
ALL HARDSTAND
07768 844
07850 912

The demonstration was to mark Carmen's 91st birthday.

She said, "When I was born in Bethlehem, it was a town surrounded by fields. Now it is surrounded by illegal settlements and a wall twice the height of the Berlin Wall. My family left Palestine and came to South Newington as WWII was breaking out, and I remember the horrors of Belson when I was a child. I remember too, the celebrations when the Berlin Wall came down years later."

"How have we forgotten our humanity so much that we build new walls, and kill innocent people just for land? I've watched war waged against Palestinians my whole life, seen the land and people torn apart. Please, let future generations see peace."

Carmen organised the quiet demonstration in Bloxham where she now lives, and invited people to donate to either Medical Aid for Palestinians or Jewish Voice for Peace raising over £500 for charity so far this year.

**JOSH CHARLES**

*Josh has actually been in South Newington for a few months at Bush House Lodge on the Wiggington Road, and it's a real pleasure to introduce him properly and tell you about his business. Josh is an amazing guy and has given his permission for me to share his story.*

"I've been the head chef at Selfridges, The Salt Room Brighton and two fine dining restaurants in Melbourne Australia. I became an obese chef suffering from more than just poor eating habits. I decided rather than paying for other professionals to fix me I'd study it myself. I studied for a nutrition degree and completed a level 4 Personal Training course specialising in diabetes and weight management.

"I fixed myself and then I went on to help other people, I've helped over 100 people get on track so far. I lost over 6 stone in under a year by switching to a high protein mostly whole food diet lifting weights and walking. My business is Joshua Charles Fitness & Nutrition."

Josh had just cooked 210 meals when he told me this! His food business is www.packed.food and here's the information about it from his website.



At Packed Kitchen, we offer a simple and local solution for healthy, balanced eating.

To your doorstep you'll receive home cooked, protein rich meals delivered right to your door to help you meet your training goals, and to help crave off hunger pangs.

The menu changes week to week, the fresh meals have a 3 day life in the fridge and can also be heated from frozen.

No fuss! We take care of everything—just heat and eat (then recycle the container). No thinking, planning, shopping, cleaning needed, it's that easy! We've got your back.

And here's a picture of his gym, handy for us just on the Wiggy and this business is called www.jcfitnut.co.uk



Josh offers personal training and weight management coaching, plus private gym space hire.

He's also setting up a new class especially for those aged 55+ called 'The Move Club'.

It'll be Wednesday and Friday morning at 11.30 £6.00 a class.

Contact josh by email josh@jcfitnut.co.uk or call 07446 845032.

**DAWN HODSON**

*Dawn's been in the village for over twenty years and if you think you've never met her it's probably because she is often beavering away indoors for the charity she set up which helps people at risk of domestic abuse.*

**An Exciting Update from Reducing the Risk!**

Hello everyone!
I thought you might appreciate a quick update on what Reducing the Risk, your local domestic abuse charity, has been up to lately. Yep, the charity that started in Moor Lane 18 years ago! It's been a busy time, and we've got some fantastic news to share.

Did you know that all employers now have a legal responsibility to consider domestic abuse in their policies and practices? You might not – not many people or employers do. We're really eager to support businesses in creating safer workplaces, and we're proud to be at the forefront of this important work.

Speaking of which, a huge thanks to *The Duck on the Pond* – our first Domestic Abuse Aware pub! They've received training from us, put up support posters, and are even fundraising. Huge thanks to Julie, Vicky, and their team for all their support.

But that's not all. We're also working closely with businesses and HR departments of all sizes. In fact, Morgan Stanley (yes, the global bank!) has developed a brilliant new exclusive costing tool to help businesses calculate the financial impact of domestic abuse.




We're launching it on 14th March – if you want to know more, get in touch at contact@reducingtherisk.org.uk or come and find me on a Monday at the village hall during table tennis.

It's amazing to think that something born in a tiny village like South Newington is now collaborating with global banks. Go South Newington'ites!

Also, for those of you who remember Paul Richards who lived here – he's now our new Chair of Trustees! As you may know, Paul and Phillipa now run Becky Falls in Dartmoor, and here's a picture of one of their rabbits modelling our bandanna.

Stay tuned for more updates, and thank you for your ongoing support.

Best, Dawn

**ROZ RAPP**

I think we've officially run out of space to describe more Super South Newingtonians (better descriptions most welcome) but must fit in a special shout out to Roz Rapp for her work for the Iuvetus Foundation.

