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# Chris Curtis MP

## Your Member of Parliament for Milton Keynes North

## IMPORTANT UPDATE ON THE WINTER FUEL ALLOWANCE

Many residents have written to me regarding the Winter Fuel Payment and their concerns about the changes that are being proposed.

I am also frustrated that we are having to make these changes, and it certainly isn't a decision that we wanted or expected to make so soon after taking office.

However, given the dire state of the public finances inherited from the previous Government, it has been necessary for the new Government to make the difficult decision to provide the Winter Fuel Allowance only to those pensioners who claim Pension Credit.

Payments will be targeted specifically at households eligible and in receipt of Pension Credit.

Pension Credit is a vital resource for eligible pensioners, introduced by the last Labour Government, ensuring that pensioners' weekly income reaches a minimum guaranteed level, and which automatically unlocks a host of other benefits including a free TV licence, the Warm Home discount and even support for housing costs.

However, it is concerning to me that many people in Milton Keynes we know are entitled to claim Pension Credit, do not claim it.

I encourage you, your friends, family and neighbours to check if you are eligible so that we can ensure that everyone who is entitled to extra support receives it.

## HOW TO FIND OUT IF YOU ARE ELIGIBLE FOR PENSION CREDIT:

You can learn about the eligibility criteria, income, savings, disability and other factors that affect your claim by visiting the following link: **www.gov.uk/pension-credit/eligibility** or by calling the Pension Credit claim line at: **0800 99 1234.**

If you have any queries please do reach out to me and my team at: **chris.curtis.mp@parliament.uk.**




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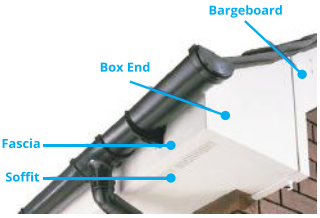
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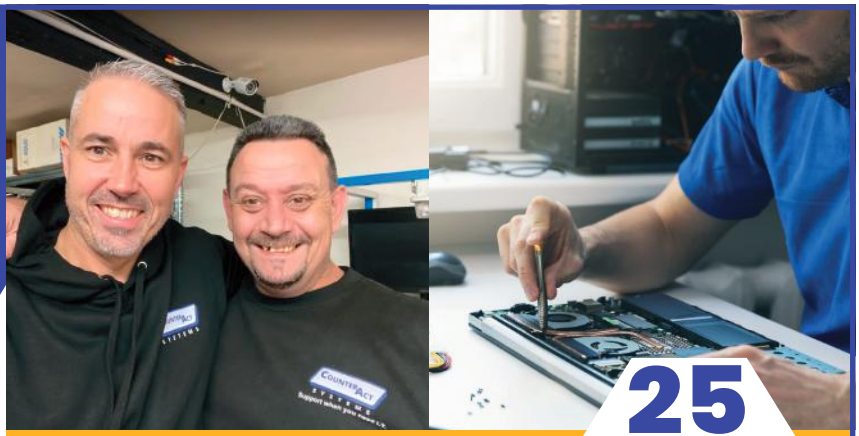
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# Phonebox
MAGAZINE



As I was putting the finishing touches to this issue of Phonebox Magazine, I found myself feeling peckish, then hungry, until finally I couldn't get food out of my mind.

I was starving by the time I got home! And why? Well, flick through the sparkling pages in this month's edition and you'll see it's jam-packed full of food-related stories, varied, interesting news and features which will certainly make your tummy rumble, your mouth water and your taste buds tingle too.

I mean, there's just so much on the menu – sorry, I mean contents page – this month. For starters, we make several mentions of BOFF, the Big Olney Food Festival, which returns to the Market Place on 7th, 8th and 9th September for another weekend of fun, food, drink and comedy.

Organisers are still looking for volunteers, by the way – put your hand up to help out and you'll be rewarded with a free food or drink voucher!

We also cover the opening of the new Aldi superstore in our 'News' section (p 6). The popular German food and grocery warehouse looks good as you pass it on the outskirts of town and I'm sure it will bring another layer of choice for local shoppers.

We also outline jobs to do this month in the garden (p 42), including picking and harvesting some of the delicious and nutritional home-grown fruit and vegetables that you might have planted at the start of the year. That really is fresh, high-value food to put on your family's table.

And with this month's 'Club of the Month' featuring tea and biscuits (p 48), you can see why I was dreaming of pies, chips, curries, veggies and all manner of food as I signed off the magazine for printing. Enjoy the issue, everyone, and I hope it leaves you feeling like Charles Dickens' character Oliver Twist: 'Please, sir, I want some more.'

