



Swallowfield Parish

Newsletter

Spring 2025

Reflections from the Chair

Welcome to the spring newsletter. Rain has been a feature of winter for the second year running and once again problems have been reported with surcharging of the sewers in Swallowfield. Moss has become prevalent owing to persistent damp conditions and for the first time ever the Parish Council has had to employ its grounds maintenance contractor to treat surfaces where it is deemed a hazard such as play surfaces, the MUGA and tarmac. Moles reappeared on the rec, and it appears qualified mole catchers are something of a rare breed, unlike the moles that seem to have had a field day this year. Our mole catcher comes out from Marlborough but has plenty of other clients out our way, so it doesn't affect what we are charged.

Maintenance of our buildings seems never-ending. Plumbing problems have featured all too frequently with a burst pipe, persistent heating issues, furred up water heaters in the

Parish Hall and a burst pipe in the Tea Room a couple of days before it was due to reopen after the winter break, to name but a few.

The Parish Hall improvements project is nearing completion, having now replaced the old and rather tatty curtains with new and, we feel, more appropriate blinds. The final piece will be the installation of automatic door openers in the new connecting corridor (between the hall and atrium) to allow wheelchair entry to the accessible WC located off the atrium.

The alterations to the parish office to create a new access door and service counter off the atrium have proved very successful and meet our employer obligations to protect staff when working alone. We have yet to decide how best to utilise the atrium space now the temperatures are more stable. A number of ideas have already been put forward.

The Parish Council has approved its budget for the 2025/26

financial year and has applied for a precept of £37,463 in total which represents a modest 3.5% increase on 2024/25 and is still one of the lowest in the Borough. The balance is funded from other income sources. This should be seen in the context of an overall annual budget of circa £285,000 to cover anticipated day to day, routine 'business as usual' expenditure and which excludes projects funded from reserves and receipts from the Community Infrastructure Levy. This issue provides more information on the Parish Council's income and expenditure for 2025/26, see page 1.

I am pleased to report that the council has agreed to replace the zip wire at Swallowfield Recreation Ground, which has long been a favourite with children of all ages. Two new animal themed pieces have also been purchased for the children's playground. It is hoped that the new equipment will be ready for the better weather.

Reflections from the Chair continued.

WBC is conducting a Community Governance Review which is looking into parish boundaries within the borough. Swallowfield Parish has a small area of land extending to the east of the A327 into Arborfield Green where some 100 new dwellings have been built. Whilst not wishing to lose residents, the Parish Council feels that these residents may have a closer affiliation with Arborfield Green and associated parishes rather than Swallowfield. We have commented to this effect to the review. It is not known how the parish boundaries within Arborfield Green might change, if at all. (more information on page-18)

To conclude. the Parish Council purchased more spring bulbs which have been planted on roadside verges and at The Marshes over winter so we can all look forward to seeing these coming into bloom this spring, all thanks to Cllr Laura Edmonds and former councillor Angela King.

Finally, some dates for your diary:

- Saturday 22nd March: Annual Parish Litter Pick, part of a borough-wide initiative.
- Wednesday 30th April: The Annual Parish Meeting starting at 7pm.

John Anderson, Chair
john.anderson@swallowfieldpc.gov.uk



Parish Litter Pick Saturday 22nd March

Litter picking is a simple yet impactful activity that involves collecting and disposing of litter from public spaces. This not only enhances the aesthetic appeal of our surroundings but also plays a crucial role in protecting the environment and wildlife. Some examples include:

- 1. Environmental Protection:** Litter can cause significant harm to ecosystems. Plastics and other non-biodegradable materials can take hundreds of years to decompose, releasing harmful chemicals into the soil and water. By picking up litter, we prevent these pollutants from contaminating our environment.
- 2. Wildlife Safety:** Animals often mistake litter for food, which can lead to ingestion of harmful substances or entanglement. This can cause injury or even death to wildlife. Litter picking helps to create safer habitats for animals.
- 3. Community Well-being:** Clean public spaces contribute to the overall well-being of a community. They provide safe and pleasant areas for recreation and social activities, fostering a sense of pride and responsibility among residents.

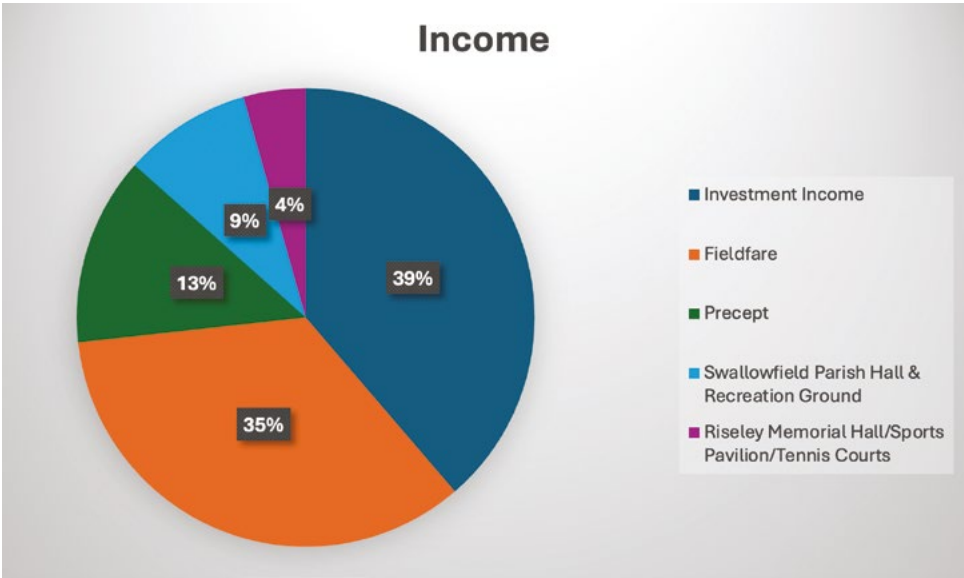
Thank you for your support
Peter & Claire Sampson

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Your Council's Finances 2025 / 2026

The Council has set its budget for the coming year, and we wanted to share how we derive our income and where the money is spent. We have shown this as pie charts, reflecting our annual income and expenditure.



