



Swallowfield Parish

# Newsletter

Autumn 2023

## RISELEY VILLAGE TEA ROOM IS ALIVE AND WELL

The Riseley Village Tea Room is now in the capable hands of Debbie Johnson and Karen Patrick who have taken over following Pam Wright's retirement as manager. Both have experience in running community cafés. Our thanks to Pam for her commitment to the Tea Room over the past 10 years. The transition went remarkably smoothly and it is great to see the Tea Room continue in safe hands. Debbie and Karen have extended their offering and opening hours to cater for local drop-in customers.

### A MESSAGE FROM THE NEW OWNERS

"On 14th June we signed the licence, and became the new owners of The Riseley Village Tea Room. Two days later we were open for business, with plenty of bookings in the diary. It has



certainly been a steep learning curve, but with support from Ray and Pam, plus the members of staff who have decided to stay, we hope the transition has appeared seamless to our customers.

With many people returning to the tea room year after year we are not wanting to make many changes to the look and feel of the tea room or the menu. Apart from the addition of a few plants, and some pictures

being rearranged, it is pretty much the same! We have plenty of plans and ideas going forward, including opening on Wednesdays as a drop in cafe, and events such as afternoon tea with a pianist. Please follow our Facebook page for the latest information. We look forward to being part of the community, and hope to see you all soon."

**Debbie & Karen**

# News in brief



## MAX BOWKER LEGACY

Following the wonderful MaxStock event last summer the council was delighted to donate the remaining monies, £358.66, to a charity close to Max's heart, the Paddle Steamer Preservation Society, specifically a fund for PS Waverley.

## THANK YOU

"After ten years, time to relax, to enjoy the garden and the lovely rose kindly given to me by Swallowfield Parish Council on my retirement. Thank you for everything." Pam



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## MEET YOUR COUNCIL

I have lived in the village of Riseley for over 21 years and believe in a community that works for itself and its neighbours to improve the general quality of life experience for everyone.

My reason for joining the Parish Council was primarily to contribute to the future wellbeing of Swallowfield, Farley Hill and Riseley. I believe in democracy and supporting democratic decisions whatever outcome I may have favoured.

I strongly believe we need to engage with and support more local community activities. Since Filomena and I moved to Riseley we have supported the carol singing in Swallowfield and, together with Michele Swift and Pam Wright, have now extended this to Riseley. Just one example of an idea that, with community support, can become a normal village activity. Other schemes and events, such as the Jubilee and the Coronation celebrations, rely on support from local people and need to be encouraged.

I am employed full time with a large technology company focused personally on Cybersecurity Education. I am also a founder member of the Swallowfield Pitt Bridge Lodge, another local initiative leading to creation of a "community focused" masonic lodge.

Cllr John McDermott  
john.mcdermott@swallowfieldpc.gov.uk



# Welcome

I would like to begin by extending a warm welcome to John McDermott who has been co-opted onto the council to fill one of the two vacancies resulting from the resignations of David Lamont and Jonathan Wheelwright. At the time of writing there is still one vacancy to be filled. Anyone who is interested in the role should talk to our clerk or any councillor in the first instance. We have reviewed membership of our working groups and updated details will be published on our website.

This is the first edition of the newsletter that has been produced since David Lamont left the council and relinquished his role as newsletter editor and coordinator. Producing the newsletter is not as straightforward as one might think and I am grateful to Ian Fullerton for agreeing to step in as interim editor. It is quite a complex task and we ask for your understanding in case of any hiccups as we get to grips with the process. We have also asked contributors to submit their copy a little earlier than usual, so please appreciate that articles for this edition may have been written in July for publication mid-September.

As reported on the front page, I am delighted that the Riseley Village Tea Room remains in capable and experienced hands. My thanks to Pam for her commitment to the Tea Room over the last ten years and for building it up to the amazing success it is today. I wish her well in retirement.

The council is delighted to have made arrangements which will allow our wonderful community pre-school to offer afternoon and lunchtime sessions in addition to its previous morning provision. These extended hours are much in demand by local families.

The parish council continues to challenge

the planning application, from Croudace Homes, to build 81 homes on the land west of Trowes Lane and north of Charlton Lane. We are closely monitoring its progress and will have a further opportunity to reiterate our objections when their application is considered by WBC's planning committee. At the time of writing, we don't know when that will be.

June was a record month for high temperatures and fine weather after a wetter than normal spring. The allotment association held their open morning in May and we saw a number of gardens opened up as part of the National Garden Scheme.

Other events included the church fête which was held on the Swallowfield recreation ground in early June. Despite the weather, it was a great success. The Farley Hall Horse Trials took place in Swallowfield Park in late June, providing entertainment for local residents who were able to watch the competitions free of charge. In July the Russell Players put on a polished performance of "Mitigating Circumstances" in the Parish Hall.

I hope you have all had a pleasant summer as we enter the season of mellow fruitfulness.

