



Swallowfield Parish

# Newsletter

May 2023

## GIVING NATURE A HELPING HAND

In September last year councillors and residents planted over 1,500 Daffodil bulbs in Farley Hill, Riseley and Swallowfield, provided by the Parish Council. This April we were rewarded with swathes of colour on verges across our parish and we have received many kind comments from people who enjoyed the display.

We are pleased to have been able to offer small areas at both Swallowfield and Riseley Recreation Grounds and Swallowfield Meadow in support of Wokingham Borough Council's tree planting scheme, part of its programme to address the climate emergency. With funding from the Woodland Trust, nearly 1,000 trees have recently been planted in our parish.



# News in Brief

## THANK YOU

Thank you to Claire and Peter Sampson for the beautiful planters outside the Parish Hall, which they magically refresh each season.



## MEET YOUR COUNCIL

I have lived in the Wokingham area since 1983, and in Swallowfield since 1998, by far the longest time I have lived anywhere.

My two children went to Farley Hill School. My wife and I consider ourselves to be very fortunate to be living in such a beautiful and friendly village.

I originally trained as a civil engineer, later moving into loss prevention consultancy, and then underwriting with a large industrial and commercial property insurer.

Since I retired a few years ago I have been looking for ways to get more involved in our community and have decided it is time to move on from occasionally helping out, and to participate more actively. I started with the Swallowfield Community Speedwatch initiative and now intend to expand my involvement.

I am particularly interested in maintaining the attractiveness and liveability of our parish, especially in areas such as littering and vandalism, excessive speed, road maintenance and availability of infrastructure services. I feel I can bring my skills to the Parish Council's plans and actions to address these areas.

Cllr Simon Taylor  
**Neighbourhood Plan Lead**  
 simon.taylor@swallowfieldpc.gov.uk



# Welcome

I am the new Chair of the Parish Council, having been voted in at the May Council Meeting. This followed the resignation from the Parish Council in April of Jonathan Wheelwright, who was previously Chair. I'm no stranger to the role, having been Chair between 2018 and 2022, but this was not a homecoming I was expecting. The baton I passed on turned into a boomerang! I will be known to many, having been a resident of Swallowfield for over 30 years and a parish councillor since September 2010 – gosh, was it really that long ago?!

On behalf of the Council I would like to thank Jonathan for his contribution, including in the area of planning and in the demanding role of Chair. Being Chair occupies a lot of time as you need to keep abreast of all the activities and projects in which the Council is involved – indeed I have heard it said and have come to know from experience that it can easily become a full-time job if you let it!

Our vice chair, David Lamont, also resigned recently so there are now two vacancies needing to be filled. David was instrumental in modernising our branding and communications, including a new logo, our website and newsletter. Our office IT systems, web hosting and email were also brought into line with modern technology. I hope you agree that this was a fantastic job and frankly long overdue. He has also made a valued contribution in other areas including the bus service and environment. I would like to thank David on behalf of the Council.

As there hasn't been a call for an election, these councillor vacancies can now be filled by co-option, whereby the Council appoints its new members. We are looking for applications from enthusiastic community-minded individuals who can contribute some of their time and expertise; if you are at all interested, please talk to Liz, our clerk, or any councillor in the first instance. Don't just assume that someone else will take on the role and so there is no point. Without a full complement of committed councillors there is no way that the Council can continue to achieve all the good work that it has been doing.

It is all too easy to complain about local issues, many of which are outside the direct control of the Council. The Council is always open to new approaches and constructive suggestions and relies on and we encourage residents to engage directly with us. The Council works hard to promote such issues within the organisations that have the powers to implement a solution.

It has been an eventful time since the last newsletter. The coronation of King Charles III was a very special occasion indeed. The last coronation happened in the year I was born! Some residents of Riseley organised an event on the recreation ground to mark the occasion. More on this inside.

Every year we hold an Annual Parish Meeting, which is convened by the Chair. This year, the event took place on 10 May, just 24 hours after I was elected as Chair. Needless to say this presented a few challenges. It is not a formal Council meeting but rather an opportunity to report to residents on work undertaken during the year, to present and discuss topics of interest and be a forum to talk to residents informally over drinks and refreshments. The meeting was well attended and there was some lively discussion. The main topics for discussion were the planning system and our proposal that the community should develop a Neighbourhood Plan. We know that whenever a planning application is submitted to WBC for a large housing development in our locality this galvanises people to action. However, by then the opportunity to influence the outcome is diminished. A Neighbourhood Plan can help to address this. If the community is to produce a Neighbourhood Plan, it requires the commitment of a significant team of residents. It is not something that is done FOR you by the Parish Council, it has to be done BY you. Please contact Cllr Simon Taylor if you think you could help in any way, no matter how small.

