



Swallowfield Parish

Newsletter

Winter 2024

Natural Flood Management for Riseley



Wokingham Borough Council (WBC), with project support provided by members of Swallowfield Flood Resilience Group (SFRG) are planning to install natural flood management (NFM) measures in woodland to the west of Riseley over the coming winter months.

A long period of exceptionally wet weather in July 2007, culminating in a very severe thunderstorm, led to 'flash flooding' of roads, streets and gardens and many houses in Riseley and Swallowfield. Further flooding also occurred during the winter storms of 2011/12, causing disruption but with limited effect on residents' homes. One of the factors contributing to the flooding experienced in 2007 is the very rapid run-off of rainwater falling on land surrounding our villages. A significant proportion of the 2007 floodwater arose from rain falling onto the A33 dual carriageway and in areas of woodland to the west of Riseley.

Swallowfield Parish Council, supported by members of SFRG,

commissioned a feasibility study in 2021, which resulted in a report recommending the installation of NFM measures on watercourses within the woodland, to slow down the flow of flood water and reduce the risk of flooding to roads and properties in Bull Lane, Basingstoke Road and beyond. The proposed NFM measures include the installation of 'leaky barriers' across watercourses and flow paths, to slow down floodwater flows, to reduce the speed of run-off by holding the flows within the watercourse and/or spreading the water over the woodland floor. The report also recommends construction of some earth banks, aimed at holding potential floodwater within the woodland. The area proposed for construction of leaky barriers and earth banks is in St Leger's Copse, Collins Copse and Coldharbour Wood.

WBC, with SFRG support, successfully applied for Defra grant funding in January 2023 and the funding process was completed in November 2023. A contractor has been

appointed for design and construction of the NFM measures and a detailed design has recently been completed. There will be a total of 67 leaky barriers installed, which comprise lengths of timber fixed across the watercourses and embedded in the banks. A typical leaky barrier, constructed in woodland near Capel, Surrey is shown in the accompanying photograph. The location and height of the barriers will be carefully controlled to ensure that shallow pooling of floodwater is held within the woodland and that water is stored over as large an area of the woodland floor as possible. Earth banks will be provided at the eastern and southern boundaries of St Leger's Copse, to minimise flows out of the woodland.

Discussions are in progress with Wellington Estate, the landowner, and the NFM measures are planned to be installed during the next few months.

Further information can be obtained by contacting SFRG via gbestanley@aol.com.

Parish News

Parish Litter Pick



Litter picking might not sound like the most glamorous activity, but let me tell you, it's a treasure hunt in disguise! Armed with a grabber, a sturdy bag, and a sense of adventure, you never know what you might find. From the mundane to the bizarre, every piece of litter has a story to tell. The usual suspects - plastic bottles, crisp packets, high-energy drink cans and the ever-elusive single shoe. Yes, you read that right. There is always a single shoe. Where does the other one go? The mystery remains unsolved. But the best part of litter picking isn't the quirky finds; it's the people you meet. There is a special camaraderie among litter pickers. We get annoyed about broken grabbers, swap stories about our strangest finds, and sometimes even compete to see who can collect the most rubbish. It's like a sport, but with more

bending and less running.

For many years, the Parish of Swallowfield has participated in the Spring Litter Pick, organised by Wokingham Borough Council. It was proposed at the Annual Parish Meeting that an Autumn Litter Pick should be organised. The PC supported this initiative and a plan was hatched. 26th October was chosen just before the clocks changed and making the late afternoon too dark to pick up the bags and also ensuring that the verges would have been cut, exposing litter discarded from cars.

The Parish Office Team worked their magic; Davies Room booked, car parking spaces coned off (reserved for the collected rubbish), litter pickers, bags and high-viz vests made available, risk assessment undertaken, insurance company informed, forms and maps printed.

And, oh yes, the Medical Centre was administering Covid and Flu jabs in the main hall, at the same time. A case of "prick and pick."

So 10am arrives on 26th and I will confess to being somewhat nervous that anyone would turn up. Well, they did (Thank you!) and in only 4 hours over 60 bags of rubbish were removed from our villages plus two car dashboards, a set of office chairs and 20 empty vodka bottles. We also reported seven fly tipping sites.

We like to show gratitude to our litter pickers so a sausage-sizzle, plus home-made cakes and other nibbles for grazing on were provided. All-in-all, a really successful day. Thanks again to everyone who made the day such a success by making cakes, serving refreshments, meeting and greeting, collecting the rubbish and bags from the roadside along with items out of the river, you know who you are.

See you all again in the Spring.

Peter & Claire Sampson

Reflections from the Chair



Welcome

First of all, I would like to extend a warm welcome to Louise Smith who was co-opted onto the Council at our October meeting to fill the vacancy left following the resignation of Paul Schulz. At the same time, I would like to thank Paul for his contribution during his tenure. This brings the Parish Council back to its full complement of nine councillors.