Cllr John Anderson  
**Chair**

john.anderson@swallowfieldpc.gov.uk





# What you ought to know about planning



Every planning application in England is evaluated in the context of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), a set of guidelines designed to protect the environment, to promote sustainable growth and to simplify the planning system. Our local planning authority, Wokingham Borough Council (WBC), has developed a set of plans and policies that adapt the NPPF to local conditions. The result is a long-term Strategic Plan, a set of Core Policies and several subsidiary plans, including Neighbourhood Plans, as discussed below. WBC's local plan is available online, is currently being updated and can be viewed here: <https://www.wokingham.gov.uk/planning-policy/planning-policy-information/local-plan-update/>.

These plans are the background against which WBC planning officers, or in more substantial cases the Planning Committee, reach decisions to approve or refuse a planning application. Your local parish council is informed about, reviews and comments on every planning application affecting the parish, including those related to properties close to our boundary in neighbouring parishes. It is essential to recognise that your parish council cannot approve or refuse any planning application! In the future, and subject to creation of a Swallowfield Neighbourhood Plan, we may hope to further influence the planning officer's decision process, but we will never be able to override it.

Every planning application is open to view and comment on by members of the public and we encourage you to do so. Please understand, however, that it is the quality of comments rather than their quantity that will carry most weight with the planning officers, and only comments that address relevant planning issues will be considered.

For guidance on making a relevant comment please see: <https://www.wokingham.gov.uk/planning/during-a-planning-application/comment-on-a-planning-application/>.

As an example, consider the recent application from Croudace Homes to build 81 properties on land immediately south of Swallowfield Village. Your parish council worked with community leaders to communicate a list of key planning concerns to all our parishioners. Your response was amazing - nearly 400 well considered objections were submitted highlighting valid conflicts with planning policy. Further, your parish council submitted a detailed rebuttal (>10 pages), opposing the application and addressing both local concerns and conflicts with planning policy. To date there has been no response from WBC to this application, but we will continue to challenge it and keep you informed.

# NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING

In 2011, the Localism Act introduced the concept of a 'Neighbourhood Plan', a plan that applies guidance for planning officers but at a much more local level than the Borough plans. It must support the overall aims of the Borough's development plans, but applies only to applications from within a limited geographical area, or 'neighbourhood', typically an individual parish.

A Neighbourhood Plan sets out planning policies which, taken together with Borough level policies, are used to determine local planning applications. Unlike Borough level plans, a Neighbourhood Plan is developed by the local community, in our case the Parish of Swallowfield including Riseley and Farley Hill, by local people who know and love the area. Its primary purpose is to help the community get the right kind of development, in the right place. Once a Neighbourhood Plan is approved, the Local Planning Authority must take it into account in making planning decisions. More information is available on the WBC website under "Neighbourhood Plans", including plans developed by several other parishes.



## Creating a neighbourhood plan for Swallowfield Parish

Creating a Neighbourhood Plan is a substantial undertaking. Yet in late 2022, the Parish Council decided it would be appropriate to develop a 'Swallowfield, Riseley & Farley Hill Neighbourhood Plan' and asked WBC to register the Parish as a 'Designated Area' for this purpose.

To develop the plan, we need to form a project team of volunteers from throughout the Parish. We need participants with a range of skills including planning, green

environment, communication, admin, report drafting, etc. The team will set aims, develop evidence bases, identify local needs and development opportunities and, ultimately, draw these together into a plan.

We anticipate that there will be two leads for the team, one Parish Councillor and one Local Community lead, but this may change as terms of reference are developed. We also need to involve residents from all parts of the parish

to prepare a coherent sustainable future vision for our community.

If you would like to be involved, and to help shape the future of our parish, please email [clerk@swallowfieldpc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@swallowfieldpc.gov.uk). Meanwhile, a useful and more detailed explanation of the process can be found at [www.neighbourhoodplanning.org](http://www.neighbourhoodplanning.org). We look forward to hearing from you.



# Parish news

## SWALLOWFIELD FLOOD RESILIENCE GROUP

Swallowfield Flood Resilience Group (SFRG) was formed following extensive surface water flooding which occurred in the parish in July 2007. Since its formation, members of the group have developed an extensive understanding of the nature of flooding in our area and have helped to implement a series of projects aimed at reducing the risks of future flooding.

SFRG works closely with the parish council, Wokingham Borough Council (WBC), the Environment Agency, the South East Rivers Trust and local landowners. The group's early efforts were focused on clearance of the various ditches and balancing ponds in the parish and,

subsequently, a programme of annual maintenance was established for the council-owned ditches. In February 2020 the parish council, supported by members of SFRG, completed construction of the swale at the end of the recreation ground in Swallowfield. This reduces the risk of property flooding in Swallowfield Street by allowing floodwater to drain from the road directly onto the flood plain. SFRG and the parish council have also worked together to develop further natural flood management proposals and, earlier this year, SFRG provided support to WBC on their successful application for further funding for these projects.

