

**Issue 560**

**March 2026**

## **The Crowmarsh News team**

The *Crowmarsh News* is run by the Crowmarsh News Association, a group of local volunteers — more help is always welcome!

*Editorial & layout this month:* Lisa Gallacher and John Griffin

*Editorial support:* Toni Taylor and Jane Thrift, James Taylor, Gay Holden and Julian Park

*Advertising:* Pat Shields

*Distribution:* Frank Sadler and the team

The *Crowmarsh News* is a self-funded publication, and we regret that we are unable to accept unpaid advertising, even from local businesses and societies.

We welcome material for inclusion but do not necessarily endorse the views of contributors. We reserve the right to refuse material or to shorten contributions as may be appropriate: editorial decisions are final.

## **ADVERTISING RATES**

Our 2024 rates for a one-eighth-page display advertisement (nominal 9cm wide x 7cm tall):

1 month	£10.25
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### **Leaflet distribution**

For a single sheet loose insert in the *Crowmarsh News* (size up to A4) our rate is £36.30 for 1 month. Advertisers must supply their own inserts (930 copies please).

## **Useful telephone numbers**

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<b>Police non-emergency number</b>	101
<b>NHS non-emergency number</b>	111

## **Next month's issue**

All new advertisements and all copy for the April 2026 *Crowmarsh News* must reach us by our **20th March deadline**.

For all items of news, articles, notices or correspondence, please email

[crowmarsh.editor@gmail.com](mailto:crowmarsh.editor@gmail.com)

or deliver to the editors at 57 The Street.

For all advertising, please contact

[crowmarshadvertisers@gmail.com](mailto:crowmarshadvertisers@gmail.com)

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# What's new at Crowmarsh Gifford Primary School?

## Space day!

The early years Space Day (Year R and preschool) took place on Tuesday 10th February. All the children (as well as the teachers) dressed up as space-related things and learnt about the planets in a song.

## Architecture workshop

An architecture workshop was held on Wednesday 11th February with most of the school taking part. We made shapes in groups of four then worked together to make a tower, then we tipped it over to make a tunnel and then we crawled through it. We asked some students what they thought about the day. 'I liked the teamwork,' Ava commented. 'It was fun. I liked the stacking and I liked the tunnel and crawling through it,' said Penelope. Someone else said, 'I had a lot of fun doing it.'

## Year 3 and 4 Football Tournament

Our Year 3 and 4 footballers attended a local school's tournament. It was pouring with rain, but they persevered and played through it. They won 3 matches and drew 2. They were supposed to go through to the next stage but unfortunately the calculations were done wrong, so they didn't. It was a great lesson in resilience and how to deal with disappointments!

## School council

Recently the school council did a survey on the school lunches. We asked each class what they thought about the school lunches and whether they liked them or not. The next meeting is going to be after the half term and a school councillor commented, 'The work we've been doing is important and will make a difference to the school.'

## Pre School

We have a few spaces available in our Pre School. If you would like to give your child a great start, contact our school office to arrange a visit. Contact office.3200@crowmarsh-gifford.oxon.sch.uk to find out more or telephone 01491 836785.

# Past Times with David Beasley

## The Floods on the Thames

It seems that in recent years the Thames has flooded almost annually. As can be seen from the flood mark near the path in the recreation ground, there were two notable floods in January 2024, and the flood of January 2003 was almost as high. However, the flood of 1947 was much higher than either of these. When coming off the bridge into Crowmarsh, the main road was completely flooded.

I remember the 1947 flood clearly, as I was living in St Leonard's Lane at the time. Floodwater entered my parents' kitchen, and the outside toilet became unusable. From my bedroom window, I was able to feed the swans swimming by. Rats became a serious problem and Tom Robbins, who lived next door, found them swimming in his kitchen. The kitchens in those houses were about seven feet lower than the living rooms, which meant that fortunately the floodwater never reached the main living areas.

Because our toilet was flooded and the "High Flood" lasted for about ten days, I had to walk to the public toilets under the Town Hall. Thankfully, neighbours on the opposite side of the road allowed my family to use theirs, but poor Tom Robbins, who did not get on well with people, still had to make the walk to the Town Hall.

The maximum flow in 1947 was 13,600 million gallons per day, which was 7,000 million gallons per day less than the great flood of 1894, when flow exceeded 20,400 million gallons per day.

In 1894, the river flooded the main road to Oxford at Shillingford and inundated Winterbrook, where residents had to live upstairs and receive their mail from the postman standing in a cart delivering letters to bedroom windows using a split stick.