I can bring you exciting news that the contract to make improvements to the Parish Hall has reached practical completion and so the Council has taken possession of the completed works. There are still a few snagging issues to be resolved but otherwise we are now in a learning phase, getting used to the new facilities. Councillors have received many complimentary remarks about the improvements which makes us feel that the disruption was all worthwhile and we hope hall users feel the same way. So, we now have modern automated, wheelchair friendly, sliding doors at the front and to the atrium, a brand-new kitchen with modern appliances and a professional dishwasher, a proper reception counter for the Parish Office accessed via the atrium entrance, a much more usable and light atrium space with insulating panels on the roof making it warm in winter and cool in summer, and a high-tech fire alarm system fit for a public building.

This year saw the introduction of an Autumn Litter Pick to supplement the one in March each year. It was a great success and well supported. Thanks to Peter and Claire Sampson for organising it. Hopefully it will now become a regular event.

The Swallowfield Show was blessed with fine weather and was as popular as ever. Sparks in the Park did not take place this year. The traditional Remembrance Ceremony took place at the war memorial, and this was followed by a service at the church. Sadly, missed was our oldest war veteran, George Winter, who passed away in July.

Once again Chris Morrissey has harvested fruit from the community orchard at Riseley and picked fruit donated from residents' gardens, taking it to be professionally pressed, pasteurised and bottled. My wife and I donated apples from our orchard which otherwise would have gone to waste (or more accurately been feed for the deer). Payment in kind – a share of the end product – is proving very tasty.

By the time you receive this we will be on the home straight to Christmas so we can look forward to events including the pantomime staged by the Russell Players in February. Details of carol singing in Riseley and Swallowfield are on the back page and the Parish Council will again make a contribution towards the mulled wine. Details of Christmas church services are also included. I wish all of you a joyful Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Cllr John Anderson
Chair

john.anderson@swallowfieldpc.gov.uk

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Introducing Louise Smith Swallowfield Parish Council

My name is Louise Smith, and live in Yeosfield, Riseley. I moved here in 2019 with my family, which includes my husband Mark, four children, my nephew and 3 dogs.

My great grandparents and grandparents lived in Riseley, and my family visited the Ford on a regular basis. I had been told many stories relating to the local area before coming to live here.

I am currently working as a care assistant. When time allows, hobbies include walking, cycling, fishing and reading.

My aim in joining the parish council is to help and support the community that I live in. Of particular interest are the areas of community outreach and environmental improvement.



ALI'S RECYCLING FOR THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

Hello everyone. This is my first contribution to the parish newsletter, so I thought I would start with a little bit of background information about me. First off, I'm Ali, or the crazy Recycling Lady to some!

I started my recycling journey some 12 years ago, when my daughter was at Swallowfield Pre-School. To help with fundraising for the pre-school, I took over a handful of Terracycle schemes. This was manageable even with 2 young children and limited time to devote to the recycling.

What started off super small (just the 1 drop off point), has turned out to be somewhat bigger all these years down the line, and somewhat more time consuming! From the original single drop off point at Swallowfield Parish Hall, to now having over 25 drop off points around Berkshire is a huge increase in the amount of schemes I participate in through www.terracycle.com and www.recyclingforgoodcauses.org

This does take up quite a few hours in my week, so I am constantly juggling work, a school run, and the recycling. To assist, I now have some wonderful volunteers who either help me with the sorting of the recycling, or they collect the recycling from various drop off points to bring to me in Three Mile Cross. All this would not be possible without my valued helpers.

From bread bags, biscuit wrappers and Babybel cheese wrappers to Marigold gloves and Lavazza Eco Pods, plus used stamps and milk bottle tops. The list is quite extensive – but can change from time to time, for example if the sponsorship of a recycling scheme pulls out, for whatever reason. So, it is important to keep an eye on my Facebook page. (see below).

Recycling has very strict guidelines to follow in terms of what I can accept under the various schemes, which can seem quite daunting to some, but I am always happy to answer any questions. Then, once you fully understand what I can and can't take for recycling, there will be no stopping you! It all boils down to what the manufacturer will pay for within the scheme that they are sponsoring, so for example: I can take a bread bag, but not a vegetable or frozen food bag. There is a check list on my drop off bin at Swallowfield Parish Hall (by the atrium doors).

There are many more drop off points too by the way – other local options include:

- BP/Budgens in Three Mile Cross – small wheelie bin opposite the toilet
- Shinfield Community Church – wheelie bin in carpark
- Mortimer Methodist Church – 2 wheelie bins in church carpark

In closing, I am very happy to guide people on their own personal recycling journey. And don't forget that everything collected also helps with fundraising for many local charities (details in my next article), so every little really does help!

Please do follow me (Ali's Recycling for the Local Community)

Facebook: www.facebook.com/AliRecycling
Email: chaneys1066@btinternet.com

Local clubs and groups

INTERESTED IN JOINING US?

Please call Jenny Boddington on 0118 988 5804 for further details. We meet at Swallowfield Parish Hall on Mondays from 2pm to 4pm during term times.



SWALLOWFIELD ART GROUP

Moving water is a notoriously difficult subject to paint; as the group found when we took on the challenge of painting an ocean wave in acrylics.

The underpainting was a light base of white with a dash of ultramarine blue over the board, adding white once dry.