Our group has also prepared a parish emergency plan on behalf of the parish council and has established an emergency response team which will assist residents in the event of future property flooding. Using grant funding from SSE, a range of equipment, including two-way radios, generators and pumps, has been acquired to be used by the team in the event of an emergency.

If any residents are interested in learning more about SFRG activities or becoming a member of the group, please contact me via the parish office.

**Graham Stanley, Chair**



## Changes to litter bins and grass cutting

Despite the triple threat of rampant inflation, increasing needs in the community and continuously low funding from central government, the Borough Council remains committed to sound finances and protecting those people who need us most.

The changes to litter bins, street sweeping, cleaning of areas around bottle banks and weed spraying

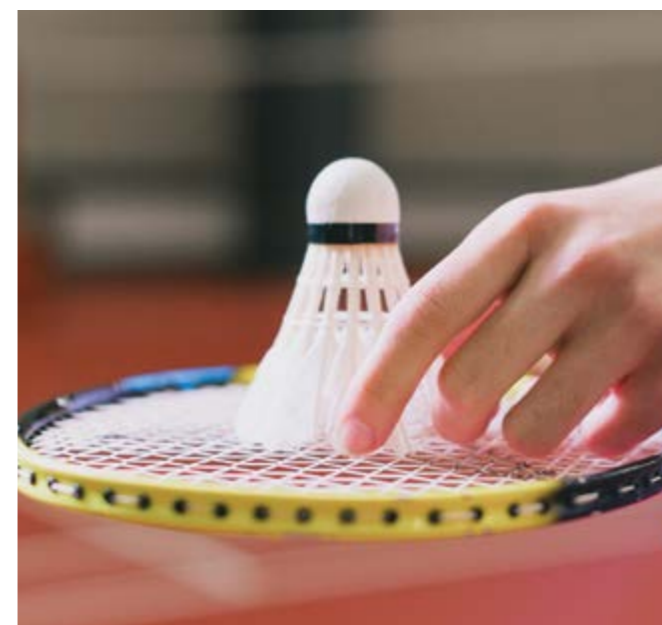
would save taxpayers about £600,000 over three years and changes to the grass cutting service would mean £100,000 savings per year through reduction of cuts from six to four for grass areas except for play parks and other amenity areas.

However, in our understandable desire to make these necessary changes, we did not follow the correct

procedure and we apologise for that. We will now go through the correct process, which started in August 2023 with a public consultation on how any changes should be implemented."

**Wokingham Borough Council July 2023**

# Local clubs and groups



## SWALLOWFIELD BADMINTON CLUB

Social badminton is a great way to keep fit, through low impact exercise, and to make new friends. We are a friendly group based around the villages of Swallowfield, Riseley, Spencers Wood and Shinfield. Our playing standards are varied and we are a non-league club.

Contact Daphne about our first free 'taster' evening on 07745 180108 or [daphne\\_seamark@hotmail.com](mailto:daphne_seamark@hotmail.com)

We play on Mondays from 8:00 to 10:00pm at Swallowfield Parish Hall. Our season runs from Monday 4th Sept and we hope to see you soon.

A separate group of friends play on Thursdays, details as above, and would also welcome new members. Please contact Malcolm on 0118 988 2736



# Riseley Tennis Club

There is lots of activity at the club at the moment. Summer matches are in full swing with great results coming in. Many thanks to our coach, Michael Fairborn, for the fabulous Children's Summer Camps run during the school holidays. As from July you can get a pro rata membership, so a good time to join for sunny summer tennis and beyond.

We also had a brilliant turn out for our quiz and chips night, with lots of fun and fabulous fish and chips, and have been asked to run more of these, so look out for dates.

Thursday is our 'social tennis' evening and our First Friday calendar is organised to the end of the year. Come and play tennis and have fab food after for a small fee. Our last First Friday was a Wimbledon Whites theme and we had lots of fun. Players played with old wooden racquets and fabulous food was supplied by one of our members.

Our finals day was Sunday 10th September. The bar was open and there was music and food after. Sandy Wyles Macmillan event will be held at the club on 29th September from 11 to 2. Sandwiches and fab cakes will be served, and there will be some super stalls, so please come along and support this great event.

Catch up with us anytime on our Facebook page or Instagram and visit our website for all info. As always, we look forward to seeing you on court; feel free to pop in and visit us anytime.

**Sandy Wyles  
Riseley Tennis Club**



## Local clubs and groups

# COFFEE CORNER



The Coffee Corner volunteers have been busy on Wednesday mornings through the spring and summer months. Along with our regulars, we've been happy to see groups of walkers and cyclists drop in. We are here for everyone, so if you ever fancy a hot drink and a piece of cake for just a £2 donation, why not call in? You can meet up with regulars or make new friends. We can even prepare a takeaway whilst you are watching children in the playground.

From our profits we are delighted to have made donations of £250 to First Days Wokingham, who support families that are experiencing financial hardship, and to Camp Mohawk, a multi-functional day centre near Wargrave for children with special needs and their families. We have continued our special relationship with the Reading Community Learning Centre, hosting a coffee morning for the English Beginners class so that they can practise their English and see a bit of life outside Reading.