In Crowmarsh, the floodwater reached St Mary's Churchyard. Walter Wilder was forced to shut down the furnace in his foundry because of the flooding. Houses opposite Wilder's Foundry had several inches of water flowing in through their front doors and out through the back into their gardens.

The flood of January 1809 was about twelve inches higher than in 1894. At that time, Wallingford Bridge had relatively low arches. The floodwaters rose above them, and the pressure built up so greatly that the bridge collapsed. It was rebuilt the following year, about six feet wider with much higher arches.

During that flood, the Wallingford coach was on its way to London. When the coachman reached the bridge and saw that the water had risen above the arches, he wisely advised the passengers, both inside and on top of the coach, to walk across. Fearing that the weight might cause the bridge to collapse, he then drove the coach across at full speed. He had cleared the bridge by less than twenty feet when it was washed away. Barely anything remained visible above the water. A temporary wooden bridge was built just upstream and was used until the rebuilt stone bridge was completed.

## **1st Crowmarsh Gifford Scouts needs a Leader**

The 1st Crowmarsh Gifford Scouts (Beavers, Cubs and Scouts) did a great job selling poppies last year, raising £748.77 from our door-to-door collection for the Royal British Legion. A brilliant effort from our Scout sections and volunteers, and contributions from our local community. Thank you!

Our wonderful volunteers are the backbone of these adventures, and we are currently recruiting for a Scout Section Team Leader. We have a number of Scout leader volunteers, but we need a Lead Volunteer (or perhaps two could share the role) who can head up this section.

We meet on Monday evenings, 7:30-9pm at the Crowmarsh Village Hall during term time.

Volunteering with Scouts is a great way to boost your wellbeing, connecting you with our local community and providing a sense of purpose as you help young people gain skills for life. You might even learn a lot about yourself along the way.

For more details or to get in touch, visit our website [www.1stcrowmarshgiffordscouts.org.uk](http://www.1stcrowmarshgiffordscouts.org.uk)

## **Crowmarsh litter pick**

Please join us for our annual village spruce-up on Saturday March 14<sup>th</sup> from 9am-12pm

Crowmarsh Parish Council are again joining forces with the Wallingford 1155 group to make our community a cleaner, greener place, with the help of you local volunteers! Accompanied children are very welcome.

Litter pickers, hi-viz vests and gloves will be provided but if you have your own please bring them as supplies are limited. Meet at the yard next to Bridge Villa Campsite at 09:00 to pick up your equipment and agree your route.

Bridge Villa will be supplying hot chocolate and cakes on your return. See you there!

## **Film: "Six Inches of Soil"**

### **Free screening and panel discussion**

Sunday 22nd March at 7.00pm

Come and see what exciting environmentally-friendly developments are taking place in the farming world.

St Helen's Benson EcoChurch is joining with the Benson Area Nature Group to screen the feature film "Six Inches of Soil".

It tells the inspiring story of young British farmers standing up against the industrial food system and transforming the way they produce food, to heal the soil, improve our health and provide for local communities.

The free screening will take place at the new Benson Community Hall, China Piece, Benson, OX10 6FY (in the Cala housing development).

It will include a discussion with a panel of local farmers/growers who are practising regenerative farming.

View the trailer at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OaJl0yQ7ufQ>.

***Please see the parish website for the latest on many local matters:  
[www.crowmarshgifford.org.uk](http://www.crowmarshgifford.org.uk)***



Team Vicar: Vacancy

Churchwardens:

Linda Parker Tel: 836100

Margaret Foster Tel: 836076

## **St. Mary Magdalene's Church, Crowmarsh Gifford**

### **Services for March**

Sunday 1st	11.00am Family Service
Sunday 8th	11.00am Parish Communion
Sunday 15th	11.00am Family Communion for Mothering Sunday
Sunday 22nd	11.00am Parish Communion — Passiontide begins
Palm Sunday 29th	11.00am Team Communion — Meet in St Agatha's Church, Brightwell-cum-Sotwell

Full details at [www.wallingfordcofe.org.uk/calendar](http://www.wallingfordcofe.org.uk/calendar)

### **The Churchwardens write...**

"I was glad when they said unto me, let us go into the house of the Lord." These words from Psalm 122 capture perfectly the feeling shared across our village as the church doors opened once again.

After months of patiently waiting, lots of hard work by the builders and a thorough spring clean by volunteers, St Mary Magdalene's doors were reopened, complete with new toilet and servery, on 8th February in a special service of celebration.

The Rector Revd Sarah Nesbitt presided over the service, and our former Team Vicar Revd Kevin Beer, who was instrumental in getting the scheme off the ground, returned to preach, and to declare the facilities 'open'.