INCOME CHART

Investment Income:

We are unusual in so far as most of the Parish Council's income is derived from returns on a circa £2.5M investment portfolio. The £2.5m was acquired as a result of selling some land where Foxborough stands today. The council at the time then chose to invest the funds and generate income that would enable a low precept to be paid by our residents. It should be noted that councils are not allowed to use money derived from the sale of its assets such as land to pay for regular expenditure, because this would be considered as "selling the family silver".

Fieldfare:

This more recent redevelopment project (the shop, 2 flats, 2 bungalows and a house) created a significant secondary source of rental income. A proportion of this income is currently used to service a loan from the Public Works Loans

Board (at a very favourable fixed interest rate over 25 years). Whilst this accounts for a relatively high corresponding expenditure, the development is self-financing and already generates a surplus which will increase substantially once the loan is repaid. It is worth noting that the council was only able to do this because of a provision in the "Localism Act 2011" and qualifying for something called the "General Power of Competence". Any future development projects would require the parish council to re-qualify.

The precept:

This is the main means by which Parish and Town Councils are typically funded. It is a levy (another form of tax) added to your annual Council Tax bill which the Local Authority (in our case Wokingham Borough Council (WBC)) passes on to the relevant town or parish council. All increases in the precept have to be approved by WBC.

Swallowfield Parish Hall:

Rental income from the hall, recreation grounds and Multi Use Games Area (MUGA) from anyone who uses these facilities such as the Scouts, Russell Players, Badminton etc.

Riseley Memorial Hall:

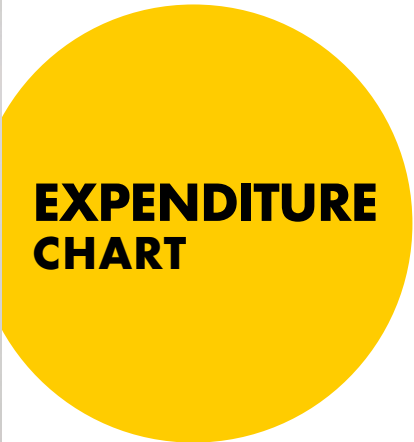
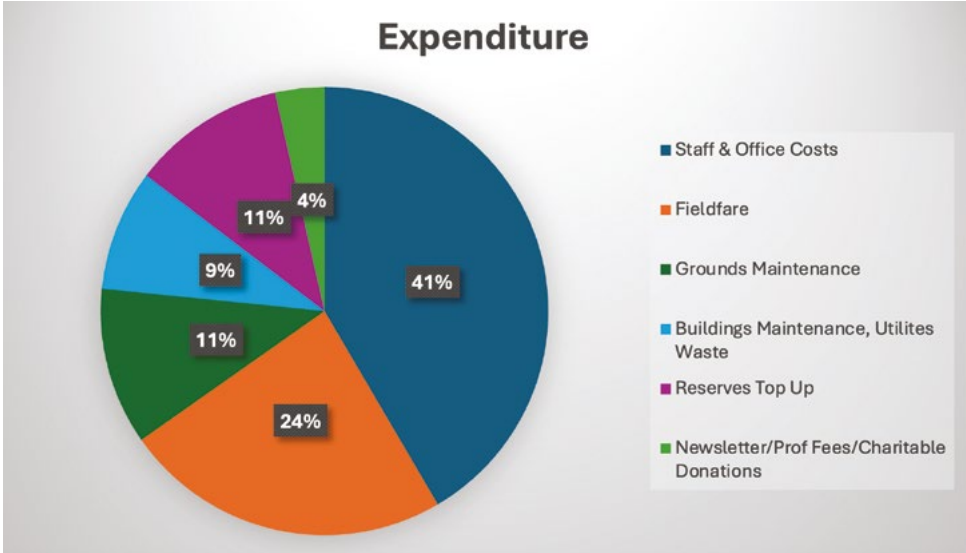
More rental income comes from the sports pavilion, tennis courts and Tea Rooms.

Hall Facilities Explained:

Both our hall facilities generate income that are also providing a benefit to the community. Our hire and licencing rates are therefore not necessarily intended to make a business focused profit but are aligned to the needs of our residents. We of course also review our facilities against those of a similar nature available for hire in the general area.

Your Council's Finances 2025 / 2026 continued.

Expenditure is largely self-explanatory. This chart shows routine in-year spend and excludes projects funded from reserves or CIL (see below).



Staff Costs:

The council employs a Parish Clerk, finance officer and caretaker, all of which are part time. In addition, we also have a Parish Warden. With respect to salary reviews etc. we look to the national bodies for guidance.

Fieldfare:

The high spend on Fieldfare is largely accounted for by the loan repayments. We also put aside an amount for maintenance, replacement and improvements. All of which are more than offset by the income received.

Grounds Maintenance:

This includes the recreation grounds at Riseley and Swallowfield, Swallowfield Meadow, The Marshes, various ditches the PC is responsible for, Van Demans, Fox's Run and other areas such as the orchard.