There have been changes amongst key groups that use our buildings. The Tennis Club and Pre-School both have new management committees and Pam Wright has declared her intention to retire as manager of the Tea Room. Pre-School is taking action to extend its appeal to a wider group of parents and we wish them well in that endeavour.

Looking ahead, here are some events to go into your diary: National Garden Scheme open gardens – 4 June; the Church Fete – 10 June; Farley Hall Horse Trials – 23-25 June; and the Swallowfield Show – 27-28 August.

The prolonged heatwave and drought last July took its toll on many shrubs and trees which haven't survived. I hope that this year we can all look forward to a warm and pleasant summer without the extremes of climate that we experienced last year.

Cllr John Anderson  
**Chair**  
 john.anderson@swallowfieldpc.gov.uk

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## Parish News



## Become a Parish Councillor

Are you interested in the life of your village, your parish, your local environment, recreation facilities, local transport, planning and housing issues and more?

These are just some of the ways you can make a difference to our local community by becoming a parish councillor and helping to shape our parish.

Swallowfield Parish Council is made up of nine members of the public and we currently have two new vacancies. Will you come and join us?

To find out more please contact our parish clerk, Liz Halson, on 0118 988 5929 or email [clerk@swallowfieldpc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@swallowfieldpc.gov.uk).

### AWARD FOR FORMER COUNCILLOR

The Parish Council is delighted that former councillor, Angela King, received a Mayor's Honour Award from Wokingham Borough Mayor, Cllr Caroline Smith

She was nominated by a resident, who wrote: "I nominate Angela as a sign of how much Riseley and Swallowfield owe her as a debt of gratitude to the hours and effort

she puts in on our behalf. Angela will be seen at community events behind a stall with a smile, having spent many hours making, doing and planning for our benefit. She served on Swallowfield Parish Council and was chair for some time, until her retirement. She is still involved with local projects, that usually involve our environment, a cause she is passionate about. Angela was instrumental in creating Riseley Common nature reserve and is now

working with Wokingham Borough Council to ensure Van Demans is saved for future generations. Angela is a pillar of our community and deserves recognition for her selfless dedication to making our little parish a nicer place to live. Angela always has time for others. I'm sure Angela would not

like or expect a fuss, but I think she deserves a little recognition for her years of local service."



# Rewilding Project Gets Underway

The Parish Council, with support from members of the local community, has been working with Wokingham Borough Council (WBC) on a project to enhance biodiversity locally. It is planned to plant native trees and hedgerow in the Parish Council-owned Van Demans field – an 11-acre field between Part Lane and the Devil's Highway which historically has been used for grazing horses. This new public space for the enjoyment of residents will commemorate the Coronation of King Charles III. The planting, tree protection and maintenance during establishment (a period of two to three years) and the associated costs will be covered by WBC, in association with the Woodland Trust. The Parish Council is investigating with WBC whether the site can be used to generate Biodiversity Net Gain units which can be sold on to developers, with the revenue being put towards the ongoing maintenance and management of the site. The first step is to commission a baseline assessment which will be carried out during the summer.

The Government is introducing a Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) requirement on developers. BNG is a way to contribute to the recovery of nature while developing land. It is making sure the habitat for wildlife is in a better state than it was before development. Under the Environment Act 2021, from November this year every planning permission granted (with some exemptions) will need to demonstrate a BNG of 10%. This can be delivered on-site or off-site either on the developer's own land or through the purchase of BNG units from a land manager. Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) will have to approve a biodiversity net gain plan for the development before work can start. A market is being set up enabling biodiversity-enhanced sites to sell units in BNG to developers throughout England, facilitated by the LPA, as a way for them to comply with this obligation. BNG will be measured using Defra's biodiversity metric.

The detailed planting and landscaping plans are being compiled and neighbours are being consulted. Plans are being made for planting to take place in the forthcoming planting season from November this year.

The Parish Council is also exploring the possibility of creating a pond or ponds on the site that would provide new habitat suited to Great Crested Newts and other pond-dwelling wildlife.

A further aim is to get the site registered as a Local Nature Reserve (LNR). LNRs are statutory sites and are given protection against damaging operations and also some protections against development on and around them. Swallowfield Meadow and The Marshes in Riseley Common are already LNRs.