Our Macmillan Coffee Morning in the Afternoon will be held on Wednesday 26th September in the Parish Hall. Please do call in for afternoon tea and help raise funds for this great cause.

Time to put the frosting on the carrot cake for tomorrow morning's Coffee Corner. We hope to see you soon.

**The Coffee Corner Team**

# SWALLOWFIELD VELO CLUB



We are so lucky to live in this parish with access to a veritable playground of beautiful country cycle routes. It has been a busy summer for Swallowfield Velo with a full schedule of rides (often on sunny Sunday mornings). As we draw to the end of the summer holidays, this are a time to dust down your bike and join us for a ride.

Our rides depart from School Green, Shinfield every Sunday at 08:00, (08:30 in winter). Rides are typically 40 to 70 miles, with a coffee stop in the middle, and is run in 3 social groups based on your preferred speed and distance.

Ride details can be found on Ride With GPS and are published weekly on our Facebook page. If you fancy joining us for a ride, just contact me (Paul Schulz) email [paul.schulz@mail.com](mailto:paul.schulz@mail.com) or through the Facebook page. I can talk you through the options and delights of group cycling and help ensure you enjoy your ride with us and discover the beautiful quiet country cycle routes of Berkshire, South Oxfordshire and North Hampshire.



## RIDE SCHEDULE

17 Sep	Coombe Gibbet	1 Oct	Velolife / Newcomer	15 Oct	Watlington
24 Sep	New Alresford	8 Oct	Overton	22 Oct	Bucklebury



## Swallowfield Pitt Bridge Lodge



### SWALLOWFIELD PITT BRIDGE LODGE

At our last meeting we initiated a new member into the fraternity. It was a joyous occasion for all those privileged to be present. It caused me to reflect on why we all enjoy it so much and what relevance Masonry has in this post-Covid modern world. After all, Grand Lodge was formed in 1717 and there is evidence that Masonry was practised many years before that.

Much is made of our charitable donations. The Masons give over £5 million a year to various good causes. This includes funding medical research and we are always among the first to help with natural disasters, wherever in the world they may occur. This, however, is not our main function; it is the result of what we do, not the cause of it. Our main aim is to make good men better. We do this by adhering to certain principles and guidelines laid out in our ritual. If you wish to know more, please contact me and I will email you a copy of the Charge to the Initiate. This is also freely available on the internet and lays down how we expect our membership to live their lives. I can assure you that if everyone behaved in this way the world would be a much better place.

The Lodge meets four times a year in the Marquee at the Mill House Hotel, Basingstoke Road, Swallowfield. Meetings are on the first Monday in February (Installation), September and November, and the second Monday in May. If you are interested in being initiated into the Fraternity, or you are a local Mason who would like to join us, please contact **Tim Double** (Mobile No: 07703 254 350, email: [timpac5261@live.co.uk](mailto:timpac5261@live.co.uk)) for further information. We offer a fascinating experience in our excellent local venue with warm fellowship and good food.



### SWALLOWFIELD HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

Greetings gardeners. Thank you so much to those of you who supported our June Open Gardens which raised over £4000 for the NGS Charity.

We hope that by the time you read this you will also have enjoyed Swallowfield Show once more. At headquarters everyone is really busy confirming bookings, sorting replacements, agreeing final sizes for marquees, number of tables, chairs and hundreds of other things including organising all the volunteers who make it work.

Focusing on the horticultural part of our brief, thank goodness we have not had a repeat of last year's prolonged drought. But we have witnessed quite unexpected consequences. Very unusually, most roses came out in huge abundance and all at the same time. This was a stress response, a sort of desperate attempt to ensure they continued through seed or anything. After which even the healthiest roses began to show black spot. The message was clear, they needed lots of tender loving care to regain their normal resilience.

Earlier in the year a lot of spring flowers, particularly tulips, were unusually short stemmed and at times small flowered. These were the bulbs that flowered then dried out and spent months before real rain fell on them. As a result, we are welcoming this cooler, damper summer to restore our battered shrubs and bulbs.

We hold monthly talks on horticulture at Shinfield Infant School on the second Thursday of the month. If these would be of interest to you, just send me your email which I will forward to the secretary who will email events to you monthly.

The heroes of the garden currently are the lilies which survive a simple care regime and then produce such amazing and long-lasting blooms. I hope your autumn garden glows for you.

**Roberta Stewart**  
[robertastewart905@gmail.com](mailto:robertastewart905@gmail.com)

### RUSSELL PLAYERS



## 'Mitigating Circumstances' by Juliet Devon

An entertaining evening was had by those who attended the Russell Players' latest production, the thought provoking 'Mitigating Circumstances' by Juliet Devon. As well as a brilliant performance, we were provided with a delicious two course, light supper. All in all, it was a very professional evening's entertainment.