**Ron Hall, Editor**









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# New Aldi store opens in Olney with perishable charity food call

The new store was officially opened by Team GB gold medalist Hollie Pearne-Webb, who cut the ribbon during the opening morning. She was joined by Kevin the Carrot to give away Team GB-themed goodie bags celebrating the Paris 2024 Olympic games.

Aldi's Olney store, run by manager Matt Callis and his team of 35 colleagues from the local community, will offer fresh, British meat products, Aldi's award-winning 'Specially Selected' range, exclusive beers, wines and spirits, and a 'Food to Go' section at the front of the store.

Their well-known 'Specialbuys' will also be available in the middle aisle every Thursday and Sunday, offering a wide range of products, from electrical items to garden tools.

The new store, which opened last month, is part of Aldi's investment in local communities across the UK and will offer customers access to its low-price products.

The Aldi store is calling on local charities and food banks in Olney Park to register with Neighbourly, a community engagement platform that links businesses to charitable organisations in the local community.

Charities that register will be able to collect surplus food and perishable products, such as fruit, vegetables and baked goods, seven days a week. Any charities in the area that would like to partner up with the new Aldi store should email aldi@neighbourly.com.

The new store is located in Olney Park, MK46 4HH, pictured below right, with manager Matt Callis and some of his team of 35 pictured below left. The store will be open Monday to Saturday from 8am to 10pm and Sunday 10am to 4pm.






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Johanna Taylor



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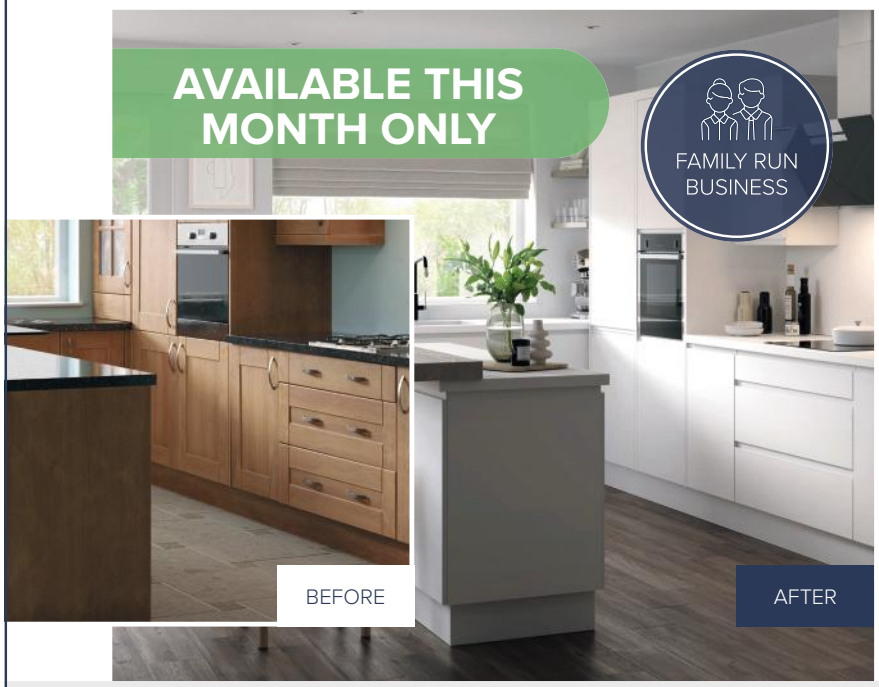
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# Olney Camera Club:

## Can't See the Wood for the Trees







In a recent meeting Simon Turnbull from Hertfordshire gave us an interesting, illustrated talk on taking pictures in the woods. Forests can be a chaotic, overwhelming environment for the budding photographer but help is at hand.

Simon now lives only a stone's throw from Ashridge Forest, so he is well placed for woodland photography. He says he finds a great sense of peace and tranquillity in the woods, and if he keeps this in mind just enjoying the nature and local environment, then the photographic opportunities will likely present themselves. When something catches your eye, then you can home in on the details. Why did it catch your eye? What makes it special? How can you eliminate distractions in the field of view? And so, after some time considering the subject and its surroundings, he is more likely to produce a better image.

He will often go to the forest on misty days as mist is very useful in the woods; not only for a different mood, but it also conceals excess background bramble or bracken chaos and other distractions. Another trick is to exploit fallen snow to 'hide' the ground and simplify the picture. See this illustrated in the '3 trees' image here, which was taken on a golf course – Simon does not play, but knows they contain well-manicured trees. There is a long line of trees here, but Simon has cropped down to just 3 – a more effective composition.