A church is never just a building — it is the heartbeat of a community, a place where joys are shared, burdens are lightened, and generations gather under one roof. Its reopening is a reminder of how deeply we value being together.

The congregation returns renewed with hope and energy. Please join us for services and the special occasions which we are now much more able to achieve.

Whether you come seeking peace, companionship, tradition, or simply a familiar place to pause, the church stands ready to greet you.

Let us enter with gladness, and let this new chapter be one of warmth, welcome, and shared celebration for all.

Blessings,

Linda Parker & Margaret Foster  
Churchwardens

## Parish council notes

Crowmarsh Parish Council met on Thursday 5th February 2026 at Crowmarsh Gifford Village Hall. Present were councillors John Griffin (chair), Andrew Johnson, Julian Park, Stephen Sherbourne, David Topliss and Zazie Carruthers, Parish Clerk Sue Rance, County Cllr Gavin McLauchlan, District Cllr Andrea Powell and 27 members of the public.

### Public representations

Two members of the public voiced residents' objections to the planning application for around 200 houses on land off Benson Lane. The points made included: The development is contrary to the local plan and neighbourhood plan; The development is not needed and would be over-development of the area; There would be an adverse impact on the Chilterns National Landscape; Medical facilities and other services are inadequate for an increase in population; There are existing sewage and drainage problems; The significant increase in traffic in Benson Lane would be harmful to safety, and OCC plans for a bus gate from the A4074 and a Park and Ride at the former council offices site would further increase traffic congestion; High-quality farming land should not be used for housing development. The parish council was asked to commission a traffic survey to show the current situation. District and county councillors gave advice on representing concerns to the planning authority.

Three North Stoke residents gave objections to a proposed development on farmland adjoining Cook Lane, including harm to the Chilterns National Landscape, conflict with local plan and neighbourhood plan policies, lack of local need, heritage harm, erosion of the countryside, surface run-off and flood risk, loss of biodiversity, increased traffic leading to safety and sustainability concerns.

### Planning

#### *Decisions by SODC*

P25/S3474/HH 151 The Street, Crowmarsh Gifford OX10 8EQ. New wall to front in brick and flint with pedestrian and vehicle gates (as amended to set back gate and section of wall). Planning Permission.

P25/S3777/LDL Howbery Park Manor, Benson Lane, Crowmarsh Gifford OX10 8BA. Creating a small hole in a former exterior wall of the manor house, now within a 1960/70s extension, for a 35mm diameter heating pipe to pass from the listed building into extension. Certificate of Lawful Use or Development.

### *Consultations*

P26/S0079/HH 23 Park View, Crowmarsh Gifford OX10 8BL. Proposed tiled, pitched roof over outbuilding in rear garden instead of the flat roof approved in application ref: P23/S3983/HH. Recommend approval.

P25/S4092/O Land east of Benson Lane, Crowmarsh Gifford. Outline application with all matters reserved except for access for up to 195 dwellings, a building for community use (use classes e(f) and f.2(b)), landscaping, open space, sustainable urban drainage scheme and associated works, with access from Benson Lane and McCulloch Meadows. (Cllr Sherbourne declared an interest). The Parish Council recommended refusal for reasons summarised as: Inappropriate development in the countryside outside the settlement boundary. Contrary to the Local Plan (Policy H4) and Crowmarsh Neighbourhood Plan (Policy CRP1). Crowmarsh Gifford is classified as a Larger Village expected to grow by 312 dwellings, but has 571 completions and commitments so the outstanding housing requirement is zero and there is no justification for further housing development here. Serious concerns about highway and pedestrian safety on Benson Lane, adding to unresolved problems created by the first development by Bloor. Inadequate road infrastructure for existing and proposed vehicle movements, exacerbated further by OCC plans for 2-way bus routing on this road and other expected developments. Loss of prime arable land and loss of rural character. Harm to the setting of the Chilterns National Landscape. Poor access and integration with the village. Pressure on inadequate local sewerage system and already overstretched infrastructure.

P25/S2718/LB 55 The Street, Crowmarsh Gifford OX10 8EA (amendment). Additions and alterations, double-storey and single-storey rear additions. Amended plans reduce

the height and extent of the rear extension. SODC should consider neighbours' views on whether reductions have overcome objections to the original proposals.

### **Other matters**

The Newnham Manor legal agreement is due to be completed very soon and the applicants are keen to implement the scheme.

Cllr Griffin and Dr Nick Robins had attended a Neighbourhood Planning workshop.

### **Finance**

The council agreed a grant of £300 to the Thames Run Committee towards the cost of the 2026 event. Crowmarsh News had requested funding towards the cost of publishing the monthly magazine and a grant of £1800 was agreed. A grant of £350 was agreed towards the cost of printing The Window magazine for North Stoke residents.