Buildings Maintenance:

Apart from the gas, electricity and water, this accounts for all our buildings. This can only ever be an estimate as we do not know what we will encounter during the year, such as the burst pipes and consequential flooding at the Riseley Tea Rooms this year!

Reserves Top-Up:

This accounts for any additional money we need to set aside in reserves (see page 5 opposite for further explanation).

Newsletter

& Professional Fees:

Professional fees include legal advice, for example the costs incurred when we agreed a new licence on the sports pavilion for the Tennis Club. The newsletter, although only issued four times per year costs around £6,000 to produce and deliver. Alternatives to a hand-delivered newsletter is always up for discussion and debate and we will continue to consider any alternatives that meet the needs of our community.

Further Information / Considerations

Reserves:

In addition to the annual income, the council holds a number of what we call "ear-marked" and "ring-fenced" reserves. This is where the Parish Council is effectively saving up funds, sometimes over a number of years, through annual top-ups to pay for major repairs, replacements and improvement projects that will benefit the community. It can also include other funds such as the Community Infrastructure Levy or grants towards anticipated major items of expenditure (sometimes known as capital projects) which are not a regular annual expense. An example might be to replace play equipment that has reached end-of-life.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL):

This is a fee charged by WBC and is paid by the developer for any new housing. It is intended to assist in paying for new infrastructure, or improving that which exists, in order to support the new houses. The parish council receives a percentage of the levy which is currently 15% (although there is an annual cap on the actual amount we can receive in a given year).

This needs to be treated as a windfall or a one-off, because it is only paid when a new development is actually being built – So no "counting our chickens". There are two major sites where CIL has and may become available

1. Cove homes development. Ground works have started, and we have received approximately £140,000, some of which has been used for the recent hall upgrade.

2. Croudace Homes. The development has already been given planning approval (following the appeal). The amount we may receive will be subject to the final number of houses to be built and "our share" is again likely to be spread over three payments. At this time, we can only guess at what money we can expect to receive, assuming of course, the development proceeds to a build stage.

It is really important, to remember that CIL payments have to be spent on capital works intended to mitigate the ongoing impact of development and an enlarged population in the area. The Parish Council should only spend its share on things for which it is responsible. So, for example the latest improvements to Swallowfield Parish Hall were largely funded by CIL. What about highways? These are the responsibility of WBC and Hampshire CC. We can only pressure WBC to ensure they include relevant works in their funded programme – remember they are keeping 85% of the CIL! One final point is that CIL payments, once received, must be spent within 5 years.

The following are some examples of future Reserves/CIL funded projects, each of which will be subject to viability, cost and final council approval (voted upon). It is worth noting again, that these are only suggestions that may or may not proceed. Note that anyone can suggest projects and the Annual Parish Meeting is an ideal opportunity to raise them.

1. Reconfiguration of entrance / exit to the car park at Riseley to include a height barrier (subject to permission from Stratfield Saye Estate who own the carpark).
2. Urgent refurbishment work in the Sports Pavilion and Memorial Hall.
3. Hearing loop for Swallowfield main hall.
4. Cleaning / restoration of War Memorial.
5. Replacement of fencing at various locations owned by the council.

John Anderson
Chairman and Finance Lead

Local clubs and groups



SWALLOWFIELD ART GROUP

Exploring Abstract Art By Patricia Taylor

"Abstract art does not attempt to represent an accurate depiction of a visual reality but instead uses shapes, colours, forms and gestural marks to achieve its effect".

The Tate Gallery

The movement as we know it today began in the early 20th century with the work of Wassily Kandinsky, Piet Mondrian, Joan Miró and others. Theories behind it include freedom

of expression; purity of form through colour, pattern and lines; and escape from the material to the spiritual by abandoning realistic forms.

With such high ideals in mind, we began exploring 'mark making', creating shapes on the paper using brushes, twigs, toothbrushes, credit cards, pastels, inks, pencils and pretty much anything else. Letting the hand move freely without deliberate intention frees up creativity by embracing spontaneity.

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.



Contact: Jenny Boddington
t: 0118 988 5804



SWALLOWFIELD PARISH ALLOTMENT ASSOCIATION

With the worst of the wet winter hopefully a distant memory, we can look forward with optimism to a new growing season, with the promise of longer, warmer days ahead of us. The landscaping that we had done down at the Calico field two years ago has again helped us to avoid the worst of the floods onsite, and our polytunnel is ready to be filled with early seeds and young plants that need protection until the weather warms up.

The first of our regular working parties is imminent, tidying the hedgerows before the birds build their nests, repairing any winter damage on the sheds and the fences surrounding the pond and making sure that the path down the side of the field is clear enough to be used as a footpath. We have plans to build a wooden fence around the smaller pond and always love to see the biodiversity that both ponds attract. Planning has started for

the allotments to be ready to open on 29th June 2025, as part of the National Garden Scheme Open Gardens. We opened for the first time last year and it was hugely enjoyable on a beautiful summer afternoon - fingers crossed for a repeat day of sunshine this year!

March is a great time to build supports ready for the planting of peas, sweet peas and runner beans. Winter debris should be cleared away, then beds can be weeded before adding more compost to the soil and covering with cardboard to help warm it up.