Next, we sketched the curve of the wave and the line of the beach in white charcoal, careful to maintain a consistent perspective by observing where the vanishing point is on the horizon.

The colours for the beach were yellow ochre, white, burnt umber and orange, blended together and keeping angles consistent with the perspective.

For the sea we used: a.) Hooker's green and ultramarine blue for the wave; and b.) phthalo green and blue for the area near the shoreline; and white to create small waves.

The next step was to paint a white line as a guide to the rise and fall of the wave and its crest. Using a rigger (a thin, fine brush), we dragged the paint along the line of

the wave to create foam, smudging with fingers where necessary. The colour of the wave was built up in layers to create a very dark shade inside the wave and a more turquoise colour along the crest.

For the wash of the wave onto the shore, we used a watery wash of phthalo green and blue with white highlights. Shadows for the waves at the back were created with a mix of blue and alizarin crimson.

Contact: Jenny Boddington
t: 0118 988 5804



INTRODUCING A NEW GROUP RISELEY COMMUNITY COFFEE MORNING

Come along and visit the newest community group in the parish.
As with all community groups, we hope to provide a warm and welcoming atmosphere, where you can meet old friends and make new ones.
Every Monday, 10am-12pm, starting Monday 25th November at Riseley Tennis Club.



SWALLOWFIELD PARISH ALLOTMENT ASSOCIATION

We find ourselves winding down towards winter again at the Calico Field, and we have been lucky enough to see some spectacular autumn days which have allowed us to harvest our remaining summer vegetables and start tidying away old plant material ready for composting.

Looking back, it's been a cool, wet year, but we have still managed to produce an abundance of root vegetables, peas, beans, pumpkins, squashes, rhubarb, leeks, onions, strawberries and some beautiful, sweet peas, cosmos and showy dahlias. Last year's new pond is naturalising nicely and has attracted an array of insects and wildlife. Our hard-working plot holders have turned out for regular working parties to keep the site tidy and the sheds in good condition.

We hosted our first Harvest Festival morning in September, and all agreed that it had been a big success. Despite the wet weather, we had a steady stream of visitors coming to look at the plots, buy plants, jams, bird boxes, freshly cut dahlias and enjoy a cup of tea with delicious homemade cakes. All funds raised go directly to the upkeep of the allotments and buildings, and to fund other improvement projects.

Before putting away your gardening gloves until next year, you can still:

- Dig over the soil, removing any perennial weeds and adding plenty of well-rotted organic material.
- Prune soft fruit bushes whilst they are dormant

- Harvest leeks, autumn brassicas and root vegetables
- Plant new bare-root fruit bushes and canes before the ground becomes too cold and wet
- Divide rhubarb and replant in well-manured ground
- Give all this year's pots and seed trays a good wash and clean to prevent any viruses carrying over to next year's new seedlings

If you would like to know more about the allotments, or would like to go onto our waiting list, why not take a look at our website: www.swallowfieldallotment.org or email the SPAA Secretary, Linda Bradley: secretary@swallowfieldpaa.org

Happy gardening!
Jane Scuffell, Plot holder

Contact: Linda Bradley, SPAA Secretary
e: secretary@swallowfieldpaa.org **w:** www.swallowfieldallotment.org



SWALLOWFIELD HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY & SWALLOWFIELD SHOW

The Swallowfield Show welcomed an impressive 8,000 + visitors across this year's August Bank Holiday weekend with adults and children alike enjoying a fun-filled day out in the sunshine.

The fabulous line up of Main Arena acts kept the crowds entertained as did the talented live music acts and performers in the Village Green area. The Dog and Horse Shows proved as popular as ever and our new attraction, the Learning Zone, was a huge hit with all ages. Competition entries were up by more than 10% and made for an impressive display in the Exhibition marquee and this year also saw the largest ever display of Classic Vehicles and Machinery with over 200 on site both days.

The Swallowfield Horticultural Society would like to thank everyone who visited the Show and all our traders, crafters, exhibitors, sponsors and advertisers for their contribution and support which is much appreciated. Our thanks also to Lord and Lady Bearsted of Farley Estate for the use of Swallowfield Park.

In addition to providing high quality family entertainment for the whole community, the aim of the Swallowfield Show is to raise funds for local charities. To that end the Swallowfield Horticultural Society, whose members run the Show on an entirely voluntary basis, is delighted to announce that this year's event has raised the spectacular sum of £30,000!

Contact: Graham Stanley **e:** chairman@swallowfieldshow.co.uk
w: www.swallowfieldshow.co.uk
Become a member: secretary@swallowfieldshow.co.uk

The list of local charities and good causes selected to benefit from a share of the funds raised is as follows:

- Thrive
- BeKind Rescue
- Arborfield Royal British Legion
- Rainbow Trust Thames Valley
- Peter Samuel Charitable Trust
- Saints Sled Dog Rescue
- The Link Visiting Scheme Wokingham
- The Loddon Fisheries & Conservation Consultative
- The Newbury & District Beekeepers Association
- SAFE
- Farley Hill PTA
- SSAFA
- The Cowshed
- Lambs Lane Repair Café
- Happy Hedgehogs
- Babies in Buscot Support
- Berkshire Search & Rescue Dogs
- Berkshire Animal Connection Centre

If you're interested in joining the Society and/or volunteering on the Swallowfield Show, we would love to hear from you so please get in touch.