Payments agreed included £2880 for tree works and £109.50 for boiler servicing. A maintenance contract was agreed for the sewage pumping system at the pavilion.

It was agreed to keep allotment charges at the current level of £20 for a full-size plot. There are six residents on the waiting list.

### **County council report**

Cllr McLauchlan's report had been circulated and he answered questions. There is a consultation on reducing the speed limit in Benson Lane to 30mph from the end of the 20mph limit currently in force in the village up to the junction with the A4074.

Flags on lamp posts at roundabouts are being taken down but persistently replaced.

Potholes are particularly bad and the weather has aggravated the problem, but OCC does not have the funding to mend every pothole. There was agreement that the quality of repairs has often been poor.

### **District Council report**

The District Councillors' report had been circulated. Government consultation is running for seven weeks on the three unitary authority proposals: [www.gov.uk/government/consultations/local-government-reorganisation-in-oxfordshire](http://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/local-government-reorganisation-in-oxfordshire).

Government inspectors were meeting with council officers to discuss the way forward for the Joint Local Plan.

SODC has submitted a response to the public consultation on the Thames Water reservoir near Abingdon.

### **Strategic priorities**

A quote has been received from Drayton Construction for Watery Lane surface improvements. Detailed quotes are awaited for new bus shelters and village signage.

### **Environment and recreation**

Discussions are taking place with the football club about improving the football pitches, which are very muddy and sometimes not playable. Felix Ogdon, a fitness coach, was welcomed as a new member of the committee. Three quotes had been received for new surfacing under the Extron play equipment and the Fantallica seesaw. It was agreed that the quote from Abacus offered the best value.

### **Traffic and transport**

Cllr McLauchlan is pressing county council officers on highway issues of concern, including Benson Lane, North Stoke speed indicators, and B4009 speed limit reduction. It was agreed to renew the contract for the Autospeed Watch camera and to relocate it to Benson Lane.

### **Other matters**

Cllr Best is investigating provision of gov.uk email addresses, which the council is required to adopt in advance of the audit.

A Crowmarsh School pupil had written on behalf of the whole school to thank the Parish Council for funding the purchase of new laptops.

### **Next meeting**

The next meeting will be on Thursday 5th March 2026 at Crowmarsh Gifford Village Hall, starting at 7.30pm. Members of the public are very welcome to attend

Parish Clerk: Mrs Sue Rance, 2 Home Farm, Crowmarsh Gifford, OX10 8EL email: [crowmarshparishclerk@gmail.com](mailto:crowmarshparishclerk@gmail.com)

Chairman: John Griffin, 29 Thames Mead email: [johngriffin@phonecoop.coop](mailto:johngriffin@phonecoop.coop)

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# What's on at Wallingford Library?

## 'Have your say' police drop in

We will have some PCSOs from Thames Valley Police here on Friday 24th April at 4.30pm for an informal drop-in. If you want to raise issues of concern or ask questions about neighbourhood policing, come along.

## After work book group

What do you do on a Thursday evening after work? Why not come along to our adult book group? It is free of charge, refreshments are provided and there's no need to buy any books. Our next meeting is on 12th March at 5.45pm-6.45pm, come along and see what we're reading, all ages, all welcome.

## Warm space

Spring is in the air but it is still chilly outside. Did you know that the library is a designated Warm Space? You can come in and enjoy our cosy library and a free cup of tea or coffee at any time Monday-Friday. Or if you fancy some company, come along to our Meet Up Monday free coffee morning on the first Monday of each month at 10.30am.

## Family history sessions return

Why not get started on that family tree you've always meant to do? Kevin, Oxfordshire Family History Society's volunteer, will be back at the library for one-to-one sessions. From 26th February, he'll be with us on the 4th Thursday of each month. Book your free session between 1pm and 6pm by calling us on 01865 815193 or emailing [wallingford.library@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:wallingford.library@oxfordshire.gov.uk).

## Diabetes collection

We have a display of books to help manage diabetes and other health conditions. If you don't see anything that fits the bill, we can get you books on health topics free of charge from any other Oxfordshire library.

## Tote bags

If you've not yet seen our stylish library tote bags, they are in durable, washable cotton and cost just £3! They make excellent stash sacks for an Easter Bunny's eggs.

## Printing & photocopying

We offer colour and black-and-white printing and photocopying for just 35p per side of A4. You just need to log into our PCs with your name, so you don't even need to be a library member to print.