Other garden jobs for March include:

- Plant first early potatoes, shallots and garlic by the end of the month
- Some hardy seeds can be sown under cover such as broad beans, broccoli, cabbages, leeks, parsnips and swedes

- Bare-root fruit trees and bushes should be in the ground by now
- If you're lucky, you may be able to harvest the first of the forced rhubarb this month
- Place cloches over existing, overwintering strawberries to stimulate them into flowering so they produce an early crop. Remove the cloches on warm days to allow insects to pollinate the flowers

All our plots are currently being cultivated, and we have some enthusiastic new plotters this year, but if you would like to go onto our waiting list, please contact Linda Bradley (SPAA Secretary), or take a look at our website:

Happy gardening!
Jane Scuffell, Plotholder

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



SWALLOWFIELD PITT BRIDGE LODGE

Yet another year has passed. At our last meeting, which took place on Monday 3rd February, we installed a new Master, who will serve until February 2026. This is always a grand occasion and very well attended, with 45 booked in for dinner. It was all change this year, with only the Lodge Almoner and Treasurer remaining in place. We have now been in existence for six years, during which time the Lodge has flourished. In fact, we have succeeded beyond our wildest expectations, but every organisation requires refreshing from time to time, so we now have a new, younger team in charge. However, the more experienced (I was told not to say older) Brethren remain to offer any assistance or guidance if requested. The future is in good hands and looks very bright.

The meeting welcomed two joining members from other Lodges and an Initiate was proposed and seconded. He will be a Candidate at our May meeting. So, we continue to grow and prosper. Long may it continue.

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 us. You are sure to enjoy, a fascinating experience in our excellent local venue with warm fellowship and good food.

Contact: Tim Double

e: timpac5261@live.co.uk **t:** 07703 254 350

w: berkspgl.org.uk/craft-lodges/19970



SWALLOWFIELD HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY & SWALLOWFIELD SHOW

SPRING SHOW Saturday 22nd March 2025

You are invited to join us and enter your flowers, vegetables, produce, craft, photography and children's art in this year's Spring Show, which will be held in Swallowfield Parish Hall.

Setting up time is from 11.00 am to 12.30 pm. All the vases will be available for use in staging your displays and society members will be able to help you with setting up your entries.

After judging, the hall will be open to the public from 2.00 pm to 4.00 pm, when you can meet your fellow participants and find out what the judges thought of your entries. Tea and coffee will be available.

There is an ideal opportunity before and during the event, to combine your visits to the show with participation in the Spring Community Litter Pick!

Contact: Graham Stanley **e:** chairman@swallowfieldshow.co.uk

w: www.swallowfieldshow.co.uk

Free SHS membership enquiries: secretary@swallowfieldshow.co.uk

Show schedules (list of classes and rules of entry) can be obtained from our website:
<https://www.swallowfieldshow.co.uk/spring-show-2025/>

Entries can be notified to Paula Martin on
0118 988 8678 or entries@swallowfieldshow.co.uk

SAVE THE DATE SWALLOWFIELD SHOW 2025

24th & 25th August (Bank Holiday weekend)

If you are interested in becoming involved, joining the Society and/or volunteering with this unique community event, we would love to hear from you (details below).



THEATRICAL SOCIETY BASED IN SWALLOWFIELD

(PRODUCTIONS AND MEMBERSHIP)

Following on from another successful production for the Russell Players we would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who came along to see a performance.

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

We have received this review and would like to share it with you.

The Untold Story of Jack and the Beanstalk by Juliet Devon

Have you ever wondered about the backstory of 'Jack and the Beanstalk'? Why is the giant so mean? Who is Jack's father? Who helped Jack to make his escape? The latest production from the Russell Players at Swallowfield Parish Hall answers all these questions!

As we have come to expect, the Russell Players enchant with lovely scenery, vibrant costumes, impressive stage effects, and splendid performances in their latest production. The pantomime explores the origins of the giant, revealing his unexpected past.



Contact: Juliet Devon if you would like to join the Russell Players

e: russellplayers@gmail.com **w:** www.russellplayers.co.uk

The avuncular narrator (Nigel Adams) transports us to Odious Palace, the lair of the cruel and greedy Baroness Von Odious (Deni Smale), who orders her sceptical estate manager, Smart Alec (Lynn Wright), to slash her staff's wages. Generous neighbours, Duke Luke (Alby Wright) and Duchess (Caroline Waterer) offer respite, but the wicked Baroness uses her evil wiles to inflict misery on all involved.

Years later, reluctant hero Jack (Sarah Mapleston) receives enthusiastic encouragement from Scary Mary (Russell players debutant, Ashleigh Baker) to climb the beanstalk and resolve matters courageously. Delightful twists and humorous interventions involve Mrs. Tidy, the Duke's housekeeper (Sheila Partington), Jack's nanny (Trish Harris), Jack's cow, Lulu (Barbara Stanley), the butcher (Mike Hibbit), and even a small copse of trees!

Mention must also go to the supporting crew, especially to the pantomime's ingenious author, Juliet Devon who, together with co-Director, Deni Smale, has pulled off another triumph.

Engaging performances, lively audience encouragement, humour, suspense, and heartwarming moments prove that even the most familiar tales have secrets to be discovered.

Andy Witting

NEXT PRODUCTION DATES:

WEDNESDAY 14TH MAY

SATURDAY 17TH MAY

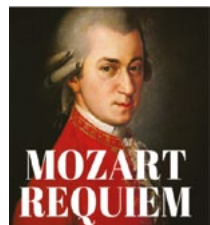
SUNDAY 18TH MAY

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 FARLEY SINGERS

MOZART'S REQUIEM Sunday 23rd March 2025

Your local choral group the Farley Singers are inviting singers from the community to a "Come and Sing Mozart Requiem" at All Saints Church, Swallowfield on Sunday 23rd March 2025.