1ST SWALLOWFIELD SCOUT GROUP



Group Meetings (Swallowfield Parish Hall – RG7 1QX)

GROUP	AGE	DAY	TIME
Beavers	6 to 8 years old	Monday	6pm to 7:15pm
Cubs	8 to 10½ years old	Thursday	6:15pm to 7:45pm
Scouts	10½ to 14 years old	Tuesday	7pm to 8:30pm

Contact: Tanja Maskell
e: maskell.family1@gmail.com



RISELEY TENNIS CLUB

Hello from Riseley Tennis Club.

- Our new LED floodlights are now in operation, you will be amazed at the improvement.
- All 4 courts are now in excellent condition
- Please refer to our website for future events
- Interested in trying tennis? Come along to our "Social Tennis", every Thursday at 6pm

As always - looking forward to seeing you on court.

Sandy Wyles

f **Contact:**
w: clubspark.lta.org.uk/RiseleyTennisClub
f: www.facebook.com/groups/riseleytennis

SWALLOWFIELD WALKING GROUP

EVERY OTHER WEDNESDAY

Meeting at 10am

So simple, very powerful and scientifically proven to transform your health, body and mind.

Mixed groups of locals, very welcoming!

- A typical walk will be around 3 miles
- Optional tea / coffee at the parish hall afterwards
- Meeting Point: Normally Swallowfield Parish Hall

If you would like to join us, we will add you to the WhatsApp group – text Sarah Firth 07973307721



FUTURE DATES

December: 4th & 18th
 2025 January: 8th & 22nd
 2025 February: 5th & 19th
 2025 March: 5th & 19th

SWALLOWFIELD BADMINTON CLUB

Social badminton is a great way to keep fit through low impact exercise and a great way to make new friends.

We are a friendly group and attract members from the villages of Swallowfield, Riseley, Farley Hill, Spencers Wood and Shinfield.

We are also a non-league club (so no pressure), and our playing standards are quite varied. Whatever level you are or aspire to be, you will find us a friendly and accommodating group. Our season runs from September to the end of July, so why not come along to a free 'taster' evening! We hope to see you soon.

We are three separate groups who meet at the Swallowfield Parish Hall. These are as follows:



MONDAY EVENINGS
 from 8pm to 10pm

Contact: Daphne **t:** 07745 180108
e: daphne_seamark@hotmail.com

THURSDAY EVENINGS
 from 8pm to 10pm

Contact: Malcolm **t:** 0118 988 2736

LADIES BADMINTON - THURSDAY AFTERNOON
 from 2pm to 4pm (except August)

Contact: Val Payne **t:** 0118 988 3594
e: valg.payne@btinternet.com



SWALLOWFIELD VELO CLUB



Our rides normally depart from School Green, Shinfield every Sunday at 08:30am during the winter. We run in 3 social groups based on your preferred speed and distance.

More information and Ride details can be found on "Ride With GPS" which is published weekly on our Facebook page. If you fancy joining us for a ride or would like to find out more about club cycling, please contact me.

f **Contact:** Paul Schulz **e:** paul.schulz@mail.com
w: www.swallowfieldvelo.club
f: www.facebook.com/groups/svcmembers



SWALLOWFIELD SEATED EXERCISE CLASS

Every Thursday, Parish Hall, Swallowfield

MUSICAL MOVEMENT

- All abilities, Dementia and Wheelchair friendly
- 11am – 12:15pm with tea, biscuits and time for a chat
- Just turn up!
- Alternatively call Coral on 07765 681797

A voluntary donation of £3 would be nice as it helps to fund the classes but it is not essential.



LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

PART 1: EXTRAORDINARY WOMEN

In October we had a very interesting talk on "Extraordinary Women" given by a speaker from the Museum of English Rural Life. (MERL)

These were mainly new to us, apart from Nancy Astor (the first woman to sit in the English Parliament) of which the University of Reading has the entire Astor archive.

We also heard about Elizabeth Waterhouse, wife of a celebrated architect, who at Yattendon Court was involved in the Arts and Crafts revival.

Then we heard of Sister Elizabeth Smith, who started a museum of rural artefacts at her home in East Hendred, Nora Thorp, a self-educated member of the Land Army who became important in that organisation and Jill Betts, whose huge tapestries were made for The Great Exhibition.

And then there was Lady Evelyn Balfour, who took a diploma in agriculture at Reading in 1917. She was a pioneer of organic farming, experimenting with "The Living Soil". In 1964 she co-founded the Soil Association, being concerned even then about depletion of the soil through large scale farming. While at Reading she lived in digs at 102 Basingstoke Road and ploughed fields at Manor Farm.

We tend to forget just how important Reading University has been to agricultural science, but there are also other significant record collections, and our speaker stressed that everyone is welcome to access them along with the nice new café.