## What we're reading...

*The Names by Florence Knapp*

What's in a name? Cora has to choose a name for her baby son. Should she go with her husband's choice, her own choice or that of her 8-year-old daughter? And what will the outcomes be? What follows is a brilliant debut novel with a real 'Sliding Doors' feel to it as we watch that son grow up.

*Craft Land, a journey through Britain's lost arts and vanishing trades by James Fox*

This beautiful book is a gift. With marbled end papers and gorgeous lino print illustrations to complement the delightful prose. Fox journeys around Britain in search of vanishing trades and the few craftspeople who struggle to keep traditional skills alive. You will feel you are stepping back in time but be assured, you are not, this is very much the 21st century.

And our children's book group recommend ...

*A wrinkle in time by Madeleine L'Engle*

*The Mythmakers by Tamzin Merchant*

*The Detective Dog by Julia Donaldson*

Contact us on 01865 815193 or email us at [wallingford.library@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:wallingford.library@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

Follow us on Facebook or visit our webpage: [www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/oxfordshire-libraries](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/oxfordshire-libraries)

## Wallingford U3A

Our February meeting started with the AGM and afterwards there was a talk by Stephen Capel-Davies entitled 'Ways over Water'.

On Wednesday 4th March from 2pm to 3.30pm, we meet in Crowmarsh Village Hall with a talk by Simon Evers about Turner and Constable. Tea and biscuits will be served. Visitors are very welcome at £3 per person.

On 1st April our meeting will be a talk by Brian Greenan on 'Who killed Elvis?' Please visit our website for additional details: <https://wallingford.u3asite.uk/events/>

## Benson Choral Society

Experience with Benson Choral Society one of the most powerful and moving choral works ever written: Johannes Brahms's *Ein Deutsches Requiem*. We will be performing the original version for piano duet, created by Brahms himself, at Dorchester Abbey on Saturday 14th March at 7.30pm.

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## Wallingford Museum news

Wallingford Museum opens from Tuesday March 3rd. See website for opening times: [www.wallingfordmuseum.org.uk](http://www.wallingfordmuseum.org.uk).

We look forward to another fabulous event with the return of the Saxons to the museum!

'Meet the Anglo-Saxons!' is a drop-in event for all the family, running from 11am to 4pm on Saturday 11th April. Normal admission fee: adults £6, accompanied children free. Come and discover more about the day-to-day lives of the people who lived and worked within the Anglo-Saxon burgh of Wallingford. Weaving to writing, wheels to warfare, how would you manage without electricity, plastic materials or modern transport?

The museum offers three intriguing and different exhibitions this year, something for all the family.

**Through Wallingford's Workhouse Door: Explore, Experience, Endure** offers families, especially children learning about the Victorians, the chance to discover history on their doorstep. Visitors are invited to cross the threshold of the Workhouse and discover what life was really like for the men, women and children who passed through its doors — not by choice, but through necessity.

### Agatha Christie's Wallingford

Wallingford Museum will mark the 50th anniversary year of Dame Agatha Christie's death at Winterbrook House with a special exhibition highlighting aspects of life in Wallingford during her later life.

## Digging for Wallingford — Archaeology at Work

Discover more about the work of the Wallingford Historical and Archaeological Society (TWHAS) archaeologists.

### The Wallingford Historical and Archaeological Society (TWHAS)

TWHAS will meet on Wednesday 11th March for a talk by Andy Hood entitled, "On-going excavations at Winterbrook and New Barn Farm by Foundations Archaeology, with an update on the Cholsey Roman villa report". Please visit [www.twahas.org.uk/meetings-programme.html](http://www.twahas.org.uk/meetings-programme.html) for the 2026 talks programme.

Sue Wright, Wallingford Museum

## Wallingford Photographic Club

The Photographic Club ([wallingfordphoto.club](http://wallingfordphoto.club)) continues its winter programme of talks, presentations, competitions and practical sessions. We meet on Thursdays from 7.30pm at Crowmarsh Pavilion, with a few sessions online during the season to make the most of inviting speakers from far away.

On 5th March we have a themed assignment where we present our images on the theme of 'street photography'.

Then on 12th we have our annual portfolio competition (four images on a theme that present well together) along with a travel photography competition.

On Wednesday 18th we hold an inter-club competition called the Chiltern Challenge, then on Thursday 19th a presentation of images of life in Kolkata by world-renowned photographer Mark Seymour, runner-up at the World Food Photography Awards in 2025.

We will have a short break for Easter.