Emma (Deni Smale) delighted us with cool apathy in the first scene, that gripped the audience in a nervous laughter, as we all questioned her motives. She calmly counted out and discarded Simon's medication, and procrastinated from calling an ambulance when Simon collapsed, clutching his chest.

His death, we learn, was not unexpected. Dr Smith (Andy Witting) lamented to the newly

widowed Emma, that if only Simon had taken his condition more seriously, his early demise could have been avoided.

When Emma's sister Jackie (Lynn Wright) and friends Sam (Sheila Partington) and Alison (Sarah Mapleston) came to stay, they reminisced over a cocktail (or three), and more twists and turns were revealed.

The dramatic flashbacks shed light on this confusion culminating in high points of tension. Simon's heavily pregnant colleague, Claire (Claire Hamilton) made a bold claim, and Simon's abuse was caught on camera, in an excruciating confrontation.

Duncan Hamilton made for an imposing, convincing, and controlling Simon, captivating the

audience as he snarled his way across the stage and missed no opportunity to find fault in his wife.

Swallowfield's First Responder Barry Davis, played the part of the paramedic to perfection, and Director Chris Partridge, managed Juliet Devon's whirlwind of a script thoughtfully, balancing humour and sensitivity in this black comedy.

Amongst the audience there was a sense of solidarity for Emma, with many questioning what they would do in this fraught situation. After all, there were mitigating circumstances.

### Ellyn Wright

Thank you to all who came and supported this production. The dates for our pantomime are: 18th, 19th, 22nd, 25th and 26th November.

**Juliet Devon**



SWALLOWFIELD PRE-SCHOOL

# It's an exciting time here at Swallowfield Pre-School



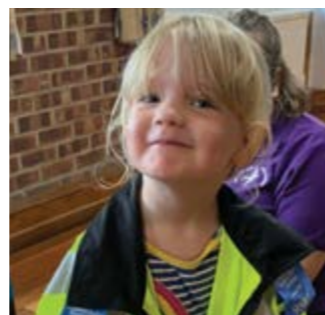
The Summer term is always a busy one and it is full of mixed emotions. We say goodbye to the children going on to school in September and wish them well in all their future adventures. Not only do we say goodbye, but we look forward to September and the new children we will be welcoming through our doors. We've already hosted a very successful stay and play session for our new starters and their parents and are now ready for the next one in August before our new term starts.

Over the last six months, Swallowfield Pre-school has been working hard behind the scenes to increase what we are able to offer our local community. From Tuesday 5th September we will be opening our doors for children aged from two-years-old to when they are ready to go to school. Our new opening hours are 8:45 until 3:15, five days a week, term time only.

Not only will we be opening our doors as a pre-school, we will also be starting a toddler group. This will be taking place on a Friday afternoon in the main Swallowfield Hall between 1:00 and 2:30. There will be different activities to take part in and both children and parents will be offered a snack.

As well as our normal day to day activities, we have had some important visitors come to say hello. On Monday 17th July our local Police Community Support Officers kindly came in to read a story and introduce themselves to the children. The children seemed to really enjoy the story and, as you can see from the photos, particularly enjoyed trying on the uniform.

At time of writing we still have a handful of spaces available on our September register. If you would like more information about either the pre-school or toddler group please email [swfpreschool@gmail.com](mailto:swfpreschool@gmail.com)



## Local clubs and groups

### SWALLOWFIELD ART GROUP

During our last few sessions of the summer term, we studied the work of Georgia O'Keeffe. Born in 1887, O'Keeffe was an American artist who painted nature in a way that showed how it made her feel. She is best known for her paintings of flowers and desert landscapes.

She played an important part in the development of modern art in America, becoming the first female painter to gain respect in New York's art world in the 1920s. Her unique and different way of painting nature, simplifying its shapes and

forms and using dramatic colours, made her a pioneer in the field of American Modernism.

We attempted to recreate O'Keeffe's method of composition by taking a small section of a reference photo of a flower and painting it in a bold and simplified way that rendered the subject quite abstract. The two paintings shown are by members of the group.

Another subject we attempted was to paint sea shells in watercolour in a circular formation. For this we painted various shell shapes in

watercolour, using a harmonious colour palette, in a pleasing composition. Creating a three-dimensional feel relied on the use of light and dark to create realistic shadows.

The rest of our time in the summer term was taken up in preparation for the Swallowfield Show, where we are currently hoping for a good turnout in the art marquee and for success in the art section of the horticultural show.

**Patricia Taylor**





## Local clubs and groups



### SWALLOWFIELD LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

#### 18th May 2023

Moving forward with our planned Programme Linda Carroll and Steve Thomas took us back to our school days. It was so interesting to hear about one of our well-known local schools: THE HOLT. Both Linda and Steve were teachers at the school so their personal knowledge was clearly expressed as they talked us through their experiences, as well as giving us some history and background of the establishment and development of The Holt. What was particularly interesting was the way in which the pupils and staff continue their connection with the school through various groups and meetings – it was abundantly clear that they thought of The Holt as a ‘family’ and were keen to continue their involvement and participation.