Roz is a coach practitioner, trained to work with both adolescents and adult and at Christmas she organised single handedly a concert in Exeter College Chapel to raise money for the Iuventus Foundation. This is an Oxford-based charity which partners with schools, colleges and youth groups often in disadvantaged communities, to support and guide young people aged 11-23.

Roz also organised our Christmas Advent Windows, raising money  for the local charity Thrive.
The opening of Christmas windows coincided with an exceptionally rainy month so special thanks to everyone who decorated their windows and especially to the brave souls who ventured out in all weather to the grand openings.  Here are a few photos of the windows, with apologies if yours isn't included here.









The Most Wonderful Window award has to go to the Cattons on Green Lane, below,  whose window included music, dancing mice and dry ice in a delightful version of the Nutcracker.



Also at Christmas we had the village email Christmas cards organised by our indomitable Gill Brounger which raised £1,115 for the Brodey cancer treatment centre at the Horton.

**COMMUNITY VALUES**

Talking of caring communities, this description from MP Neil O'Brien made me think just what a first class kind of place our village is, as we prepare for our annual Spring tidy up 😊

*"In a third-class society there's a lot of litter, and no one picks it up. In a second-class society, there's some litter, and some people pick it up. In a first-class society there's no litter and if there was any, someone would pick it up."*

**WELCOMING NEW VILLAGERS**

Tina and John Cooper and their dog Jessie have moved into Hollowfield in Sands Lane, having moved here from Stratford.

Joining us later this month at The Ranch, Moor Lane are Sandria and Mark McEachron from Middle Barton.

We hope they all enjoy living here and being part of our lively community.

**REMEMBERING PAST VILLAGERS**

**Les Ebdon**

Late in 2024 saw the passing of Len, who had lived in St Peter's Close for many years, having moved from Banbury where he had been part of the great London Overspill. He joined the building company of Hinkins and Frewin where he became very good friends with David Gibbard of Bloxham who was asked to speak at the funeral service, so here are his comments which he has kindly allowed us to quote:

*When I left school I went to a joiners shop in the market town of Banbury, a country workshop! We went smoothly on in our country way when we were suddenly hit by the London Overspill. One of these gentlemen came and asked for a sub on his wages after only two days, which the foreman refused and he left after only a few days.*

*Then came Len! He brought with him tools that he had shone up on a buffing wheel and he looked more like the part. After a few days one of the older joiners came to me and said 'these Londoners say what they can do and how to do it, but this one CAN do it', so Len passed muster. In fact he turned out to be a very good joiner and a very fine friend.*

*Later on, one of the office staff formed a shop-fitting gang of 6 tradesmen – Len and myself were included in this number. We were sent mostly around the London area, and many of these shops were ladies' underwear shops (Contessa), and we worked all day and all through the nights at the weekend, so the shop closed on Friday evening and opened again on Monday, having lost no time, while we had done a fortnight's work in a weekend.*

*Len and Pat always liked to a 'get-together' and often came to us for social events, which might be a meal, a fancy-dress party or a quiz night. This was always returned, as nothing pleased Len more than having a few friends round for a meal and a chat.*

*I have lost a good mate – Len and I were mates for almost 60 years and he was a very good friend.*



When Len came to live in South Newington, he took a job at Heath Farm in David Barbour's Joinery, where he continued to produce fine work, and many houses in the village have evidence of his excellent workmanship.

This photo shows Les working at the joinery on a table he had made.

**SHARING INFORMATION & COMMUNICATION**

We have two WhatsApp groups for instant messaging across the village. If you don't know about them, here's an explanation.

**"Chatter – South Newington"**

This is for general, pleasant chat, observations, requests for help e.g. "does anyone have a tombola game I can borrow" or "can anyone recommend a plumber" plus messages from Ana about "what's on the bench today".

**"South Newington Cares"**

Originally set up during Covid, this group is intended for important or urgent news and is meant to be a sort of rapid alert or emergency call for action.

If you would like to be added to either group, please contact Vanessa. If you would like to join the email group all the details are below:

**VILLAGE EMAIL LIST**

The village email list notifies villagers about things going on in the village.

Some emails come from the Parish Council e.g. to inform villagers of Parish Council Meetings and other matters. Other emails will keep villagers informed about what's on or planned such as road works/road closures, coffee mornings, church services, village quiz nights, and other village meetings.