The day will include an open rehearsal at 3pm followed by the concert, starting at 6pm. Rehearsals (for those that would like more practice) will be in the evenings on the 7th, 13th and 18th March, depending on the interest shown.

Written at the end of his all too short life, Mozart's Requiem Mass in D Minor was commissioned in 1791 and at the time of his death, remained uncompleted.

His wife Constanza was anxious not to have to return the down payment already received and the Requiem was eventually completed by Mozart's pupil Sussmayr.

The completed manuscript, containing Mozart's (forged) signature was delivered to Count Franz von Walsegg, who had commissioned the piece, for a requiem service on 14th February 1792 to commemorate the first anniversary of the death of his wife Anna at the age of 20, the previous year.

Contact: David Walder **e:** david@thewalders.com

The delivery allowed Constanza Mozart to collect the final payment for the completed work, after which she continued to promote the piece as being entirely by her deceased husband, so she could continue to collect royalties and performance payments to support herself and their surviving children. It is broadly agreed that, while the majority of the piece is based on Mozart's own work and incomplete notations, Sussmayr was probably the principal composer of the Agnus Dei, Benedictus and Sanctus. The work is among Mozart's finest and remains one of his most loved and best-known pieces.

Singers who would like to participate, please contact David Walder (david@thewalders.com) to register and hire the score for £5 (if needed). We look forward to you joining us.

The Farley Singers invite you to come and sing Mozart: Requiem in D Minor, K 626

Sunday 23rd March 2025
All Saints Church Swallowfield

Come and Sing Rehearsal 3pm
Concert 6pm

Contact David@thewalders.com to sign up.
Music Hire is £5 or bring your own. Other rehearsals TBC dependent on interest.

Scouts 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

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:



RISELEY TENNIS CLUB

Hi again

What a great start the club had in 2025 with a fabulous Burns night, food prepared and served in the tearoom by Debbie and her fab team and then dancing in the tennis club, lots of fun and laughter all round.

We have a great coaching programme running at the moment for adults and children, plus our Summer camps are coming soon. Please refer to website.

We have a full year of events for 2025, again, all details will be on the website.



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



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

THURSDAY NIGHT

Social Tennis, and the bar is open!

FIRST FRIDAY

A tennis round Robin with fab food.

SATURDAY MORNING

The cafe is running and is really buzzing.

We look forward to seeing you at the club and on the tennis court hopefully soon

Thanks for your support and looking forward to seeing you on court.

Sandy Wyles



Local Services and Support



ALL SAINTS CHURCH SWALLOWFIELD

The churchyard has begun to 'reawaken' and we invite you to rest awhile in this tranquil haven. It is Snowdrop Season as I write, the yellow aconites will follow very soon, and it will be daffodil and primrose time when you read this. Later, we welcome back the violets and red campion, the Spotted Flycatcher and the twitches. Please remember that we purposely leave grass cutting till our many wildflowers have seeded; but we try to keep on top of necessary jobs, the most recent being spreading several tons of gravel on the driveway.

If we ever have enough money, plans exist to improve the flat path round the side of the church, to help those for whom the hill is an obstacle.

Christmas at All Saints was a busy and very happy time. We started with the annual Christmas Market in the Parish Hall at the beginning of December. An enthusiastic crowd enjoyed a convivial morning with coffee, cake and mulled wine fortifying them to browse the many stalls, while the children made Christmas cards and applied stick-on angels and Santas with unrestrained merriment.

The essence of Christmas - remembrance of the birth of Christ - was amply celebrated. The magnificent music of the Farley Singers enhanced Carols by Candlelight; and the Crib Service was, as usual, a joyous experience as the children recreated the Nativity tableau and we all joined in favourite carols, as the 'wondrous story' was told. With Midnight Mass and the Christmas Day family service as well, there was a service for everyone.

Finally, our 4 churches will soon be jointly advertising for a Children and Family Minister, so if you know anyone who might be interested, do contact stanleyba01@gmail.com for information.

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



SWALLOWFIELD FETE Saturday 16th June 2pm To 5pm

Each year, hundreds of you enjoy the camaraderie, refreshments, children's games and varied stalls. The Fete is a long-standing village tradition and we look forward to seeing you there.

For the children, there are Micka's children's races, face painting, sideshows, ice cream and the toy stall. Everyone appreciates the traditional Tea & Cake, We look forward to Pimm's weather, or maybe you prefer a cool beer.

CAN YOU HELP?

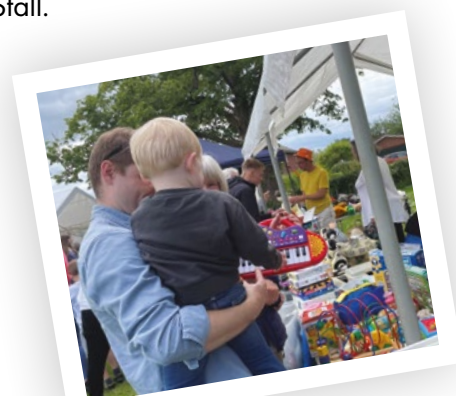
Would you like to help this traditional element of our community calendar continue? Could you give an hour to set up or take down on the day? Help on a stall or with car parking?

Organised on behalf of All Saints church, the Fete is a community event for all three villages. We are very grateful to the current volunteers and are always seeking new ideas and assistance. As well as your presence on the day, is there anything YOU could contribute?

Donations Day is when you generously help us to fill the many stalls for the fete and will be on Saturday morning 7th June, in the Parish Hall car park.

Before that, however, please remember the PLANT STALL when you are gardening – when separating perennials, do you have a few spare? When you have too many seedlings, please grow some on for us. No number is too small – a few or even one plant each from lots of people adds to variety and stocks our famous Plant Stall.