#### 15th June 2023

A visit to the Ice House on the Farley Hill Estate (which was built in 1790 on land which at the time was part of the Swallowfield Park Estate). It was fascinating to actually stand and see the opening of our local Ice House. Natalie Gaibani welcomed us and gave us some background history about their Ice House.

A few Facts and History of Ice Houses: Ice Houses were introduced into Britain in the 1600s. James I commissioned the first modern Ice House in 1619 in Greenwich Park and another in Hampton Court in 1625–6. An ice house (also known as ice well, ice pits or ice mounds) is a building for storing ice throughout the year. They date from before the invention of electricity and the modern refrigerator. An ice house is usually located partly or completely underground and often built near natural sources of ice in winter like rivers and freshwater lakes. During the winter, ice and snow would be taken into the ice house and insulated against melting with straw or sawdust. It would stay frozen for many months, even until the following winter.

We then went on to All Saints Church where Barbara Stanley gave us an interesting, informative and knowledgeable guided tour of this beautiful old Church, its foundations being laid as a Chapel in 1256 during Norman Times, and the Graveyard with information about the more famous gravestones. The questions and explorations continued during refreshment time.

Everyone declared it was a really interesting evening, visiting local places of real interest and history.

Our Programme continues on 21st September when we are guests of the George and Dragon and are using their meeting room to hear the History and plans for the future given by Danny Wrathen Sanchez.

Mike Cooper joins us once again on 19th October 2023 to give his talk entitled ‘The Abbey & the Castle, Reading in the middle ages’ or ‘What did the Abbey ever do for us?’ We will be back in the Rose Room, Parish Hall, Swallowfield for this presentation.

On the 16th November 2023 we welcome back Richard Hoyle again in the Rose Room at the Parish Hall to continue his Tudor History with Elizabeth 1st – the Tudor Succession.

All meetings start at 8pm and usually take place in The Rose Room at the Parish Hall, Swallowfield (unless otherwise notified to Members, Friends and by Posters displayed throughout the villages.) Do come and join us, you will be most welcome.

Maggie Uttley

# Swallowfield Parish Allotment Association



Our Open Morning on Saturday 13th May was well attended, and, despite the gloomy forecast, we had a dry if slightly chilly day. We sold lots of plants, vegetables and flowers and offered a tasty selection of cakes with coffee. We were delighted to raise more money than last year which will go towards projects that we need to do to maintain safety of the site and the communal equipment.

We held our AGM on Thursday 13th July and were very pleased to welcome new committee members. Several long-standing committee members were thanked for their tireless work in keeping SPAA running over the last few years, particularly through the challenging pandemic months. SPAA is in a healthy financial position and there were many discussions about which of many projects we should prioritise for the funds.

### WHAT TO DO IN EARLY AUTUMN

September is a month of harvests and tidying up the debris of the finished crops. There isn't much

that you can SOW at this time of year, other than winter lettuces, salad leaves, spring onions and spinach but you can PLANT OUT spring cabbage plants, cranberries, over-wintering onion sets and strawberries. Propagate from your own runners, planting the new baby plants into pots but leaving them attached to the mother plant.

HARVEST any remaining onions, leaving them to dry off before storing them in a dry, cool place. Ripen and pick tomatoes. Help them along the way by cutting off all the lower leaves (especially if they are turning yellow). Help pumpkins and squash to ripen by trimming back some leaves. Continue watering and feeding them until harvesting them at the end of the September.

Sweetcorn cobs are usually ready for picking when the silks turn brown or black. Test by peeling back the outer leaves and digging a thumbnail into a kernel. If the juice is milky, not clear, the cob is ready for eating.

Sue, Plot Holder

### Jobs for September:

- Cut down asparagus ferns when the leaves turn yellow
- Turn your compost heap with a fork to aerate it
- Feed and trim celeriac
- Sow green manure on cleared beds to prevent weeds from taking over again
- Prune out old blackberry canes and tie in the new ones
- Lift sweet potatoes and turnips
- Pick aubergines while their skins are still glossy
- Check apples, pears and plums for brown rot and destroy infected fruit



### Want to know more?

Have a look at our website on [www.swallowfieldallotment.org](http://www.swallowfieldallotment.org) or contact the SPAA Secretary [secretary@swallowfieldpaa.org](mailto:secretary@swallowfieldpaa.org) to find out more about the Allotment site.



# LOCAL MEMBER UPDATE



## Wokingham Borough Council

Final recommendations for new ward boundaries have been set out. Wokingham Borough Council will soon have new ward boundaries following an independent review by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (see <https://www.lgbce.org.uk/all-reviews/wokingham>). The review aimed to ensure that each borough councillor will represent approximately the same number of electors and that these arrangements will help the council work effectively.