Both mist and snow are notoriously difficult to forecast reliably, and some might think Simon is spoilt to have a forest nearby that he can just walk out to when the conditions are right.

A lonely tree can tell a story. On a nice day the conditions reduce the effectiveness, but with rain or mist it allows the subject to stand out. Keep in mind that you still have work to do to further emphasise the subject verses the surrounding landscape.

Simon also reveals that he uses a long lens more often than a wide-angle lens to help focus in on the detail and remove chaotic surroundings in the image.

We thank Simon for his most interesting talk and the use of his images in this article.

**Next Meeting: -**

**Wednesday 25th September: Print Competition, round 3 of 4. Starts 8pm at Olney Centre.**

**Wednesday 30th October: Practice Session. Starts 8pm at the Swan Inn & Bistro.**

**See our 'gallery' and check further meeting details on our website at www.olneycameraclub.co.uk**

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# Embracing A Fresh Financial Start: September Is A Time For Renewal

As summer draws to a close, we often find ourselves reflecting on the fun and relaxation of the past few months. The long days, the holidays, and the slower pace give us a much-needed break from the daily grind. But as the leaves start to change and the children head back to school, September offers us a unique opportunity: a chance to rethink, refresh, and restart.

For many, the idea of a fresh start is invigorating. As a financial adviser, I find September to be a particularly great time to reassess our finances, both personal and business. The summer holidays are behind us, and the Christmas season is yet to begin. It's the perfect moment to pause, reflect, and make plans for the rest of the year.

## Personal Finances: Time to Focus & Get Back on Track

Did you find yourself splurging a bit more than you intended over the summer? Perhaps those impromptu day trips, barbecues, and meals out added up faster than expected. Now is the perfect time to review your budget and see where you stand.

Maybe ask yourself:

**Where did I overspend this summer?** Identify the areas where your spending went off track. Was it eating out, entertainment, or travel? Understanding this can help you make adjustments moving forward.

**What are my financial goals for the rest of the year?** Maybe you want to save for the holidays, pay down some accrued debt, or build up replenish an emergency fund. Setting clear, achievable goals will give you direction and motivation to achieve these goals, even if small .

**How can I cut back and save more?** Look for small changes that can have a big impact. Can you cook more meals at home, cancel unused subscriptions, or find free or low-cost activities for your family for the remainder of the year?

## Business Finances: Preparing for the Year-End Push

For business owners, September is a crucial time to assess the financial health of your company and prepare for the final quarter of the year. For many businesses the slower summer months often mean reduced revenue, but they also provide a chance to be strategic for the busy months ahead.

Consider these questions:

**How did my business perform over the summer?** Review your sales, expenses, and overall performance. What went well, and where can you improve?

**What are my business goals for the rest of the year?** Whether it's increasing sales, prepping to launch/launching a new product, or improving customer service – setting specific goals will help you stay focused and measure your success.

**Is my budget aligned with my goals?** Ensure that your spending priorities align with your objectives. This is true both inside and outside of your business. Are there areas where you can cut costs or invest more wisely?

**Do I need to adjust my marketing strategy?** With the Christmas season approaching, is now the time to ramp up your marketing efforts. Are your promotions planned? Is your stock ready? Are you leveraging social media and other channels effectively?

## Taking Action: Make September Your Month of Renewal

The beauty of September lies in its promise of renewal. It's a month that encourages us to shake off the remnants of summer and gear up for a productive and fulfi lling end to the year.

Here's how you can take action:

**Set Clear Goals:** Defi ne what you want to achieve by year's end. Write down your goals and break them into manageable steps.

**Create a Plan:** Outline the actions you need to take to reach your goals. Whether it's a new budget, a marketing plan, or a savings strategy,having a plan will keep you on track.

**Seek Advice:** Don't hesitate to get in touch for help. As a financial adviser, we are here to offer guidance and support. Whether you need help with budgeting, investing, or business strategy, professional advice can make a big diff erence.

**Stay Motivated:** Keep your goals in sight and celebrate your progress. Even small victories can boost your confidence and keep you moving forward.

Whether you're looking to improve your personal fi nancial situation or strengthen your business, now is the time to act.

Happy planning!

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# Readers' Letters

## Let's speed up some changes

Dear Sir

As welcome as they should be, once again a police speed check was carried out at lunchtime in Sherington High Street today - the least appropriate time when through traffic is at its quietest. My fear is that few or no speeding vehicles will be recorded and the erroneous conclusion will be drawn that there is not a problem here and that it is no longer necessary to monitor the traffic.