### LITTER PICK A SUCCESS

Thank you and well done to everyone who joined us for this year's annual community litter pick, as part of the Great British Spring Clean, on 25 March. The turnout was excellent.

A special thank you to Peter and Claire Sampson (for helping to organise the event), Margaret Clayton (for staffing the kitchen), Margaret McDonald (for welcoming everyone), Ed Handley and Stephen (for collecting bags) and Martin Moore and Russell Hatchet (for taking care of the river). A fantastic community effort.

## Local clubs and groups

**Pam Wright, Manager  
Riseley Village Tea Room**

### RISELEY CORONATION CELEBRATIONS

On the morning of Sunday 7 May we were ankle deep in mud as the tents were erected and the bunting unfurled. But, by midday the sun was out and, my word, how it all dried up. Wellies were discarded and sunscreen applied – only in England!

Riseley folk are brilliant and “all hands to the pump” whenever they are needed.

I was slightly worried that we may not have a good turnout of visitors but there was no need to be concerned as the field became busy with picnics, games, welly wanging, skittles and our traditional Riseley tug of war, which is always a huge favourite and now a well ingrained tradition.



Debbie, Karen and Millie were busy manning the refreshments table, serving delicious cakes donated by the community. The Tennis Club was buzzing and any event involving Sandy Wyles is not to be missed. Ray Burton came riding to the rescue when I was struggling to find a master of ceremonies and happily came along with his keyboard player, so all was well.

Huge thanks must go to Chris Jackson from Jacksons' garage in Spencers Wood for sponsoring the event and to Wendy and Colin Brooks for all their help and enthusiasm.

It was grand to have a tent and picnic set up by our neighbours from Dukes Meadow I must say their picnic looked incredible. We were so pleased to welcome them aboard.



When the fun and frolics ended and the rec cleared, we all proceeded to The Bull where we were royally entertained by “the acoustic Beatles Shambles”. They were, as always, superb, with lots of singing along to Beatles favourites, then home to bed and to reflect on what a marvellous community we have and how privileged we are to live in Riseley.







**Graham Stanley, Swallowfield Horticultural Society**  
**OPEN GARDENS AND THE SWALLOWFIELD SHOW**

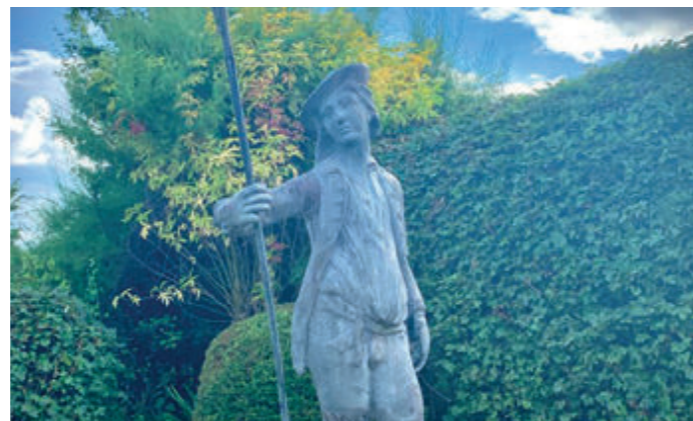
This year Swallowfield is offering eight gardens to visit on Sunday 4 June as part of the National Garden Scheme (NGS). Many of the gardens are in the village itself or just outside, so there is a mix of walking to some, with those in different directions needing a car or bicycle to reach them comfortably. Each garden has its own character and style, ranging from the formal and traditional to the unique and unusual. The garden owners, many of whom are members of our Society, are always happy to chat and share their enthusiasm and experience.

The NGS gives visitors unique access to over 3,500 exceptional private gardens in England, Wales, Northern Ireland and the Channel Islands, and raises impressive amounts of money for nursing and health charities through admissions, teas and cake.

A single admission fee of £8 per adult (children admitted free) gets you entry to all the gardens. For more information, please visit [www.findagarden.ngs.org.uk/garden/19601/swallowfield-village-gardens](http://www.findagarden.ngs.org.uk/garden/19601/swallowfield-village-gardens).

Opening times are from 2.00 pm to 5.30pm and tickets can be purchased on the day at our stall in the Swallowfield Medical Practice car park or, you can book your tickets in advance online. Refreshments and home-made teas will be available at Brambles on Church Road.