Barbara Stanley
Church Warden



NEW WEBSITE



SWALLOWFIELD MEDICAL PRACTICE

New Practice Website

Our new website is now live. Although the new site looks different, it still contains all the existing information, and you are still able to contact us in the same ways as you did before. We hope the new site is easier to navigate and provide you with a better overall online experience.

COVID Vaccinations

While flu season may be winding down, we are already looking forward to our Spring COVID programme. Currently we expect to be vaccinating the following patients:

- adults aged 75 years and over
- care homes for older adults
- individuals aged 6 months and over who are immunosuppressed

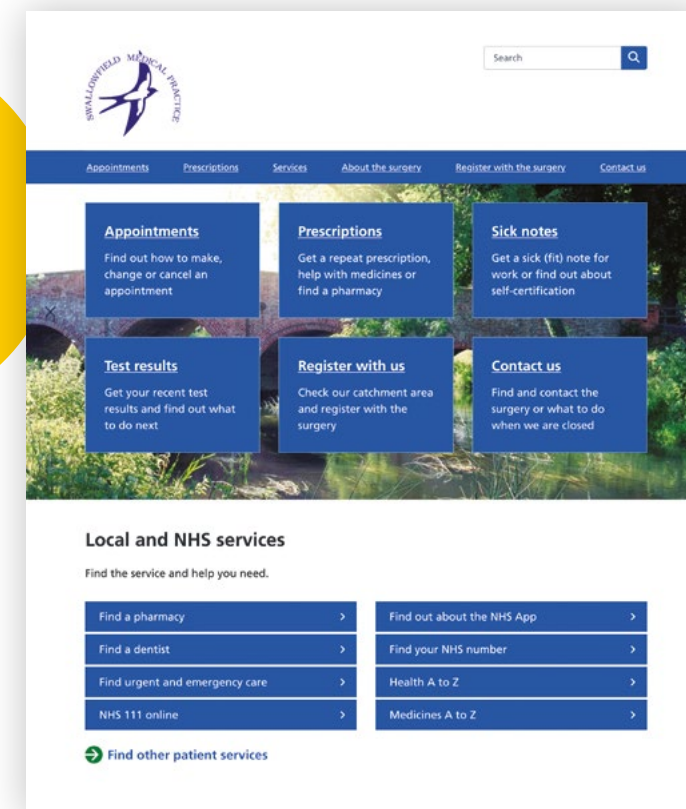
Invites will be sent out in due course, please do not call the practice regarding bookings and use the website should you wish to ask us a question.

Pharmacy First Service

We are working alongside our pharmacy colleagues who are now providing this new initiative which involves providing advice and treatment for seven common conditions:

Sinusitis	Sore Throat	Acute Otitis Media	Infected Insect Bites
Impetigo	Shingles	Uncomplicated Urinary Tract Infection in Women	

w: swallowfieldmedicalpractice.co.uk



Consultations for these clinical pathways will be provided to patients presenting themselves to the pharmacy as well as those referred by NHS 111, general practices and others.

Patient Feedback Survey

Your feedback is invaluable to us as we strive to continuously improve our services. We continually send out our Friends and Family Test (FFT) survey following appointments and really appreciate all those that spend a little time completing this and leaving us comments. The link to the FFT survey and also our monthly data is available here - www.swallowfieldmedicalpractice.co.uk/nhs-friends-and-family-test/

Stay Informed

We try to keep our website up to date with any news stories and any relevant information about the practice, including closures. The website also contains a wealth of information and ways to stay in touch such as:

- Requesting sick notes, referrals and test results
- Requesting repeat medication
- Registering for online access
- Self-help guides for minor illnesses and injuries
- Wellness Centre providing information and contact details for support services including Community Groups, Maternity, Keeping Healthy and Mental Health.



SWALLOWFIELD SEATED EXERCISE CLASS

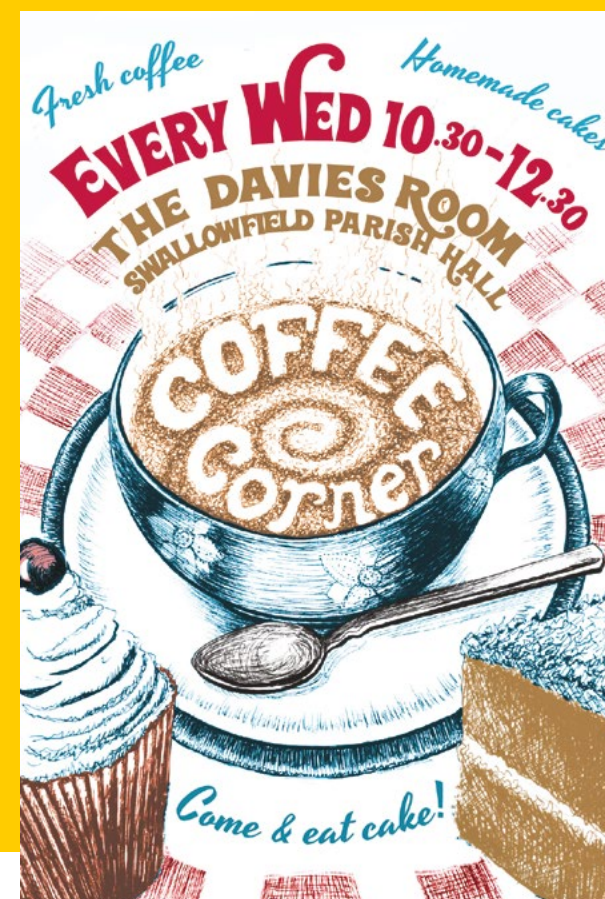
Every Thursday, Parish Hall, Swallowfield

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 but not essential as this is subsidised.