From my 20 year experience living on the High Street it is between 7 and 9am and 4.30 and 7pm that the most flagrant breaches of the 30mph speed limit take place. This is the time when school children are walking to school or to catch a school bus.

I regularly see vehicles travelling at speeds I would conservatively estimate at over 50mph, sometime much faster. In surveys conducted in the past it has been well documented that cars have been travelling through Sherington in excess of 70mph.




Surely, if the Thames Valley Constabulary is not to waste its stretched resources, it would be at least sensible to monitor the speed of the traffic through the village when speeding traffic is at its worst?

Whilst police presence may deter drivers on the day, speed checks are only of limited value. What is needed is a physical change to the carriageway (speed bumps or a chicane) to make it impossible to exceed the speed limit.

**Trevor Yorke**
**Sherington**

## Thanks to Tanya

Dear Sir

I moved to Olney in June last year, just two weeks after having my first baby. If you've had children, you will know what a momentous and challenging period this is for any new parent. Shortly after settling in, I was lucky enough to be introduced to Tanya James who runs Little Therapy Space in Olney.

## Well done Ol' Boys

Dear Sir

The Olney Trough, an old Olney artifice, was damaged recently, but now all is ok as it has been repaired by Graham Orin of Olney Ol' Boys and C T Wilson who kindly donated the sand and cement. Well done. ***By email***



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The majority of her services are aimed at mothers and/or women but Tanya's work goes far beyond the paid services she lists on her website, and this is really the reason for this email.

For many years, although I'm not sure how many, Tanya has supported countless families in Olney and the surrounding areas. She tirelessly goes out of her way to find new ways to help connect women and their families to various different support systems, build and protect communities and spread kindness and compassion when it is most needed.

It's a pretty well-known fact that modern society doesn't support the role of pregnant women and mothers like it used to. However, Tanya is one of the rare few who are pushing against this and changing things for the better.

I know there must be so many women and their families who would like to publicly thank Tanya for all the work she does and I hope this is a good platform to do so.

**Kathryn Giddy**
By email

## Can you help out? It's food for thought

Dear Sir

The Big Olney Food Festival (BOFF) is fast approaching and we are again seeking volunteers. We need even more help this year due to our extra comedy night on the Friday, so even if you can only volunteer for an hour over the weekend, it all helps.

This year, BOFF runs from 6th to 8th September.

The link below will take you directly to the form to complete to let us know when you are available:

www.bigolneyfoodfestival.co.uk/volunteers/

I look forward to seeing you again in September.

**Kind regards**
**Sheila Woodhead**




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# She's a De Vil in disguise

From pop idol to stage villain, Kym Marsh has proven her popularity with all ages. Now she's taking on the role of Cruella de Vil, and loving it. Phonebox's Tom Johnston found out more.

She made her name as one fifth of chart-toppers Hear'Say, pursued a stage career and was then on Coronation Street for 13 years – Kym Marsh is one of Britain's best-loved performers.

And now she's back on stage and tapping into her dark side, playing the dog-murdering fashionista Cruella de Vil in a new UK tour of 101 Dalmatians The Musical.

And it's a tough ask: she's playing a lead role in a big show and there are plenty of solo singing slots in the production.

"If you don't sing, you forget," she says. Last year she had a supporting role in the Take That musical Greatest Hits but there was nowhere near as much singing in that as there is 'Dalmatians'.

"I didn't have a lot to sing – there were no solos and nothing hugely taxing, whereas in this I've got my own songs, and there's lots to learn."

But Kym's used to hard work and punishing schedules, right from when she was a young girl starting out in show business while bringing up two young children as a single mum.

"I fell pregnant at a very young age and my parents were like: 'this is even more reason for you to continue and carry on pursuing your dream and make the life that you want, not just for you but for the children'. I was very much spurred on by them and I'm thankful for that."

So along came Popstars, the ITV series that took unknown performers and made them into a pop band. Kym calls that a 'unique and very strange time' but it certainly put her and her four fellow Hear'Say band members – Myleen Klass, Suzanne Shaw, Noel Sullivan and Danny Foster – in the spotlight.

After leaving Hear'Say Kym embarked on a solo singing career with only medium success but was offered a role in the West End production of Saturday Night Fever.

"Once I started to do that. I remembered my love of acting which I had as a teenager but had not pursued because I felt like I could make money singing in pubs and clubs," she says.

After a few small TV roles she was offered the part of Michelle Connor in Coronation Street and went on to become a household telly name. Kym was only contracted for four episodes of Corrie but made such an impression producers asked her to come back for more.