Preparations are also proceeding apace for our largest annual event, the Swallowfield Show, which will be held in Swallowfield Park at the August Bank Holiday weekend, 27 and 28 August. This popular community event, which is organised and run by volunteer members and friends of our Society will this year be even more focused on provision of a wide variety of competitions and family entertainment for all. More information can be found on our website: [www.swallowfieldshow.co.uk](http://www.swallowfieldshow.co.uk).



**Patricia Taylor**  
**SWALLOWFIELD ART GROUP**

The Art group has been busy this term with a combination of tutored and untutored sessions. Amongst the subjects covered in our tutored sessions, we studied abstract flowers in acrylic paints and architectural line and wash with pen and watercolour.

It's fair to say that the former subject elicited some strong reactions! As usual, trying to 'loosen up' to paint in an abstract style proved a challenge, as our natural inclination is to fiddle with detail and to adopt a more photo-realistic result. The two paintings shown are as a result of a great deal of groaning and trying again.

The line and wash lessons proved a more popular subject, though the discipline of perspective using multiple vanishing points was definitely challenging. A vanishing point is the point at which receding parallel lines viewed in perspective appear to converge. The views we studied and drew were of a Venetian canal and proved to be excellent learning exercises. The initial drawing was done using a waterproof ink pen and then colour and shadows were added using watercolour paint.

We are entering the pre-Swallowfield Show phase, preparing material and finishing work off ready to exhibit in the Art Group marquee or to enter into the art section of the horticultural competition.

If you are interested in joining the group, please call Jenny Boddington on 0118 988 5804 for further details. We meet at Swallowfield Parish Hall on Mondays from 2.00pm to 4.00pm during term times.





## Local clubs and groups



**Barbara Stanley**

### CHURCH UPDATE

Congratulations to the Pre-School on the success of their fete in April – and there's a different, but equally enjoyable one to enjoy:

### Swallowfield Church Fete Saturday 10 June 2.00pm-5.00pm at Swallowfield Recreation Ground

Dog Agility, lots of side shows, children's games, face painting, music, Pimms, beer and cider, ice cream, tombola, our traditional teas and all the stalls: Plants, toys, health & beauty, books, cakes, bric à brac and gifts. So, bring your dogs, your children and yourselves for an enjoyable community afternoon.

As well as the many stall helpers, a big thank you to everyone who helps with set-up and take-down of marquees and equipment on the day. We would welcome anyone who can give some help between 8.00-11.00am or from 5.15-6.30pm. We are pleased to accept donations for the stalls in the Surgery car park from 10.00am-12 noon on Saturday 3 June.

All Saints Church is a long standing part of the Swallowfield Parish community. As well as Easter Sunday services, we were delighted to host the Farley Singers and friends who sang Stainer's Crucifixion and other works on Palm Sunday, and the united benefice for Holy Week services. The benefice's children's craft activities in St Mary's Shinfield were a new initiative, thanks to Janet, our new Rector's wife and we shall invite you to join us in this next time.



**Sandy Wyles**

Committee Member

## Riseley Tennis Club

What a fantastic time was had in Riseley for the Coronation. The Tennis Club joined in the celebrations with an hour of tennis games, with coach Michael Fairburn and some willing helpers.

We served Pimms and ice creams and had a hamper raffle, with a family voucher for four kindly donated by Wellington Country Park.

Over the next few weeks we will be holding some fab events including our very popular First Fridays. Please see our website for more details: [www.riseleytennisclub.co.uk](http://www.riseleytennisclub.co.uk).

We are always looking for new members, who are very welcome to come and see us. We have a social tennis session on Thursday evenings from 6.00pm, and are running some great summer camps through the school holidays for children.

We are a super friendly club with lots of teams in the Berkshire and Hampshire leagues and are always looking for new players.

For more information, please contact our club secretary at [secretary@riseleytennisclub.co.uk](mailto:secretary@riseleytennisclub.co.uk), membership secretary [membership@riseleytennisclub.co.uk](mailto:membership@riseleytennisclub.co.uk) or club coach, Michael Fairburn, [coach@riseleytennisclub.co.uk](mailto:coach@riseleytennisclub.co.uk).

We very much look forward to welcoming you at the Club, for tennis, social events or both.

**Andy Marr, Captain**

### FARLEY HILL CRICKET CLUB

When it rains it pours. Never has a saying rung so true than to a village cricketer in spring this year. Around the country there will be hundreds of groundsmen that share a common frustration that the weather just doesn't seem to want to relent! Despite the almost constant rain, Farley Hill CC has managed to play a couple of games this preseason, including a first evening T20 on a beautiful Wednesday, a sign of more to come? The weather may be trying its hardest to delay the season but the work around the club is ongoing. David Cliff Estate Agents continues to sponsor the club as the main club sponsor and has been joined by Taylor Wimpey and Siren Craft Brew who have also provided support for the 2023 season.