(The Riseley, Swallowfield & Farley Hill Charitable Trust and Swallowfield Parish Council).



COFFEE CORNER

(Every Wednesday 10.30 – 12.30)
Swallowfield Parish Hall

Run by volunteers, all our profits are donated to local charities.

If you like baking and have a bit of free time, why not join the team?

Please contact clare.pilgrim@btinternet.com.

The Coffee Corner Team

SWALLOWFIELD WALKING GROUP EVERY OTHER WEDNESDAY

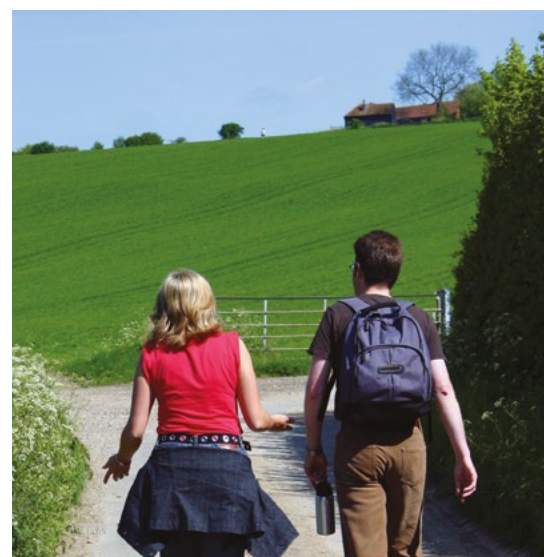
Meeting at 10.30am

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

March: 19th

April: 2nd, 16th, 30th

May: 14th, 28th



RISELEY COMMUNITY COFFEE MORNING

(Every Monday 10am – 12.00pm)
Riseley Tennis Club

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.

Each week we try and introduce a new activity, absolutely NO pressure to join-in.

Shinfield Voluntary Car Service

Registered Charity: 1152423

Volunteer Opportunities

Can you help patients get to and from their medical appointments?

Voluntary Bookings Officer

Tuesday 9.15am – 12.45 pm

- Schedule journey requests & drivers
- Handle telephone & administrative work
- Easy-to-use computerised bookings system



Voluntary Driver

4 hrs a week or more

- Use your own car with expenses paid
- Choose when & where you drive
- Rewarding role with training given

Interested?

Simply leave your Name & Number for our Manager to get back to you for a no-obligation, informal chat

Busy Spencers Wood Office – Friendly Team – Lots of tea & biscuits

Office: 0118 9883400



www.shinfieldvoluntarycarservice.org





RISELEY VILLAGE TEA ROOM

What a start to the New Year for the Tea Room!

Monday:

With a full diary for the first week and a private party on the Wednesday, the lovely Katieann and Margaret went in to freshen the place up. Miquelette let them in to discover water all over the floor and that the ceiling in the ladies toilet had collapsed. Miquelette calls me and I call Liz (the Parish Clerk) who puts on her superhero cape and the rescue begins!

Other members of the amazing Riseley community were on hand with a water sucking vacuum cleaner, torches, mops, buckets, tea towels and the clean-up campaign had begun.

It was incredible. Apart from the gaping hole in the ceiling and the fact that things were "out of place", an amazing job had been done. The plumber had fixed the burst pipe, and a plasterer had been scheduled to replace the ceiling.

Tuesday:

Sally, Miquelette and Sue went in to get the room ready for the next day (we had a private party scheduled). The ceiling was replaced, but it was still touch and go (the Tennis club very kindly offered their facilities if we needed). However, after the hard work from the team, the room was set and looking lovely once again.

Wednesday:

Miquelette and I cleaned and apart from the fact the ceiling was brown, you wouldn't have known anything had occurred!

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



More Issues:

It was a day or two later that, due to the flooding, our beautiful parquet flooring started to lift. Liz once again assisted - carefully taking up the tiles in such a way they can be put back in the right place. I put out a plea for rugs to cover the worst of it in the main room and our neighbours Chrissy and Steve came to the rescue! It's still ongoing, but with the invaluable help from the community and our own committed team (past and present), plus the support from Liz and the Parish Council, this could have been a different story - I cannot thank all of you enough.

Saturday:

We had a surprise inspection by the environmental Health and Food Hygiene, which resulted in maintaining our 5 star rating, so again, thanks to the team who all work so hard to keep the standards up.

General:

Please keep your eye on our Website, Instagram and Face book pages for more information about future events we are planning.

- 10th May - We will be joining in and assisting with the VE day Celebrations.

Opening Hours:

Thursday to Sunday 10am to 12am and 2pm to 5pm.

- Call in and say hello; it would be great to see you.

Best wishes

Debbie and the incredible Team



RISELEY, SWALLOWFIELD AND FARLEY HILL CHARITABLE TRUST

We fundraise to support our community.

If you are a local family, individual, or organisation in need of assistance, please reach out to us at rsfenquiries@gmail.com.

Thank you to everyone involved for your continued support.

f: www.facebook.com/RSFCharitableTrust



RISELEY, SWALLOWFIELD
& FARLEY HILL CHARITABLE TRUST

JUMBLE SALE

Join us on...
15TH MARCH
2025
FROM **2PM**

SWALLOWFIELD VILLAGE
HALL - RG7 1QW

**TEA & CAKE, CLOTHES, TOYS,
BRICK-A-BRAC,
BOOKS & MORE...**

£1 ENTRY **CASH ONLY**

All donations must be delivered to the village hall between
8.30am and 11am on the morning of the sale only.
All donations will be vetted to ensure they are in a saleable condition.
(No large items/furniture accepted)
Thank you!