Contact: Mike Round
e: slhscoc@yahoo.co.uk **w:** www.slhsoc.org.uk



PART 2: 50 YEARS OF BEE KEEPING HISTORY

In September, the History Society welcomed the beekeeper Adrian Doyle from Hillside House in Great Shefford in the Lambourn Valley. They have 50 years of beekeeping experience.

Adrian gave us an interesting and informative talk on everything bees. Starting with its long history, we went on to learn about its medicinal properties and how hard the bees work with frequent visits to flowers covering miles of flying.

Beekeeping is much more involved than most of us realised and is not as simple as purchasing the correct hive and collecting the resultant honey. It was fascinating to hear how intricate marking of the queen bee is useful to find and track which queen is in the hive. Amazing that such a small creature can be marked in that way.

Our awareness was raised on the identification of the Yellow-Legged Asian Hornet which can decimate pollinators including honeybees. Adrian stressed the importance of reporting any finds to help prevent its spread. This has already decimated honey production in France and is heading our way with some sightings on the South coast of England.

At Hillside House they pride themselves in ensuring all the properties of the honey are maintained and preserved. Unlike many honeys they do not blend their honey leaving it as the bees intended taking on the properties from the Lambourn Valley countryside.

Nothing is wasted and the beeswax is used for candles, lip balms and soaps.

Adrian answered the numerous questions which his enlightening talk had raised, and the evening ended with the opportunity to purchase honey and other related products.



MURDER CAME TO SWALLOWFIELD!

SWALLOWFIELD BELLRINGERS

A Murder Mystery Dinner was organised by the Loddon Reach Bellringers to raise money for the maintenance of the Swallowfield Church Bells. With a full house, delicious food, a raffle and the challenges of unravelling the clues for the murder, the evening was buzzing! The Bellringers were delighted that just over £1,000 was raised.

The event brought together 85 enthusiastic sleuths gathering for a Murder Mystery Dinner in the Victory Hall, Farley Hill, on Saturday 26th October to try and solve a daring and motive-filled murder.

The scene was set for Swallowfield landowner, Russell De Grasse, to host his 70th birthday party

for friends and family before his planned extended holiday abroad. Just as he was about to be arrested as a suspect for murder, he dropped dead in front of all his party guests. Who had murdered him? Almost all of his guests had motives, he was having lots of affairs, he owed lots of money and he was very unpopular. What a tangled web of mystery!

As the scene unfolded and the various characters were introduced, everyone seemed to have a motive. Was the murderer Doug Hole the gardener, Candy Barr the postmistress or Jack Tupp the car mechanic? Or perhaps it was one of Russell De Grasse's three wives, Daisy, Romy, or current wife Mo De Grasse? Some of the characters were bellringers – were they all

at bellringing practice when the poison was stolen?

The sleuths pondered all of the clues – which ones were red herrings, and which ones pointed to the murderer? After lots of discussion, the sleuths reached their decision, but not everyone got the right suspect. Led by Detective Chief Inspector Clueless, the final details were revealed, and Russell's third wife Mo De Grasse was arrested for murdering her husband.

Sue Mee,
Solicitor to Russell De Grasse

Contact: Steve Jenkins **t:** 07756 806887
e: s-jenkins@live.co.uk **w:** odg.org.uk/reading



THEATRICAL SOCIETY BASED IN SWALLOWFIELD

(PRODUCTIONS AND MEMBERSHIP)

Following on from our successful production of *The Invitation*, we would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who came along to see our performances. We have received some wonderful feedback and appreciate your support.

"The Russell Players' latest production The Invitation by Juliet Devon and directed by Deni Smale provided audiences with a witty, clever, and laugh-out-loud comedy all wrapped up in a wedding-themed venue. The play was well-written, well-cast, and delivered to the highest of standards. The "light supper" exceeded expectations and rounded off an excellent evening."

Thank you to everyone who was involved with the production and those who gave up their time to help our front of house.



Contact: Juliet Devon if you would like to join the Russell Players
e: russellplayers@gmail.com **w:** www.russellplayers.co.uk



NEXT PRODUCTION OUR INFAMOUS PANTOMIME

The sets have now been cleared, the props put away and our minds turn to "The Untold Story of Jack and the Beanstalk" – Maggie Uttley will be directing.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY:

- SATURDAY 1ST FEBRUARY (Matinee and evening.)
- WEDNESDAY 5TH FEBRUARY (Charity Night.)
- SATURDAY 8TH FEBRUARY (Matinee and evening.)

Further details will follow on our website, www.russellplayers.co.uk and on our Facebook page.

Why not join the Russell Players either on stage, backstage, Front of House, helping with costumes or make-up? If you would just like to see what we are about, please contact us at russellplayers@gmail.com

We would love to hear from you, and you can be assured of a warm and friendly welcome.

The Committee



THE COFFEE CORNER

Run by volunteers, all our profits are donated to local charities. And if you like baking and have a bit of free time, why not join the team? Please contact clare.pilgrim@btinternet.com.

Every Wednesday, 10.30am-12.30pm, at The Davies Room, Swallowfield Parish Hall.