The preseason nets have proven useful for several members, Sanjay Gurung coming agonisingly close to his first FHCC ton with a knock of 94. Zeeshan Hussain (78) racked up an opening partnership of 160 with the ever-reliable Ali Jalil (88). On the bowling front Lewis Hart (4-7), Sree Kenchath (3-28), Matt Jones (3-14) and Ajmal Khan (3-22) all started well and will be looking to bag the bowling award this year. As we look forward to an Ashes summer the buzz around the clubs is ever-growing, the rain can't stop us for long!

As always, if you are interested in getting into cricket, drop us a line at [farleyhillcc@gmail.com](mailto:farleyhillcc@gmail.com) or visit [www.farleyhill.play-cricket.com](http://www.farleyhill.play-cricket.com).







The allotment dried out a bit in April after a very waterlogged winter, but the rain of early May has set us back again. The water table is very high, and it doesn't take much rain to turn the site back into a muddy bog! But the intrepid plot-holders on the site haven't been deterred and there is much new growth across the site, including from plants that must have been underwater for months.

We held our open morning on Saturday 13 May and are always very pleased to welcome visitors to the site. This year's event was themed around the Coronation – "Of Cabbages & Kings"!

There are many jobs to do in the early summer:

**Outdoor sowing**

Beetroot, broccoli, carrots and courgettes can all be sown now. Kale, kohlrabi, marrows, oriental leaves, peas, pumpkins, runner beans, swedes, Swiss chard and turnips, salad leaves, spring onions and radishes too.

**Plant out seedlings**

Your seedlings can be planted out - aubergines, brussel sprouts, cabbages, cauliflowers, celeriac, chilli peppers, courgettes, summer squashes, French beans, kale, leeks, marrows, pumpkins, sprouting broccoli, sweetcorn and peppers. Don't forget to protect your seedlings from any late frost.

**Time to harvest early crops**

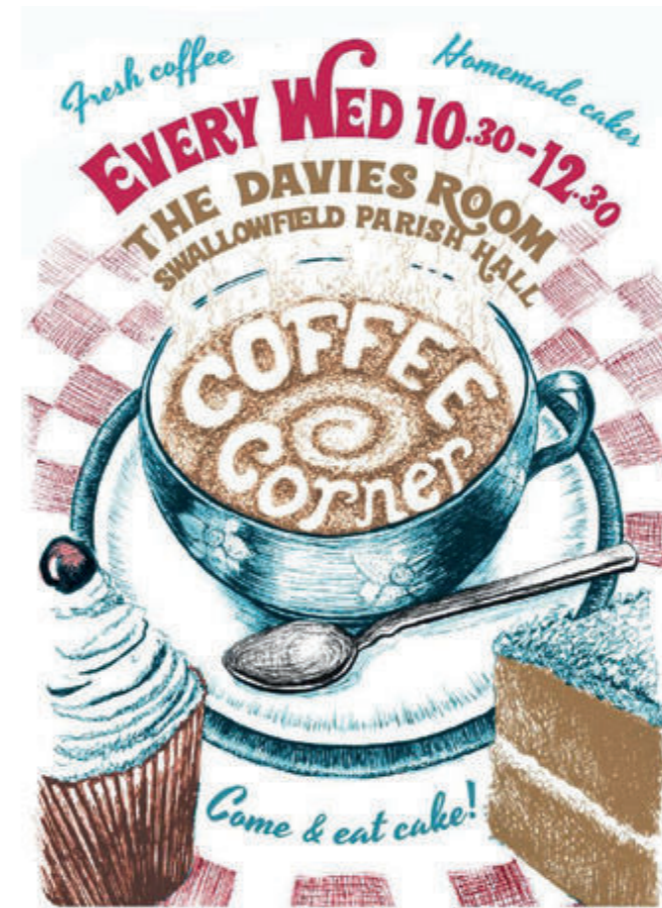
New season early potatoes, peas and broad beans will be ready to harvest. Pick strawberries and gooseberries; harvest beetroot and summer salads.

**Want to know more?**

Please visit our website: [www.swallowfieldallotment.org](http://www.swallowfieldallotment.org) or contact the SPAA Secretary to find out more about the allotment site.