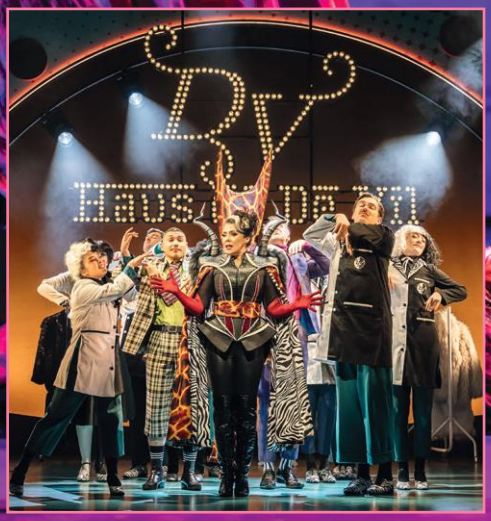
"I've been very fortunate as I've been given some amazing opportunities and had a lot of people believe in me, even if I didn't necessarily believe in myself," says Kym.

And so to 101 Dalmatians and Cruella. What can fans expect from her in this big stage production?

"I enjoy playing villainous roles because they're so far removed from me," she says. "So you really have to try to get in the head of that person. I think people are going to absolutely love her. The costumes are so brilliant, and when she walks on, she's just in command of everything – she's the most fun character ever."