In its final recommendations the commission concluded that Wokingham residents, should be represented by 54 councillors, the same as at present. There will be 18 three-member wards, including yours, an arrangement that I personally do not agree with. In my view, a rural community such as the current Swallowfield ward, which includes the villages of Swallowfield, Riseley, the southern part of Spencers Wood and Farley Hill, is better served by a single member of the council as at present.

Borough councillors are elected on a four-year cycle. Currently the Borough Council holds elections

every four years when all members' seats come up for election at once. The next election is due in May 2024. In future each ward is to be represented by three councillors and the new administration has decided that, starting in May 2025, a third of the seats in each ward will come up for re-election in each of three successive years with no elections taking place in the fourth year. This means holding three elections in each ward instead of just one over a four-year cycle which will add hundreds of thousands of pounds to the cost. My colleagues and I concluded that it would have been preferable to save money during these economically difficult times and retain the current arrangement of elections every four years.

The changes become law once Parliament has approved them and the Council will ensure that the arrangements are in place for the local elections in May 2024. Sadly, I do not believe the residents of our community were fully appraised of these important changes and therefore did not comment. In fact, only 208 people and organisations in the borough made comments to help decide the new wards. Further details can be found on the

commission's website at <https://www.lgbce.org.uk/all-reviews/wokingham>.

As I write this brief update, summer is in full swing having given us some much warmer weather. I hope that you will have had an excellent summer break.

**Stuart Munro,**  
Member for Swallowfield,  
Wokingham Borough Council



## SWALLOWFIELD MEDICAL PRACTICE

### Staffing

The partners are very pleased to announce that Dr Ghaffar has now increased the number of days he is working at SMP, from 3 to 4. Dr Whittaker is due back from maternity leave in October but she will not be resuming her full working hours until the New Year.

The Partners are currently also advertising and recruiting for another GP to complement the current team. We hope to be able to update everyone with staffing news as soon as possible.

Emma, one of our Practice Nurses, will soon be leaving us for a little while (maternity leave) and I know we all wish her well and are looking forward to her return. We have a new nurse covering some of the hours from Emma's maternity leave: the new nurse is called Jayna and started with us on Tuesday August 1st.

## Carpark

The remedial work on the car park has been successfully carried out.

## Acute Illness Appointments

We have three Paramedic Practitioners who form part of the daily team of clinicians who cover these on the day appointments. Please note these appointments are for **on the day urgent problems that cannot wait, and for this one problem only**. The Acute Team should not be seeing patients who have had the problem they are coming with for weeks or months already. Anyone with an ongoing / chronic problem should make a routine appointment. The additional hours being worked by Dr Ghaffar will ensure we have more routine appointments available to our patients.

Thank you.

## THE CALICO TRUST

The Calico Trust is a long-standing local charity that provides financial help to people in need who live in Swallowfield Parish – the area covered includes Loddon Court Farm on the Beech Hill Road, Stanford End, Riseley, Swallowfield, Farley Hill and the surrounding rural areas.

The trustees all live locally and include a Church representative and two people nominated by Swallowfield Parish Council. If you, or someone you know,

feel the Trust could be of assistance, please let us know. Information is held in confidence and enquiries are always welcome. Please contact either Celia Adams by calling either **0118 988 4661** or **07946 654 424**, or emailing [celia8844@gmail.com](mailto:celia8844@gmail.com). Alternatively, please call Ros Riddell on **0118 988 2014** or email [ros.riddell@btinternet.com](mailto:ros.riddell@btinternet.com).







## Transforming lives with friendship

The Link Visiting Scheme is a charity in Wokingham Borough dedicated to reducing loneliness by supporting people to build friendships and community connections

**the Link**  
visiting scheme

Visit [linkvisiting.org](http://linkvisiting.org) for more information

### THE LINK VISITING SCHEME

The Link Visiting Scheme is a local charity that supports older people who often feel lonely and who need some support to engage with social activities and feel connected to the local community again.

Although feeling lonely is a common feeling that we can all relate to on occasion, if it becomes a chronic feeling, we need to do something about it. Having a few friends that we can be ourselves with is so important. It means we are less likely to feel low, less likely to suffer with cardiovascular problems or dementia. At The Link Visiting Scheme, we understand that a few quality friendships and feeling part of the community can have a significant impact on overall wellbeing and happiness.



Social connection helps boost confidence, reinforces self-esteem and encourages people to embrace the changes that come along with age. Ageing does not have to be lonely – it should be celebrated! So, if you find yourself often or always feeling lonely, reach out to us. We know it's a really difficult thing to do and you may need some support to do it, but we can assure you that if you make that call, or fill in our online form, you will be met with a warm response. We have lots of options and ways you can connect with others and everything we do is tailored to the individual, so do get in touch.