**JOBS FOR EARLY SUMMER**

- wage war on weeds
- mulch and water regularly
- check your netting is secure and will not entrap wildlife
- feed tomatoes being grown under cover when the first fruits form
- continue to earth up potatoes
- cut down broad beans and peas to the ground after the crops have finished but leave the roots in the ground as they are rich in nitrogen
- feed asparagus after the final pickings (around the 21st June) but leave the plants to grow until autumn
- cut off and pot up strawberry runners to make new plants
- remove raspberry suckers and tie in blackberries
- check for pests and diseases.



**The Coffee Corner Team**

**COFFEE CORNER**

Through the winter the Coffee Corner team was particularly busy, staying open to provide a warm place for hot lunches and company, in addition to our regular 10.30am-12.30pm coffee-and-cake slot. A big thank you to Jenny Burnett for organising the lunchtime sessions and all the volunteers that made it possible. We are now back to normal opening times and are busier than ever.

Funded by customers' donations and run by volunteers, after covering our costs, all money goes to local charities. I am delighted that we have recently given £200 to Share Shinfield, who helped with our lunchtime potato supply, and £250 to Alana House, part of the Reading-based charity, Parents And Children Together (PACT).

All are welcome at Coffee Corner. Do feel free to drop in on a Wednesday morning. We can even provide a drink-to-go! Cakes are generally homemade, and a gluten free option is usually available.

We are always looking for new volunteers. If you can spare a few hours on an occasional Wednesday morning and don't mind making a cake from time to time, please contact [clare.pilgrim@btinternet.com](mailto:clare.pilgrim@btinternet.com).

**Maggie Uttley, Secretary**

**SWALLOWFIELD LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY**

An Annual AGM is a must for all societies and ours as usual was well attended and gave everyone the opportunity to question, make suggestions for the future, and enjoy the camaraderie during refreshments. We also had the opportunity to welcome our new president, Ken Hussey.

The year 23/24 began with our local duo, Fred and Wendy Holloway, giving a presentation entitled: 'Living and working in the Parish of Swallowfield, Farley Hill & Riseley for nearly 50 years'.

Fred described their involvement throughout the years, giving us an insight into the changes and challenges they had faced and overcome when building or taking over The Crown Public House. Wendy, a District Nurse, and then sitting on the Parish Council which in itself could take up a whole evening!

A full Rose room enjoyed every minute of their presentation and the questions which followed showed the interest aroused by everyone present.

We would be delighted to hear from anyone who has noticed and experienced the changes over the years. Your input is important when gathering the 'history' of our Parish.

**Come and join us on the third Thursday in the month, at 8.00pm in the Rose Room. Details are posted around the village.**





**Juliet Devon, Russell Players**

**RUSSELL PLAYERS**

It was with great sadness the Russell Players learned of the passing of one of their long-standing members, Margaret Stead. Margaret was involved in all aspects of the Society. For over forty years she showed great versatility, talent, and enthusiasm in whatever role she undertook and was a valued member of the Russell Players. She has given us some wonderful memories and will always be in our thoughts.

Rehearsals are underway for our next production, Mitigating Circumstances, directed by Chris Partridge. Here's a synopsis to whet your appetite.

Simon's death wasn't completely unexpected, he did have a heart condition after all. After the funeral, Emma's friends and sister gather to offer her comfort and support. During their conversations, it becomes apparent that the cause of Simon's death wasn't as straightforward as they initially thought!

The performance will be at Swallowfield Parish Hall on Wednesday 5 July, Sunday 9 July and Wednesday 12 July. Doors open at 7.00 pm. A light supper will be served followed by the performance. Tickets are £15.00.

This production will be brought to you by arrangement with Lazy Bee Scripts.

More details can be found on our website: [www.russellplayers.co.uk](http://www.russellplayers.co.uk).

Members from the Russell Players enjoyed a theatre trip to see Hayfever at Sonning Mill. The evening consisted of a drink or two at the bar, a delicious meal followed by a thoroughly enjoyable performance.

If you would like further information about the Russell Players, please contact Juliet Devon via our email address [russellplayers@gmail.com](mailto:russellplayers@gmail.com).