The Coffee Corner Team



SWALLOWFIELD PITT BRIDGE LODGE

In a changing world where Trick or Treat is replacing Penny for the Guy and Solar Panels are replacing food in our fields, Freemasonry remains a constant.

Grand Lodge was formed on St John's Day in 1717 at the Goose and Gridiron Tavern in St Paul's Churchyard, London and was the first Grand Lodge in the world, and it has continued pretty much unchanged ever since. Some adjustments have been made to reflect changes in society, but its values remain the same. I can assure you, that if everyone adhered to its precepts the world would be a much better place.

We held our last meeting of the year at The Mill House Hotel on 4th of November and what a successful year it has been, with two Initiates (new members to freemasonry) and four Joining Members. It does not get much better than this. The only thing that tempers our joy is the loss of three highly respected and valued members to the Grand Lodge Above. They will never be forgotten as they form a part of the rich history of this Lodge.

Contact: Tim Double, Secretary
e: timpac5261@live.co.uk **t:** 07703 254 350
w: berkspgl.org.uk/craft-lodges/19970

At our next meeting in February, we will be installing our new Master for the year 2025-26. How time flies. This is a great occasion that is always very well attended. There is a change of Officers, with Members, reinvigorated, looking forward to yet another year of enjoyment and fulfilment.

The Lodge meets four times a year in the Marquee at The Mill House Hotel, Basingstoke Road, Swallowfield. Meetings are held on the first Monday in February (Installation), September and November, and the second Monday in May. We offer a fascinating experience in our excellent local venue with warm fellowship and good food.

If you are considering or maybe interested in being initiated into the fraternity, or you are a local Mason who would like to join us, please contact us for further information.

Tim Double, Secretary

Your Local Borough Councillor Update

Wokingham Borough
Councillors: Spencers Wood
and Swallowfield Ward

Strength in Our Community

On 10th November, I had the privilege of attending the Swallowfield Parish Remembrance service. It was inspiring to pay tribute to former Parishioners who made the ultimate sacrifice to protect our way of life. It was also fantastic to see how strong our community still is. We have so many wonderful volunteers working hard to keep this Parish special.

I recently saw a quote that said in life it's not the destination or even the journey that matters most, it's the company. We are very fortunate to have so many special people living among us and we need your strength and voices to help keep Swallowfield Parish special and fight against overdevelopment here and around us that would change the character of our community. I will never stop fighting to keep Farley Hill, Riseley and Swallowfield special.

Councillor Dave Edmonds
dave.edmonds@wokingham.gov.uk

Speed Limit Review

Many of Swallowfield's roads are rural lanes without footways, yet they remain subject to the national speed limit.

Wokingham Borough Council recognises that some drivers might not adhere to speeds that allow for anticipation of rural hazards, especially where pedestrians, cyclists, and equestrians frequently use the roads. In response to growing concerns about road safety and active travel, the Council is now in the early stages of a comprehensive review of its Speed Limit Policy.

This review will prioritise the unique demands of rural lanes, where slower speeds can enhance safety for all users and improve the experience for residents, recreational walkers, and those traveling sustainably.

The review will also consider the presence of small villages, where residents, including children and older adults, often walk along the roads in the absence of footways. The goal is to create a balanced approach that respects both the rural nature of these lanes and the needs of all who use them.

I believe all three Swallowfield councillors look forward to contributing to and seeing the results of this review.

Councillor Catherine Glover
catherine.glover@wokingham.gov.uk

Free Bus Service

Wokingham Borough Council will offer free bus travel on the six Saturdays leading up to Christmas and for two festive events, with costs to be covered using funding from the Department for Transport.

This includes the "600 Service", and means that all those boarding local bus services from bus stops in the Borough on the six Saturdays leading up to Christmas, as well as for Wokingham Winter Carnival and Woodley Christmas Extravaganza, will travel for free. As I write this brief update, winter is around the corner giving us colder weather. I hope that you all have an excellent Christmas and Festive break.

Councillor Stuart Munro
stuart.munro@wokingham.gov.uk

Local Services and Support



SWALLOWFIELD MEDICAL PRACTICE

ACUTE ILLNESS APPOINTMENTS

We are now well into our busiest period with lots of coughs and colds being seen.

Please do remember to use the NHS website for more common ailments prior to calling as some of these can be treated at home or via the local pharmacy, which in turn eases the pressure on our acute illness team.

The following links provide advice for coughs and colds.

COUGHS

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/cough/>

COLDS

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/common-cold/>

COVID-19 AND FLU VACCINE

All patients eligible for seasonal flu and COVID-19 booster vaccinations should have received a text or telephone call to book into one of our clinics. If you are eligible but have not heard from us, please contact the practice.

w: swallowfieldmedicalpractice.co.uk

THE CALICO TRUST

We are a local charity which helps people in need. If you or someone you know needs financial assistance, please let us know.