**101 Dalmatians The Musical is at Milton Keynes Theatre from Tuesday 1st to Saturday 5th October.**





# WHAT'S COMING UP IN: SEPTEMBER

**Sun 1st**
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The Place Theatre, Bedford

**Sun 1st**
**Milkshake Live! On Holiday**
Bedford Corn Exchange

**Sun 1st**
**Shark in the Park!**
Stantonbury Theatre, Milton Keynes

**Mon 2nd-Sat 7th**
**Hairspray The Musical**
Milton Keynes Theatre

**Tue 3rd**
**Bootleg Blondie**
The Stables, Wavendon

**Fri 6th-Sat 7th**
**NOW That's What I Call A Musical**
Aylesbury Waterside Theatre

**Fri 6th**
**Whitney – Queen Of The Night**
Bedford Corn Exchange

**Fri 6th**
**Robbed Zombie**
Craufurd Arms, Wolverton

**Fri 6th**
**Joe Pasquale: The New Normal**
Castle Theatre, Wellingborough

**Fri 6th**
**Performers' Night @ The Song Loft**
York House Centre, Stony Stratford

**Sat 7th**
**Martin Turner ex-Wish-bone Ash**
Aylesbury Waterside Theatre

**Sat 7th**
**The Time Travelling Baron**
The Quarry Theatre, Bedford

**Sun 8th**
**An Evening With Jimmy Tarbuck**
Castle Theatre, Wellingborough

**Sun 8th**
**Sarah Millican: Late Bloomer**
Milton Keynes Theatre

**Wed 11th**
**G4 20th Anniversary Tour 2024**
The Stables, Wavendon

**Wed 11th**
**An Evening With Laurel & Hardy**
Castle Theatre, Wellingborough

**Thu 12th**
**Lebrock**
Bedford Esquires

**Fri 13th**
**The Merry Wives of Windsor**
The Place Theatre, Bedford

**Fri 13th**
**Kickin It Country**
Roadmender, Northampton

**Fri 13th**
**Shakatak**
The Stables, Wavendon

**Sat 14th**
**Keith James – The Music of Leonard Cohen**
The Place Theatre, Bedford

**Sat 14th**
**Nirvana UK**
Roadmender, Northampton

**Sat 14th**
**The 2Tones Ska Band**
Craufurd Arms, Wolverton

**Sat 14th**
**Creedence Clearwater Review**
Bedford Esquires

**Sun 15th**
**An Evening of Classic Reggae**
Aylesbury Waterside Theatre

**Sun 15th**
**Ben Elton: Authentic Stupidity**
Milton Keynes Theatre

**Tue 17th**
**Tim Peake: Astronauts**
Milton Keynes Theatre

**Tue 17th**
**Adam Kay – Undoctored**
Aylesbury Waterside Theatre

**Wed 18th**
**Queenz: Drag Me To The Disco!**
Castle Theatre, Wellingborough

**Thu 19th**
**Aled Jones: Full Circle**
The Stables, Wavendon

**Fri 20th**
**Buffalo Gals @ The Song Loft**
York House Centre, Stony Stratford

**Fri 20th**
**Magic Of The Bee Gees**
Bedford Corn Exchange

**Fri 20th**
**Dad's Army Radio Show**
The Quarry Theatre, Bedford

**Fri 20th**
**Kenny Thomas: Behind The Groove**
Roadmender, Northampton

**Sat 21st**
**Beatlemania!**
Stantonbury Theatre, Milton Keynes

**Sat 21st**
**DJ Yoda – 50 Years of Hip Hop**
Roadmender, Northampton

**Sun 22nd**
**Richard Jobson: In Conversation**
Bedford Esquires

**Mon 23rd**
**Dom Joly: The Conspiracy Tour**
The Stables, Wavendon

**Wed 25th**
**Edward Scissorhands: Matthew Bourne**
Castle Theatre, Wellingborough

**EDITOR'S PICK**

**Thu 26th**
**Hawxx**
Craufurd Arms, Wolverton

**Thu 26th**
**One Man Poe**
The Quarry Theatre, Bedford

**Thu 26th**
**Psychic Sally**
Bedford Corn Exchange

**Thu 26th**
**Merrill Osmond**
The Stables, Wavendon

**Fri 27th**
**The Kopycat Killers**
Roadmender, Northampton

**Fri 27th**
**The Very Best of Tommy Cooper**
Stantonbury Theatre, Milton Keynes

**Sat 28th**
**Fleetwood Bac**
Roadmender, Northampton

**Sat 28th**
**CODA – Tribute to Led Zeppelin**
Bedford Esquires

**Sat 28th**
**Golden Brass**
Stantonbury Theatre, Milton Keynes

**Sun 29th**
**Legend: The Music of Bob Marley**
Milton Keynes Theatre

**Sun 29th**
**Battlesnake**
Craufurd Arms, Wolverton

**Sun 29th**
**Thank You For The Music Tribute**
Aylesbury Waterside Theatre

**Sun 29th-Mon 30th**
**The Shires: The Two Of Us Tour**
The Stables, Wavendon

***Dates might change: check with venue***

# the stables

## September highlights

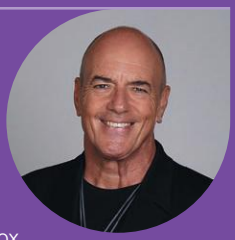
### Danny Beard: Straight Expectations



Friday 20 September, 8pm

Join Drag Race UK winner Danny Beard and their full live band for a five-star night of killer vocals, snappy comedy, put-downs and pick-me-ups. (16+)

### Peter Cox



Saturday 21 September, 8pm

As the singer, co-writer, and frontman of Go West, Peter Cox has enjoyed a career spanning four decades with a string of hits including *We Close Our Eyes, Call Me, Don't Look Down* and *Goodbye Girl*. Alongside this, he has maintained a successful solo career.

### Dom Joly: The Conspiracy Tour



Monday 23 September, 8pm

Comedian and writer Dom Joly presents a hilarious, fascinating and slightly anarchic guide to the wacky world of conspiracies. (14+)

### The Leo Green Experience



Saturday 28 September, 8pm

Enjoy your favourite songs from the last 30 years or so, reworked into jazzy, soulful, sax-drenched brilliance, that will have you on your feet and singing along.

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# CHICA-GO AND SEE IT!

It's nearly 30 years old and has played over 30,000 times in theatres around the world and now Chicago is back on tour in the UK. And guess where it's starting? Phonebox's Tom Johnston reveals all.

Set amidst the razzle-dazzle decadence of the 1920s, Chicago is the story of Roxie Hart, a housewife and nightclub dancer who murders her lover after he threatens to walk out on her.

Desperate to avoid conviction, she dupes the public, the media and her rival cellmate, Velma Kelly, by hiring Chicago's slickest criminal lawyer to transform her malicious crime into a barrage of sensational headlines, and her into a showbiz-style celebrity.

It's a musical based on a play originally written by former newspaper journalist Maurine Dallas Watkins. The characters are based loosely on actual criminals who she saw during her time as a court reporter.

Created by the musical theatre talents of John Kander, Fred Ebb and legendary choreographer Bob Fosse, Chicago's sexy, sassy score includes the show-stopping songs 'Razzle Dazzle', 'Cell Block Tango', and 'All That Jazz'.

Winner of six Tony Awards, two Olivier Awards and a Grammy, Chicago is the longest running American musical in Broadway and West End history.

Since it opened in New York in 1996, the show has played in 38 countries worldwide, and been performed in English, Dutch, German, Swedish, Spanish, Portuguese, Russian, Italian, French, Danish, Japanese and Korean.

Worldwide it has been seen by an estimated 34 million people, made more than £1.3 billion and has played over 33,500 performances.