**To book the pavilion or hardcourt on the Recreation ground in Crowmarsh Gifford**

Phone Chris Strange on 07711 904252, or email [chrisstrange47@gmail.com](mailto:chrisstrange47@gmail.com)

## The Corn Exchange events

Tickets £10 for Adults and £5 for under 16s unless otherwise stated. Doors open at 2pm and 7pm and the bar will be open so there's plenty of time to collect drinks beforehand. Films with subtitles will be shown on Wednesday afternoons at 2:30pm. Please check the website ([www.cornexchange.org.uk](http://www.cornexchange.org.uk)) for any updates.

### Cinema

Sunday 1st, Monday 2nd March — *Is This Thing On?* (15)

Wednesday 4th, 2:30 and 7:30pm — *Othello*

Friday 6th, Saturday 7th — *Wuthering Heights*

Sunday 22nd - Tuesday 24 — *Hamnet* (12)

Wednesday 25th, 2:30 and 7:30pm — *Turner and Constable: Exhibition on Screen*

Thursday 26th, Friday 27th — *The Bride*

### Live screening

Tuesday 3rd March, 7:15pm, *Giselle* from the Royal Ballet

Thursday 5th, 7pm, National Theatre Live: *The Audience* (PG)

Tuesday 31st, 5:15pm, Wagner's *Siegfried* from the Royal Opera House

Tickets £18 (adult), £15 (seniors), £10 (under 18s) for all live screenings

### Live on stage

Tuesday 17th to Saturday 21st at 7:30pm, and Saturday matinee at 2:30pm

*The Unfriend* by Steven Moffat, directed by Ric Harley, performed by the Sinodun Players

Tickets £12 (Mar 17 & Mar 21 2:30pm), £15 (all other performances)

Not suitable for those under 14 years of age.

## Short Mat Bowls Club

Wallingford & Crowmarsh Short Mat Bowls Club is a very friendly, social club who meet up Monday evenings 7pm to 9.30pm and on Tuesday afternoons from 1.15pm to 3.45pm.

We are looking for new bowlers of any age and of any level including beginners. If you don't have any bowls we will provide them for

you but please note that you will need flat foot trainers when you are playing on the mats.

There is a membership charge of £5 per session, however the first 4 sessions are free for new bowlers.

Join us at one of our sessions at Crowmarsh Pavilion, Recreation Ground, Bellamy Way, Crowmarsh Gifford. If you have any questions please contact Kevin on 07891 813669 or email [kevinpickworth@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:kevinpickworth@yahoo.co.uk).

## Road closures

Oxfordshire County Council has issued a temporary traffic order to close Constitution Hill (Mongewell) between the A4074 and 5 Carmel Terrace from Monday 2nd March for approximately 3 weeks for installation of fibre optic cable by broadband provider Gigaclear.

A further road closure will affect Icknield Way between Oakley Wood and Forest Row from 21 April to 23 April inclusive.

## Entry opens for the 2026 Thames Run

Registration for the Wallingford Thames Run **5k and 10k races** is now open. Visit <https://www.wallingfordthamesrun.co.uk/> for more information or to sign up today for summer's hottest race, which returns on Sunday 7th June. Runners will be raring to go when the starting pistol sounds at 9am!

This much-loved race, now a firm fixture on the Oxfordshire running calendar, helps raise money for Crowmarsh Gifford Primary School and Style Acre, a Crowmarsh-based charity that supports local people with learning disabilities.

A day packed with fitness, fundraising and fun awaits runners, volunteers and supporters alike – as some of the county's best runners make their way along the uniquely scenic (and enticingly flat!) route. Runners start at the school, head through quiet country roads and paths in Crowmarsh, along the meadows and banks of the Thames' Path, into the heart of historic Wallingford and over the bridge back into Crowmarsh. Lucky 10k runners get to do

the whole course again. With a mix of terrain and a wide range of scenery to take in, there's joy at every turn, and the prospect of a personal best to boot!

It's an event with something for everyone, whether you're a veteran racer or a first-time runner. Anyone 11 or over on race day can take part in the 5k, with a lower age limit of 15 for the 10k. And for younger runners, a thrillingly messy Colour Dash will take place on the school field once the main event is done!

The Thames Run returned to the running calendar in 2024 and enjoyed its biggest year yet in 2025. Around 300 runners of all abilities crossed the finish line, raising a much needed £4,282 for the Crowmarsh Gifford Primary School PTA, plus £800 for Style Acre.

Aurelio, a Crowmarsh Gifford Primary School student in Year 6 said: "The Thames Run is a great event if you have recently started running as there's lots of people to cheer you on from the community. I can't wait to have a go at the 5k myself!"

Josie Brettell, Race Director, explained: "This year, we are hoping to welcome a bigger crowd of runners than ever before. Our team of volunteers is raring to go, ready to provide the best race day experience our runners have ever experienced. With so many people in the area getting into running, we're expecting some fast finish times this year!"