Contact: Celia Adams
t: 07946 654424 / 01189884661
e: celia8844@gmail.com

Contact: Ros Riddell
t: 07885 045362 / 0118 988 2014
e: ros.riddell@btinternet.com



RISELEY, SWALLOWFIELD, FARLEY HILL CHARITABLE TRUST

We were delighted to see our regulars again at our Autumn Jumble Sale and weren't disappointed with the piles of generous donations! Thank you to everyone involved, including our regular volunteer helpers, friends and family and of course our buyers. The majority of items were sold, with surplus being passed on to other local charities to use in their fundraising efforts.

Our café was popular as ever with homemade cakes and freshly brewed beverages, served from the brand-new kitchen at Swallowfield Parish Hall.

We raised a significant amount for local good causes and have been able to support Helping Hands, Shinfield with a new commercial grade freezer for their Share food programme following the breakdown of their existing freezer.

Look out for more information on local Facebook pages, posters and social media, and please follow us on Facebook: <https://m.facebook.com/RSFCharitableTrust/>

We fundraise to support our community, if you are a local family, individual, or organization in need of assistance, please reach out to us at rsfenquiries@gmail.com.

Thank you to everyone involved for your continued support and see you soon.

RESERVE THE DATE: Saturday 15th March 2025

Will be our next charity Jumble Sale and will be held in Swallowfield Parish Hall – RG7 1QX.

Please make a note and get ready for a pre-summer clear out. Details on how to donate items will be posted on our Facebook page and other local Facebook pages.



All Saints Christmas Calendar

The All Saints church calendar follows the seasons and events of the year, with the Harvest Festival, Remembrance Sunday and Christmas dominating this quarter. Each gives us cause to be grateful for our own good fortune and to remember those so much less fortunate, and to act upon it, as we are all 'God's hands and feet' on this earth. We rejoice that we have plenty to eat, and so can give to Readifood from our bounty. We remember those who have suffered for our security and pledge ourselves to promote peace and help those suffering today as a result of conflict. We look forward to a joyous Christmas, remembering our Saviour's birth, and to use our personal resources to help those in greatest need today. Society's concern for our neighbour has its origins in Jesus' teachings and we try to live up to our calling, especially in this Christmas season:

'If a brother or sister is poorly clothed and lacking in daily food, and one of you says to them, "Go in peace, be warmed and filled," without giving them the things needed for the body, what good is that?' (James 2.v15-16).

Christmas is a special time of joy, it being the epitome of the Christian spirit of good will and rejoicing at our Greatest Gift. It is a time for families and friends, for fun and singing, and hopefully also for reflection. As part of the celebrations the following has been planned.



All Saints Church Swallowfield Parish Remembers



Remembrance events are steeped in tradition, and rightly so, but change and renewal are also universal. At this year's services, at the war memorial and the church, we remembered our last actively involved World War II veteran, George Winter. Right up to last year, George was still reading out the WWII names on the memorial (in a remarkably strong voice for someone in their late nineties). In his honour, our bugler ended both ceremonies with Sunset, and also accompanied the naval hymn, 'Eternal Father, strong to save' on his cornet.

Taking the place of George, we were very pleased to welcome Danny Randall to assist Colin Brooks and Malcolm Bradley in the reading of names. Sadly, this included his uncle, who died in WWII. The 42 men from the Parish who died in WWI and WWII are

remembered in name on the memorial and by the poppy banner (one poppy for each of the fallen) which is under the Forgotten Soldier fixed to the Parish Hall. The poppy banner was brought over to be re-dedicated by Andrew Sass, formerly of the 3rd Regiment, the Royal Horse Artillery and Layton de Wet, who served in the South African Army, 61st Mechanised Infantry Regiment. We also included a Sikh wreath laid by Jasdeep of The Parish Stores, to help us to remember that conflict and peace are worldwide concerns.

As part of the change and renewal, I would welcome anyone who might work with me and the Parish Clerk, to begin the handover to yet another generation and keep Remembrance Sunday thriving. All volunteers welcome!

Barbara Stanley, Church Warden

Contact: Barbara Stanley **w:** 0118 988 5923 **e:** stanleyba01@gmail.com
e: office@loddonreach.org.uk **w:** www.loddonreach.org.uk/all-saints

**CHRISTMAS MARKET
IN THE PARISH HALL**
Saturday 7 December, 10.30am to 1pm.

**CAROLS BY CANDLELIGHT
ALL SAINTS CHURCH**
Sunday 15th December at 4pm
Followed by seasonal refreshments.

**CRIB SERVICE
ALL SAINTS CHURCH**
Christmas Eve from 4pm to 4.45pm
Many say this is the start of their celebrations, with or without children.

We have costumes for all the children so that angels and shepherds abound, with wise men, the Holy Family and usually a few sheep (or one year, a dinosaur!).

Please arrive about 3.45pm to choose your costumes. The children love it and it will build memories for them - and especially for you!

**MIDNIGHT MASS
ALL SAINTS CHURCH**
Christmas Eve from 11.30 pm

This always has a special atmosphere all its own, especially if it's frosty outside.

**CHRISTMAS DAY
ALL SAINTS CHURCH**
Family Service from 10:30am

Is a wonderfully happy occasion which sets the scene for your Christmas Day.