*If you wish to join the village email distribution group, please email Susan Robertson using the following email address:* susanrobertsonSNEM@gmail.com.

You will need to provide your name, address and email address and Sue can then add you to the email distribution group.

**Who Is Your Information Shared With?** The information will not be shared with any other organisations. **How Do I Opt Out?** If in the future you wish to opt out, simply send another email to that effect to susanrobertsonSNEM@gmail.com and your details will be deleted.

**NOTE: Due to data protection rules you cannot ask on behalf of someone else that they be added to the village email distribution group.**

There's also the village noticeboard where most village events are also publicised, plus the website www.southnewington.co.uk.

**WHAT'S BEEN GOING ON IN THE VILLAGE? SPECIAL EVENT PHOTOS**

**Halloween**

Here are some photos from Halloween. Houses with pumpkins outside welcome 'Trick or Treaters,' perhaps the only American orange face we could countenance in the village.







Who could all these scary characters be? And here's an enticing woodland walk (above) on Bakers Lane made by Claire Swan for brave souls out that night.



Graham celebrating winning at table tennis club



Jonah enjoying the tractor run



Carli and Roz at the AED and CPR training in the village hall

**SOUTH NEWINGTON OCCASIONAL SINGERS**

Thanks to everyone who supported our last concert, this is us below, singing in the church at Christmas. We have a great time practising on Saturday mornings from 10.30 – midday in the village hall with a sociable coffee break at half time.




We're incredibly lucky to have our professional conductor Stuart Dunlop from the village and piano accompanist Kieron. Keiran is leaving the area soon, so this is a great opportunity to thank him for his many years of playing and supporting us. We'll miss you Keiran and wish you all the best in your new home. If any one knows a piano accompanist looking for a well paid position with a friendly choir, please do let me know.

This year we've welcomed several new members of bass, alto and soprano voices and while the hall is pleasantly packed on Saturday morning, we could always squeeze a few more in, especially tenors! Drop me an email or just turn up on Saturday term time.

Our next concert is on Sunday 8th June at 5pm in the church. We'll be joined by Folky Folk again and very much hope you will join us in the audience.

Steph Rew

stephrew99@gmail.com.

**SOUTH NEWINGTON OPEN GARDENS SUMMER 2025**

Could you share your garden with others for just one day this summer?

It would be a wonderful if this summer we could open some of the gardens in South Newington to visitors, and at the same time help to raise funds for our local hospice, Katharine House Hospice.




Katharine House is currently planning and organising the Open Gardens events for 2025 and inviting hosts to get involved and help them raise much needed funds.

You may know the hospice in Adderbury, maybe from the annual tractor run through the village or perhaps through you or a loved one using their services.

Many of us will remember with great fondness David Hemmings who recently passed away and was cared for by Katherine House. How many walls and buildings did he repair or build with such skill in South Newington? Perhaps we could show those gardens and their fine walls in his honour.

Katharine House is itself surrounded by beautiful gardens which provide a peaceful place for patients to spend time in. Visiting families and friends also appreciate the calm and charm of their garden and many a special moment is shared there. The hospice cares for over 1200 people each year, in their own homes, in care homes, at the hospice in Adderbury or in the hospital, and is there for those living in North Oxfordshire and South Northamptonshire.

It's hoped to organise a day of open gardens in South Newington on either Saturday 7th or Sunday 8th June, to be confirmed. It would be a village-wide event, with afternoon teas being served at the village hall and lots of support for participants.

If you can offer to open your garden and be there on the day to talk to visitors, the hospice support team will provide signage and advice and a team of helpers from the village will be on hand to help too.

The lovely thing about an open garden day is the variety – whether large or small, landscaped or wild, full of flowers or focussing on vegetables, sunny or shady, – it's an opportunity to see a range of gardens so it would be great if you could get involved whatever the size or type of garden you have.

If you prefer to help in other ways perhaps you could bake a cake or help with teas in the village hall?

If you are interested in taking part in any way please contact Penny Price on 07780435249 for more information, preferably before 21st March.

**BARFORD ST MICHAEL WI**

Wednesday 12th March will be the annual meeting of Barford WI when we will be reviewing the past year followed by a supper. This is a chance to hear about our meetings and events and spend a pleasant social time over supper.