If you are interested in volunteering we'd love to hear from you! You can contact us via our website [www.linkvisiting.org](http://www.linkvisiting.org) or call us 0118 9798019

Marjie Walker  
[admin@linkvisiting.org](mailto:admin@linkvisiting.org)



# The Rainbow Trust

Wyvols Court is now home to a new branch of the Rainbow Trust, a wonderful charity that supports the families of children with terminal or life threatening illnesses. We provide emotional and practical support 24/7 through treatment and beyond. From organising medical appointments and providing safe transport through to support through bereavement and grief, we're there to help make every moment with a very sick child count for all the family.

Our new Reading Care Team will be working at the heart of your community to bring this support to your community and beyond. But in order to reach as many families as possible we need your help. We're looking for volunteers across the Thames Valley area and are currently recruiting for Family Support Volunteers and Volunteer Drivers. Roles are flexible so you can give as much or as little time as you have to spare. Your out-of-pocket expenses will be covered.

Alternatively, if you're a business which is interested in partnering with us, or otherwise supporting our work, please do get in touch. Please contact our Family Support Manager, Natalie, for an informal chat on 07749 416062 or via email [natalie.whitby-lear@rainbowtrust.org.uk](mailto:natalie.whitby-lear@rainbowtrust.org.uk).

We aim to tell you more about our work in future parish newsletters. In the meantime, you can find out more about what we do from our website [www.rainbowtrust.org.uk](http://www.rainbowtrust.org.uk)

### RISELEY, SWALLOWFIELD AND FARLEY HILL CHARITABLE TRUST

Help us to help you, your neighbour or someone in our community.

Are you or do you know of someone locally in need of something that could make a real difference to their life? We may be able to help!

We are a small local charity, based in the parish of Swallowfield, covering local areas. Our remit is to support local people but understandably people in need can often be difficult to find as they may not know where to turn. We pride ourselves on being able to offer complete confidentiality, an easy request process (just an email) and a quick response. We would love to be able to support more people in our community.

Please contact us if you have a need, we may be able to help with, if you have a community scheme that may need supporting or if you have any suggestions of someone we could help. The types of support we have provided previously include vital medical equipment to a parishioner who couldn't fund it themselves and a replacement mattress for a family living in damp social housing whose bedding was ruined by the issue.

We would love to hear from you!

Please email us at [rsfenquiries@gmail.com](mailto:rsfenquiries@gmail.com).





## LOCAL CONTACTS

### **Swallowfield Medical Practice**

0118 988 3134 (general) or  
0118 988 3473 (appointments)

### **All Saints' Church, Swallowfield and Nutbean Cemetery**

0118 988 5923 or email [office@loddonreach.org.uk](mailto:office@loddonreach.org.uk)

**Royal Berkshire Hospital** 0118 322 5111

**Wokingham Hospital** 0118 949 5000

**Emergency Services** 999

**Medical (Non-emergency)** 111

**Police (Non-emergency)** 101

**Thames Water (Emergency)** 0800 714 614

**24hr Floodline Service** 0845 988 1188

**SSE Electricity (Emergency)** 0800 783 8866

**Gas (Emergency)** 0800 111 999

**Swallowfield Community Responders**  
0118 988 4384

**Reading Buses** 0118 959 4000

**Readibus** 0118 931 0000

**Keep Mobile** 0345 544 0850

**Swallowfield Calico Trust** 0118 988 4661  
or 0118 988 2014

**Shinfield Voluntary Car Service** 0118 9883400

**Wokingham Borough Council** 0118 974 6000

**Citizens Advice (Wokingham)** 0808 278 7958

**Farley Hill Primary School** 0118 973 2148

**Lambs Lane School** 0118 988 3820

**Spencers Wood Library** 0118 988 4771

**Riseley Village Tea Room** 0118 99 67375

**Swallowfield Parish Stores** 0118 988 5138

## **DID YOU KNOW?**

Our redesigned newsletter will result in a saving of up to 32,000 sheets of paper annually.

## CONTACTING THE PARISH COUNCIL

Councillors can be contacted through Liz Halson, the Parish Clerk.

0118 988 5929

**[clerk@swallowfieldpc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@swallowfieldpc.gov.uk)**  
**[swallowfieldpc.gov.uk](http://swallowfieldpc.gov.uk)**

Your Parish Councillors are: John Anderson (Chair), Mark Binns, Catherine Drew, Laura Edmonds, Ian Fullerton (Chair, Planning), John McDermott, Margaret McDonald and Simon Taylor.

## Facilities for hire

The Main Hall, Davies Room and Rose Room at Swallowfield Parish Hall are available for weddings, parties, clubs/groups, meetings and other events. Please call 0118 9885 444 or email

**[finance\\_officer@swallowfieldpc.gov.uk](mailto:finance_officer@swallowfieldpc.gov.uk)**

For information on hiring Victory Hall in Farley Hill, please call 0118 324 6600 or email **[hire@victoryhalltrust.com](mailto:hire@victoryhalltrust.com)**.

Disclaimer Articles that have been submitted to Swallowfield Parish Council for inclusion in this newsletter do not necessarily reflect the views of the Parish Council or individual councillors. Anyone wishing to comment on such articles should please contact those involved directly.

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