The Thames Run is proud to offer clear signage, well-stocked water stations, fresh fruit for finishers, and bags of enthusiastic support from safety-conscious marshals at every step of the way. There will be family-friendly activities on site before, during and after the race, so let the training begin – and see you on the start line!

## Consultation

The government's consultation on local council reorganisation is open from 5 February to 26 March — visit [consult.communities.gov.uk/local-government-reorganisation/oxfordshire](https://consult.communities.gov.uk/local-government-reorganisation/oxfordshire).

The preferred unitary structure is expected to fully replace our current councils in 2028.

Local elections in May 2027 will be for Councillors in the new Unitary Authority.

## Wallingford and District Art Club (WADAC)

Wallingford and District Art Club will welcome two visiting artists in March to our usual venue, Centre 70, Kinecroft, Wallingford. On Saturday 14th March from 10am to 4 pm, artist Melanie Cambridge returns to run a workshop in oils. With thoughts of warmer days ahead, we will work on a seascape with her encouragement and guidance. Cost is £50 for members and £65 for non-members.

Then on Tuesday 17th March from 7:30 pm to 9:30 pm, artist Catherine McVean will give a live demonstration on painting a still life with silver surfaces in oils. She will show how a reflective surface can provide a good contrast to softer subjects such as flowers and fruit. The demonstration is free to members and £10 (payable on the night) for visitors. To take part email [admin@wallingfordartclub.org.uk](mailto:admin@wallingfordartclub.org.uk).

## Wild Oxfordshire's gardening tips for March

While it may be the month of the 'Big Spring Clean', when it comes to our gardens, less is often more at this time of year: resist the urge to tidy and let nature run its course.

**Leave some areas undisturbed:** Dead leaves, log piles and dead flowers provide vital shelter and resources for hedgehogs, insects and small mammals, and are crucial habitats as wildlife becomes active in early spring.

**Feed the birds,** but make sure bird feeders are cleaned weekly to prevent the spread of disease. If you can't, grow native plants with berries and seeds, such as Elder, Hawthorn and fruit trees to provide natural bird feed. If you think you have spotted a diseased or injured bird in your garden, **do not** touch them or pick them up. Report any sick birds to Garden Wildlife Health. Dead wild birds should be reported to Defra online.

As slumbering hedgehogs wake, you can help them with meaty cat food and water (not milk) in shallow dishes. Avoid disturbing wild areas where a hedgehog may be hibernating. and create gaps under fences to encourage their safe movement in and out of your garden.

## Dig in for free! Residents can grab complimentary compost

Spring is coming – and so is your chance to give your garden a natural boost! South Oxfordshire and the Vale of White Horse District Councils are inviting residents to collect free, nutrient-rich compost at special giveaway events this March. It's the perfect way to recycle, reduce waste and grow something great!

**Saturday 7th March – 9am to 11am – Howbery Business Park, Benson Lane, OX10 8BA**

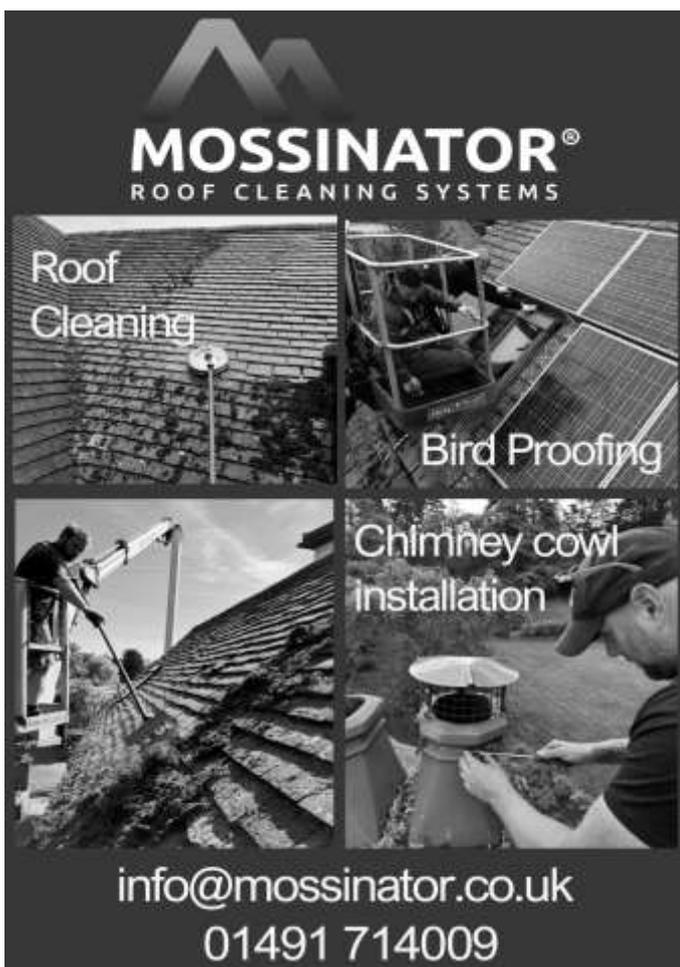
The councils' friendly Waste and Recycling Team will be on hand to answer your composting questions and share top tips for greener living.