+++ NO MATTER YOUR DENOMINATION,
EVERYONE IS WELCOME AT ALL OUR SERVICES +++



JOIN US FOR A JOYFUL CHRISTMAS DAY LUNCH

The Link Visiting Scheme is delighted to invite older people to our annual Christmas Day Lunch, a heartwarming event designed to bring hope and happiness to those who might otherwise spend the day alone. We understand that loneliness can be especially challenging during the festive season, and we want to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to celebrate in good company.

Our Christmas Day Lunch is open to older people who would like to join us for a delicious meal, festive cheer, and wonderful companionship. If you or someone you know would benefit from this event, signing up is easy. Simply visit our website at www.linkvisiting.org/christmas or call our office on 0118 9798019.

We also warmly welcome volunteers who can help make this day special. Whether you can assist with preparations, serve meals, offer transport or simply be a friendly face to chat with our guests, your support will make a significant difference. Volunteering with The Link Visiting Scheme is a rewarding experience, and we are always looking for compassionate individuals to join our team long-term. No experience necessary and is based on your availability.

Let's come together to create a memorable Christmas filled with joy and connection. We look forward to celebrating with you!

w: www.linkvisiting.org



RISELEY VILLAGE TEA ROOM

Here we are again, and the Tea rooms goes from strength to strength, so thank you all for your continued support, small businesses need and very much appreciate it!

We have a wonderful new staff member, Miquelette Cooper, otherwise known as the amazing "Post Box Topper Maker" in Riseley, a gifted and talented new addition to the team.

The morning openings are going well, as are the afternoons and although in the morning you can just pop in, it is still best to call first before coming in the afternoon.

Now I've found a cinnamon bun recipe I can trust myself with, I'm really enjoying making them, the savoury scones go down a treat.

We had our very first wedding reception in October and it was wonderful. With a bit of moving about of the furniture we managed to accommodate all the guests comfortably.

Thank you to the Tennis Club for being such good neighbours and being so supportive. We are still open at the Tennis Club on Saturday mornings 9am to 11.30am – our Bacon and Egg rolls being most popular.

Half price cakes after 4 pm on a Sunday is also proving very popular and we have one or two customers that are very willing to take our surplus, and nice to set the clock by, which we just love.

Note that we will close on the 20th of December, when the team, who as you know are completely brilliant, can have a well-deserved rest. Wishing you all a very wonderful festive season and may all your Christmas wishes come true. See you in 2025.

We re-open on the 16th of January from 10am to 12am and from 2pm to 5pm.

Best wishes
Debbie and the incredible Team.

e: theriseleyvillagetearoom@gmail.com
t: 0118 996 7375
f: www.facebook.com/RiseleyVillageTeaRoom

LOCAL CONTACTS

All Saints' Church, Swallowfield and Nutbean Cemetery
0118 988 5923 or email office@loddonreach.org.uk

Citizens Advice (Wokingham) 0808 278 7958

Emergency Services 999

Farley Hill Primary School 0118 973 2148

Gas (Emergency) 0800 111 999

Keep Mobile 0345 544 0850

Lambs Lane School 0118 988 3820

Medical (Non-emergency) 111

Police (Non-emergency) 101

Reading Buses 0118 959 4000

Readibus 0118 931 0000

Riseley Village Tea Room 0118 996 7375

Royal Berkshire Hospital 0118 322 5111

SSE Electricity (Emergency) 0800 783 8866

Shinfield Voluntary Car Service 0118 988 3400

Spencers Wood Library 0118 988 4771

Swallowfield Community Responders
0118 988 4384

Swallowfield Calico Trust 0118 988 4661
or 0118 988 2014

Swallowfield Parish Stores 0118 988 5138

Swallowfield Medical Practice
0118 988 3134 (general) or
0118 988 3473 (appointments)

Thames Water (Emergency) 0800 714 614

Wokingham Borough Council 0118 974 6000

Wokingham Hospital 0118 949 5000

24hr Floodline Service 0845 988 1188

DID YOU KNOW?

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

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 988 5444 or email finance_officer@swallowfieldpc.gov.uk

CONTACTING THE PARISH COUNCIL

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

0118 988 5929
clerk@swallowfieldpc.gov.uk
www.swallowfieldpc.gov.uk

Your Parish Councillors are:

John Anderson (Chair)
john.anderson@swallowfieldpc.gov.uk

Victoria Adams
victoria.adams@swallowfieldpc.gov.uk

Mark Binns
mark.binns@swallowfieldpc.gov.uk

Catherine Drew
catherine.drew@swallowfieldpc.gov.uk

Laura Edmonds
laura.edmonds@swallowfieldpc.gov.uk

John McDermott
john.mcdermott@swallowfieldpc.gov.uk

Margaret McDonald
margaret.mcdonald@swallowfieldpc.gov.uk

Louise Smith
louise.smith@swallowfieldpc.gov.uk

Simon Taylor (Chair, Planning)
simon.taylor@swallowfieldpc.gov.uk



Supporting families with a seriously ill child

e: Natalie.whitby-lear@rainbowtrust.org.uk

e: reading.volunteer@rainbowtrust.org.uk