# SWALLOWFIELD PRE-SCHOOL

We had a very busy half term at Swallowfield Preschool. We have been busy exploring the changes to the garden with the spring weather. We have particularly loved digging in the mud pit, finding lots of worms and treasure and getting very messy. We love lots of different types of messy play - we have painted, made playdough, and used cereal, rice, pasta and coloured soap as part of our play outside. Role play is also one of our favourite ways to play and we have become doctors, builders, knights and princesses and cared for animals and babies in the home corner. We have also enjoyed celebrating the King's Coronation this half term - we had a lovely street party snack and baked blueberry and strawberry fairy cakes. We also made lots of crowns, with different materials. Thank you to all those who helped to organise our recent fete and to everyone who attended. The funds raised will support our charity-run Pre-School.

## EXTENDED HOURS AVAILABLE FROM SEPTEMBER

We also have some very exciting news! From September 2023 we will be open for 30 hours a week during term time. This gives us lots more time for playing, learning and exploring. We will have a full day session available from 9.15am-3.15pm, and morning and afternoon sessions, with optional lunch club too. Please email [swfpreschool@googlemail.com](mailto:swfpreschool@googlemail.com) for more information.

**Tim Double, Secretary**

**SWALLOWFIELD PITT BRIDGE LODGE**

At the time of writing, we have yet to hold our May meeting, which had to be rescheduled due to the Coronation of King Charles III. What a wonderful occasion that was, the pageantry, the tradition and above all a thousand years of history. All to a backdrop of London's beautiful buildings and parks. Our capital is without doubt one of the world's finest cities.

The coronation ceremony combined centuries-old ritual with innovations for the 21st century. Like the monarchy, masonry is adapting to ensure it remains relevant, shedding its old image of secrecy and exclusivity while holding fast to its rituals and principles.

Since we last met in February, we have been busy preparing for our meeting on Monday 15 May, when we will Initiate another local man as a member. We have also interviewed a new candidate, whom we hope to welcome in November.

Meanwhile, we will be initiating yet another local man at our meeting on September 4 2023. It is quite wonderful how success breeds success. Onwards and upwards, marvellous.

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 telephone Tim Double on 07703 254 350 or 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.





# LOCAL MEMBER UPDATE

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

## Hard work of the Council and its partners recognised

There was great news for Wokingham Borough Council and many partner organisations, as the hard work of officers and colleagues across the Borough has been recognised with not just one, but four nominations in the national MJ Achievement Awards. The highest number of nominations from any single council this year.

One of the most prestigious awards for local government, the MJ Awards were established to recognise best practice and excellence in delivering services as well as innovation in supporting local communities. The awards also celebrate projects where local authorities have worked closely with partners, including other professional organisations, the voluntary sector, businesses and the local community to deliver great outcomes for all.

Winners will be announced

later in the summer at the MJ awards ceremony on 23 June.

## Villagers and Council see off 'inappropriate' homes plan

I know that residents are concerned about excessive building in our villages, particularly with the application by Croudace Homes being reviewed for Trowes Lane/Charlton Lane by WBC planners. I was particularly pleased that a proposal for about 200 new homes in Hurst, which many residents opposed, will not be going ahead after Wokingham Borough Council's decision to refuse the scheme was upheld by a planning inspector.

The applicant wanted to develop a 10.68-hectare plot east of Lodge Road, currently used for grazing. The site lies outside Hurst village, beside its boundary, and the Council argued strongly that this "huge bolt-on extension" would have harmed its rural character.

Policies recognise Hurst is an appropriate place for limited development, but oppose larger developments and generally building outside

the village boundaries to preserve its character and identity, much as is the case with our villages, such as Swallowfield.

The Council welcomes this decision as it shows that our planning policies, which guide where development should and should not take place, can withstand independent scrutiny.

The inspector said: "Even though the council is currently unable to demonstrate a deliverable five-year housing land supply, I don't consider it reasonable to ignore the bigger picture, which is a very strong likelihood that the Council will achieve a significant oversupply.

To my mind, this does not signify a council that is failing in terms of housing provision, but rather one which is performing well and managing to boost the supply of housing over that which it planned for."

The scheme was opposed by Hurst Parish Council, who instructed its own legal counsel and appeared at the inquiry as a main party, which included giving formal

evidence. Wokingham Borough Council welcomes this confirmation that it can defend the Borough from unsuitable, speculative development, even when it can't technically show a five-year housing land supply. It still has a valid local plan that runs until 2026 and will cite this decision if it is challenged in this way again.

In recent months WBC has been pressing for changes to the national planning system, arguing it should take in the bigger picture and allow past overprovision of housing to be considered when looking ahead. The Council continues arguing for a fundamental shift in national planning policy - one that looks at the national and regional picture, deciding where housing and related development is most fairly allocated to benefit everyone.