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

Your Local Borough Councillor Update

Have your say on the Community Governance Review

The review is to ensure people of the Borough are represented appropriately and effectively through town and parish councils

A public consultation will run for 12 weeks from Friday 31st January to Friday 25th April. Here is the link: <https://tinyurl.com/SM-CGR>

Our towns and parishes are the first tier of local government, and they play a very important role in ensuring people's views are represented.

Through the Community Governance Review, we hope to assess how well the current arrangements are working and use local knowledge to make any changes. I would encourage as many people as possible to read and complete the survey, as we strive to develop something that represents the identity of our towns and parishes as accurately as possible.

A CGR must be carried out every 10 to 15 years and the review must be completed within 12 months from when the terms of reference are published. Following the deadline, the council will consider feedback and prepare a draft report of recommendations, for further consultation later this year.

If you wish to take part in the survey but are unable to do so online, please contact the council's customer services team on (0118) 974 6000 or visit a library to request a paper copy or PDF version.

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

Oakbank School Update

Since before I was elected to the Council in 2023, I have been concerned about Oakbank School, and the provision of local schooling in general. OFSTED gave the school (run by Anthem Multi-Academy Trust), a second 'needs improvement' rating just over a year ago, since when there has been considerable staff turnover and changes of policy by the Trust. Despite valiant attempts by parents and teachers, the school deteriorated, and WBC decided to intervene using its safeguarding role to bring in OFSTED again.

OFSTED soon turned this into a formal inspection, which resulted in a rating of 'Inadequate' in all four areas (quality of education, behaviour and attitudes, personal development, and leadership and management). As a result, WBC has been in negotiation with the Regional Director of Education, the only body able to remove a Trust from running a school.

We now know that Anthem Trust will pass Oakbank over to another trust, and Greenshaw Learning Trust has been temporarily assigned as a school improvement partner.

I am truly sorry it has come to this, because fourteen years ago there were such high hopes for the new Free School after the closure of Ryeish Green School. I shall continue to press for more and better educational facilities for children in this far south-western part of the Borough.

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

Parish Update

Let me share with you some of the resolutions that I want to work towards for our community in 2025.

1. Our Roads. As far as I am concerned, our roads are still not fit for purpose. For example, parts of The Street in Swallowfield are in an awful state. I will continue to push the Council to get this improved.

2. The mobile phone signal is still not good enough in many areas of the Parish which is something that urgently needs improving.

3. Oakbank School remains in need of strong community support. The Anthem Trust will cease to run the school shortly which will hopefully bring about positive change, but a lot of work still remains to be done. We particularly need to scrutinise the transfer of reserves between Anthem and its successor to ensure Oakbank gets as much investment as can be secured for it.

4. With the 80th Anniversary of VE Day in May we have a brilliant opportunity to bring our Community together. I hope we take that opportunity and remember the values that remain at the heart of our community.

I am here to help. If you need help or advice, please don't hesitate to reach out.

Councillor Dave Edmonds
Mobile: 07540 069596
Dave.edmonds@wokingham.gov.uk

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

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

**The Loddon Reach Benefice welcomes all who would like to remember,
celebrate and worship together this Holy Week & Easter**



APRIL

- Mon 14th 7.30pm Compline (Zoom)
Tue 15th 7.30pm Compline (Zoom)
Wed 16th 7.30pm Compline (Zoom)
Thur 17th 7.30pm Tenebrae Service including
Holy Communion, *All Saints, Swallowfield*
Fri 18th 10–noon Benefice Good Friday
Children's Activities, *St Mary's, Shinfield*
12–1pm Good Friday Reflections
St Michael & All Angels, Spencers Wood
2–3pm Good Friday Reflections
St Mary's, Shinfield



Easter Sunday – 20th April

- 6.30am Sunrise Service - St Mary's, Shinfield followed by
breakfast in the church hall
9.30am Holy Communion - St Mary the Virgin, Beech Hill
10am Family Holy Communion - St Mary's, Shinfield
followed by *Easter on the Green*
(a re-enactment of the Easter story)
10.30am Holy Communion - All Saints, Swallowfield
10.30am Holy Communion - St Michael and All Angels,
Spencers Wood



Spring Clean Up Day



Meet in the
Davies Room, Swallowfield Parish Hall, RG7 1QX
Saturday 22nd March 2025
10am and 4pm

Please come along and lend a hand but remember to
wear gloves, strong footwear and suitable clothing
Bring along your own litter picker and Hi Vis otherwise
they can be provided

Refreshments will be provided

For further details please contact the Clerk on 01189 885929 or
clerk@swallowfieldpc.gov.uk



Please come and help shape your villages

BECOME A PARISH COUNCILLOR

The Parish Council is nine members of the public.

Are you interested in the life of your village, your parish, your
local environment, recreational facilities, local transport,
planning and housing issues, just a few of the areas where we
get involved to help make a difference to our community.

We have a vacancy - will **YOU** come and join us?
If yes, or you would like more details, please contact the
Parish Clerk or any member of the Parish Council.

Liz Halson, Parish Clerk
Email: clerk@swallowfieldpc.gov.uk
Telephone: 01189 885 929
Website: www.swallowfieldpc.gov.uk



**Ali's Recycling For the
Local Community**

e: chaney1066@btinternet.com
f: www.facebook.com/AliRecycling