The 1996 Broadway revival of Chicago was choreographed by Ann Reinking, who had starred in the show, in the style of Bob Fosse, directed by Walter Bobbie, and produced by Barry and Fran Weissler.

And now the legendary production is coming back again in the form of a UK tour. It all starts at Milton Keynes Theatre next month before heading across the UK well into 2025.

**Chicago is at Milton Keynes Theatre from Saturday 12th to Saturday 19th October.**




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COUNTRY & STABLE

# Emberton is Ofsted Good!




The staff, children and parents at Acorn Day Nursery in Emberton are celebrating after receiving Good in every category in a recent Ofsted inspection.

The report commented that 'the staff greet children with broad smiles and continue to create a positive and happy environment throughout the day. The impact of this on children's well-being and sense of belonging is seen very clearly through children's clear enjoyment for being at nursery.' The report also noted that 'staff consistently help children learn to manage their emotions and consider the needs of others.'

The Nursery's outdoor provision – especially the Nature Kindergarten – was also recognised as a strength of the curriculum, highlighting 'here staff are especially effective at teaching children about the natural world and how to manage risks and keep themselves safe.' The report also noted that 'babies and young toddlers receive a highly effective start to their learning journey. They thrive in the nurturing and inspiring learning environment that staff create. Staff are very alert to the changing needs of these young children.'

Francesca Flewers is new to her role as the Nursery Manager at Emberton and was described as a role model for staff and leading by example, 'consistently modelling high-quality teaching skills when working directly with the children'. Francesca said 'Our Ofsted Inspection was a wonderful experience. Our inspector made the whole team feel at ease from the first step she made into the nursery. The day ran how any other usually would, the children and staff were happy, calm and engaged throughout the day and it was an absolute pleasure to showcase what we do here at Emberton.'

Zoe Raven, CEO of Acorn Early Years said 'we are delighted with the report, particularly in the way it highlights the strengths of our Nature Kindergarten and the opportunities offered by the extensive outdoor space, which is so important for children. We're very proud of Francesca and her team.'

**The nursey offers full and part-time care for up to 36 places for babies, toddlers and pre-school children, and are open from 7.30am to 6.15pm, Monday to Friday, all year round. If you would like to enquire about a nursery space, or if you would like to apply for a position at any of the Acorn Day Nurseries, please get in touch on 01908 510309 or email HR@acornearlyyears.org.uk.**




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# Newport Pagnell Mayor's Update



In August I was privileged to be at Willen Road sports ground when Leah Williamson OBE officially opened the new "Leah Williamson Pitch", a 3G artificial pitch which can therefore be used more often than grass. It is a fabulous addition to our town's main outdoor sports ground and a lasting reminder of the success of the England Captain and her teammates.

The town council believe sport should be for all and are delighted to see women's and girls' sports grow at many clubs, including the significant expansion of women's and girls' football at Newport Pagnell Town Football Club over the last few years.

We're proud of the various sports facilities we have and encourage you to come and participate or support us.

A short distance from the sports ground, the development of Milton Keynes East is now taking shape, and the erection of the first warehouses are really changing the landscape. Until now there has been a sense of a 'green belt' between the edge of the new city at the motorway and our old town, but the reality is that it is disappearing. Schools and housing will soon be going up too, and we've still to experience the roadworks for months more before the A509 reopens fully and the much larger traffic-light controlled Marsh End roundabout is finished.

The highways were the subject of a public meeting I chaired for the City Council in July, and my town council colleagues and I continue to collate the comments of local residents and pass them to the Highways and Planning Authority (MKCC), where responsibility for all that sits.

MKCC are currently consulting on MK Futures 2050, the strategy for the next few decades, which includes following MK East with further development down "our side" of the motorway between junctions 14 and 13.

If you want to have a say on this proposal, please go to https://www.mkfutures2050.com

I also hope local residents' diaries include:

* **Firework display, Friday 3rd November**
* **Remembrance Sunday, 10th November**
* **Christmas Light switch on festival, Saturday 30th November**

**As always, Phonebox readers with any comments about Newport Pagnell, can contact me at pauldayMK@outlook.com and you can also follow my Mayoral activity on my Facebook page "Paul Day, Newport Pagnell" (@PaulkDayMK).**

*Councillor Paul Day*

# Newport Pagnell Councillor Corner

Newport Pagnell South FOCUS Team, Cllrs Jane & Andy Carr, Tony Oyakhire




**Harben House – Housing for the Homeless**

You may have recently read that the company that owns Harben House Hotel is intending to contract with MKCC to provide temporary accommodation, up to 90 days, for those experiencing homelessness.