- Bring your own bags and spade.
- Collect up to three bags of compost per household.
- Available while supplies last.

Helping residents access compostable material recovered from the waste process is part of the councils' Rethinking Waste – Waste Resources and Street Cleansing Strategy 2024, which focuses on the key themes of Reduce, Reuse, Recycle and Recover.

By turning food and garden waste into compost at home, it helps to reduce the amount of waste that needs to be collected.

Don't miss out – mark your calendar and join us on 7th March for a greener spring!



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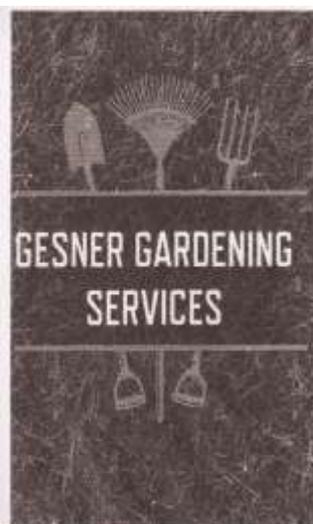
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## WHAT'S ON — MARCH 2026

### Regular events and meetings

Tuesdays	14.00-16.00	Short Mat Bowls	Crowmarsh Gifford Pavilion
Thursdays	19.30 for 20.00	Wallingford Photographic Club	Crowmarsh Pavilion
Every Friday	9.30-12.00	Wallingford Country Market	St Mary-le-More Church, Wallingford
Saturday mornings	10.00-12.30	Local Producers' Market	St Mary-le-More Church or Wallingford Market Place
Every Sunday	11.00 onwards	Parish Communion. Family service on the first Sunday of the month	St Mary Magdalene Church, Crowmarsh Gifford
Various days	Differing times	Didcot and Wallingford Ramblers	<a href="http://www.ramblers.org.uk/didcot-wallingford">www.ramblers.org.uk/didcot-wallingford</a>
Various days	Differing times	CTC Wallingford cycle rides	<a href="http://www.ctcwallingford.org.uk">www.ctcwallingford.org.uk</a>
Various days through the year	Differing times	Cholsey and Wallingford Heritage Railway	<a href="http://www.cholsey-wallingford-railway.com">www.cholsey-wallingford-railway.com</a>
Various days	Differing times	Music at Dorchester Abbey	<a href="http://www.dorchester-abbey.org.uk/whats-on/">www.dorchester-abbey.org.uk/whats-on/</a>

### March 2026

Wednesday 4th	14.00 onwards	U3A: Turner and Constable	Crowmarsh Village Hall
Thursday 5th	19.30 onwards	Crowmarsh Parish Council Meeting	Crowmarsh Village Hall
Wednesday 11th	19.45 onwards	TWHAS: On-going excavations at Winterbrook and New Barn Farm	St Mary-le-More Church, Wallingford
Saturday 14th	09.00 onwards	Crowmarsh Litter Pick (see p.4)	Bridge Villa yard, The Street
Saturday 14th	10.30-12.00	Crowmarsh Community Café	Crowmarsh Village Hall
Saturday 14th	19.30 onwards	Benson Choral Society concert— Brahms' German Requiem (p.11)	Dorchester Abbey
Sunday 22nd	19.00 onwards	Free screening of the feature film "Six Inches of Soil" (see p.4)	Benson Community Hall (Cala development), China Piece, Benson, OX10 6FY
Saturday 28th	18.45-21.45	Charity rock concert — <a href="http://www.wallingfordtowncouncil.gov.uk/council_events/charity-fund-raising-concert">www.wallingfordtowncouncil.gov.uk/council_events/charity-fund-raising-concert</a>	Dorchester Abbey
Saturday 28th	10.00- 15.00	Indoor Artisan Market	Wallingford Sports Park

### April 2026

Wednesday 1st	14.00 onwards	U3A: Who killed Elvis?	Crowmarsh Village Hall
Thursday 2nd	19.30 onwards	Crowmarsh Parish Council meeting	Crowmarsh Village Hall