As I write, summer is around the corner to give us warmer weather. I hope that you all have an excellent summer break.

**Helen Knipe**

## SWALLOWFIELD MEDICAL PRACTICE

### Staffing

The partners are very pleased to announce that from July 2023 Dr Ghaffar will increase the number of days he will be working at SMP, from three to four.

### Car park

Sadly, there has been a marked increase in the number of cars damaged in our car park, where the person responsible for this damage has driven away. As a result, the partners have invested in CCTV in and around the car park. Whilst there may be some people unaware that they have hit or caused damage to another vehicle in the car park, the new CCTV will assist in the identification of those people that drive off without leaving their details.

As the number of patients and clinical staff continues to grow, we are aware there are times when our car park is full and parking is at a premium. We have received several complaints about the surgery car park regarding potholes, the size of the parking bays and the number of disabled parking bays there are. We are awaiting

## 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).



confirmation of a date to have the car park repaired. However, to enlarge parking spaces will reduce the number of parking spaces available overall. To then increase the number of disabled parking bays will reduce the overall number of parking spaces further. We are unable to make the car park any larger than it is, therefore, we would encourage those patients that are able to, to please park in the Parish Hall car park and walk up to the surgery. There are no double yellow lines on The Street and we would encourage patients to park with consideration if parking on this or other roads.

### 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. The Acute Team should not be seeing patients who have already had the problem they are coming with for weeks or months. Anyone with an ongoing or chronic problem should make a routine appointment please. The additional hours being worked by Dr Ghaffar will ensure that we have more routine appointments available to our patients.





Spencers Wood Library offers a wide range of books and other reading materials for you to borrow. You will need your library card at each visit, to borrow items and also to access public computers.

IT facilities include public PCs and printing, wi-fi (library card and pin number needed) and photocopying.

**Opening hours**

**Mondays and Tuesdays** 2.30pm-5.00pm,  
**Thursdays** 10.00am-12.30pm and 2.30pm-5.00pm  
**Saturdays** 10.00am-12.30pm.

The Library is closed on Wednesdays and Sundays and all bank holidays and public holidays.

**Events include:**

**Rhymetime**

Rhymes for adults with babies aged 0-18 months.  
 Free. Booking recommended  
 First Thursday of each month 10.30am-11.00am.

**Lego Club**

Children aged 7 - 11 years  
 Third Thursday of every month 3.45pm - 4:30pm  
 Free. Booking required.  
 To book, visit [www.wokingham.spydus.co.uk](http://www.wokingham.spydus.co.uk)

**JOIN SPENCERS WOOD LIBRARY**

You can find us on the Basingstoke Road in Spencers Wood or contact us on 0118 988 4771.

You can join Spencers Wood Library if you live, work or study in Wokingham Borough, or are a member of any other library. There is no charge for joining. To do so:

- Visit Spencers Wood Library and fill in an application form.
- Produce identification showing your name and current address, such as a driving licence, bank statement with bank card or utility bill less than three months old.
- Under 18s require a signature from a parent or guardian.

**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 in 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).



**Marjie Walker, CEO Link Visiting Scheme**

**LINK VISITING SCHEME**

The Link Visiting Scheme is a local charity based in Wokingham Borough that aims to help people struggling with the serious impact of loneliness and enable them to make friends and engage again with their community.

Feeling lonely and isolated can have a negative impact on our health and can lead to low mood, stress, anxiety and a lack of confidence. The Link Visiting Scheme works with volunteers who give time to visit an older person for a couple of hours once a week or fortnight. Our aim is to improve wellbeing and have as much fun and enjoyment as possible.

Spending quality time with someone can be transforming and we've had the pleasure of seeing many lives improved by friendly volunteers regularly visiting someone who see very few people from week to week. We have over 400 volunteers throughout the borough engaging with people and often taking them out to coffee shops or garden centres where possible.

We also have a growing program of social activities aimed at encouraging older people to venture out and meet others in a safe, friendly environment. These include regular pub lunches, friendship groups, singing, yoga, bowling, Friendship Tables in local cafes and lots more.

If you are interested in finding out more, please visit [www.linkvisiting.org/volunteer](http://www.linkvisiting.org/volunteer) and request a volunteer pack. Once you return your application form, we will get in touch to arrange a time to call or meet you and talk through the role in more detail.

We believe that no one in our community should feel forgotten or lonely. Please do reach out if you'd like to get involved. We look forward to hearing from you!





## 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 (Planning Chair), 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.

Printed on sustainably sourced paper.