The speaker at our April meeting on Wednesday 9th April will be from Farm Ed, talking about regenerative agriculture and its role in increasing biodiversity and enhancing eco systems.

We meet at 7:30pm in the Barford Village Hall, Lower Street. Visitors are always welcome (£7). Why not come along?

For more details contact barfordwi@oxfordshirewi.co.uk or president Carole Coppin 07768 378758.

**REGULAR WHAT'S ON IN THE VILLAGE**

| What | When | Where | More info |
|---|---|---|---|
| Table tennis | Monday eves 6.30 – 7.30pm | Village hall | Dawn and Neil hodsod@hotmail.co.uk |
| Art classes | Tuesday morning | Village Hall | bridget.read@icloud.com linda.brecknell@gmail.com |
| Yoga | Weds eves | Village hall | Geraldine Thomas 07584 571979 southnewingtonyoga@yahoo.co.uk |
| Pilates | Thurs eve | Village Hall | Barb |
| Seated Yoga | Friday eves | Village Hall | Liz Davis |
| Book Club | 3rd Thursday of the month 7:30pm | Pub | southnewingtonbookclub@gmail.com |
| Coffee mornings | Thurs morning most months | Village hall | darkestella@gmail.com |
| Circle dancing | 4th Thursday of month | Village hall | darkestella@gmail.com |
| Singing | Sat morning 10-12.30 am | Village hall | Steph Rew stephrew99@gmail.com |
| Parish Council Meeting | See village notice board or website | Village Hall | Vanessa Doyle, chair vanessasnpc@hotmail.com |
| Flower Show Committee | Now and then | Committee members house | Amanda & Graham, co chairs amandablythesmith@gmail.com gfewster@gmail.com |
| Biodiversity group | Now and then | Committee members house | Stella Darke & Nicky Smith darkestella@gmail.com Nicky@twelvepr.co.uk |
| 49 Club | Weekly prize draw | Cash for the winner | zoedavidson@sky.com |
| Church Services | Sundays 8am, 11.15 am or 5pm | Church | Church wardens: Tim.Catton@epr.co.uk claire_ainley@hotmail.com |

**SOUTH NEWINGTON WEATHER**

**September October November December January February 24 /25**

To fall in line with the South Newington newsletter I've commented briefly on the Autumn and Winter weather in the village. At the time of writing Spring is really with us again and we have a number of days of lovely sunshine for gardeners, walkers and any active sport people. The sunshine comes with a chill in the air which is particularly noticeable at night so we're not into relaxing on the lawn scene as yet.

At night the clear sky has produced a rare sight of all our "sister" planets quite plain to the naked eye spread across the sky. The very warm Mercury through to Uranus and Pluto at the other end of the solar system. It will be a good many years before they all line up again.

It has been a wet Autumn and Winter which seems to have turned the village into a "mud bath" much of which seems to end up in Moor Lane . This gives me a chance to say thank you to all of you who have helped us clear up at various times when the floods have arrived. September produced 244.8 mm of rain, October 86.8 mm and November 127.8 mm. All well above the monthly average of 70 mm. The winter months were a little lighter with December at 68.8 mm, January 105.4 mm and February 44.8 mm. I think there is still a lot of groundwater to dry up before we get back to normal. The changing weather patterns and particularly the storms which have deposited a lot of water in a very short time in the village are no doubt to blame for this.



59.6 mm on 22nd September and 25.6mm on the 23rd September completely overloaded the drains and I suspect the pumping station on the A361.

The river Swere has flooded on a few occasions. For the first time for a few years we actually saw some snow this year on the 19th and 20th November and again a small amount in January.



Looking at temperatures we have had some cold nights -5.3 C on 17th February and -8.7 C on the 11th January which was a lowest temperature this winter. We had the lowest temperature in the UK on the 20th February picked up because of our Met Office weather station.

Let's hope we have a nice spring in front of us and we can all enjoy the benefits of this lovely village in the Spring and Summer. Hope to be back in a few months.

John Britton

**COUNCIL AND OTHER GOVERNMENT NEWS**

England has limited land with growing demands being made of it. This consultation explores the land use changes implied by commitments to restore nature, support food production, improve climate resilience and deliver new housing and infrastructure.

It seeks views on the type and scale of land use changes that might be needed, as well as the actions government could take to support this. This will help to foster a public discussion about how land can better support government's plan for change.

Land Use Consultation - Defra - Citizen Space

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