The scheme will offer places to single people, a single parent and a child or couples, but will not be used for housing those seeking asylum, as the responsibility for caring for them remains with the Home Office, not the Local Housing Authority.

We are advised that council employees will be on-site throughout the project, undertaking housing assessments in order to ensure those seeking housing are eligible. If found to be, then they will be moved on to more permanent housing.

Whilst we welcome any initiative that reduces our homeless numbers, we have sought assurances at the Delegated Decision meeting held on 6th August 2024 that the previous Director, who was found to have committed offences as a landlord, is no longer involved and will not have any input into the running of this project.

Further, we have asked for assurances that if it came to light that they became involved, that the contract would be reconsidered.

We have been told that the Council believe that their due diligence is sufficient to assure them, and whilst these assurances are not legally binding, the confirmation is on record via the YouTube recording of the meeting. Should issues arise, we will hold the Council to account.

We have also had assurances that those housed at Harben House Hotel will remain with their current GP, and children will not be expected to move schools.

**Family Cinema Events**

There are to be two family film events at the Mead Centre, one in half-term on 29th October with a Halloween theme and the other around Christmas. Details will be available on the Mead Centre website, or call into the centre to ask.

Do come along and support these event, which is hoped will become a fixed date in the Town's diary.

## Dates for your diary

**Community Litter Pick – our next session will be on Saturday, 2nd November, meeting at 1pm at Hopton Grove Play Park to help litter pick in the Tickford end of the town. Please feel free to just come along.**

**Councillor Surgery - our next surgery dates will be 28th September 2024, and our final session for the year on 26th October 2024, from 10 – 11.30am at the Swan Revived Hotel, Newport Pagnell.**

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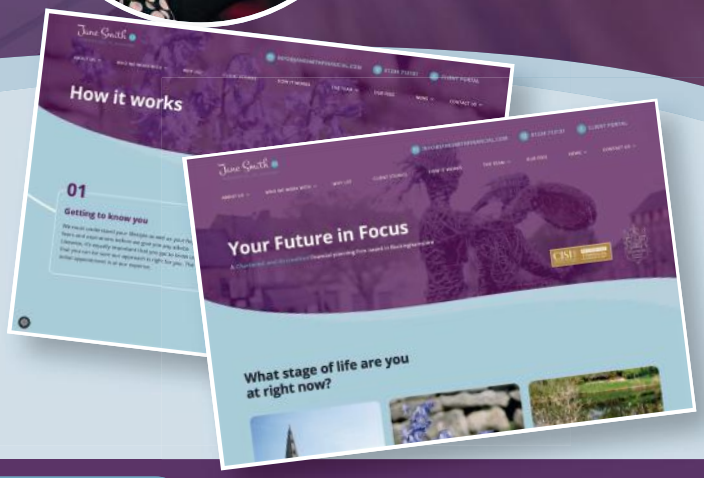
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# Olney Ward **Councillor Corner**



Cllr Debbie Whitworth

**CONTACT DEBBIE:**
Tel: 07494 681907 /
debbie.whitworth@milton-keynes.gov.uk

My ward surgeries are every Tuesday, 10am-12pm at the Olney Centre. No need to book, just pop along.

### Parking problems

Parking remains a big problem for a growing number of residents especially those who are elderly and infirm, anyone who is disabled and also parents with babies and young children who have prams and buggies. People are telling me that trying to cross a street safely without being forced into the road by a badly parked car to access a pavement is causing huge upset and frustration to many. I've reached out to MK City Council and relayed just how badly residents are suffering on a daily basis and the never-ending obstacles they have to endure simply to navigate their way around town. And I say 'enough is enough'.

I've requested an officer from the Highways department come out to meet with me, where I will personally take them around so they can witness first-hand the awful and upsetting experiences residents face trying to cross a road in safety (and it simply isn't safe for them).

A visit has been agreed, and I hope to be able to update you all next month.

### Little People signs

With school budgets stretched, I'm reaching out to individuals and businesses from across the Olney ward for your support in raising funds so that I can purchase some of the 'Little People' featured in last month's magazine and get them into our neighbouring village schools and in Olney.

The safety of our school children is paramount so any donations to this fund to help me secure these practical pieces of equipment will be hugely appreciated. They really do give out a compelling message to drivers to slow down, stop and think before parking irresponsibly.

If there are any businesses out there or any individuals who would kindly like to buy one of these signs for the schools, please see the attached fund raising link to make a donation:

www.gofundme.com (and search for 'little people')

A huge thank you to those who have kindly donated so far. I've ordered some, but please let's keep this fund growing so that all of our neighbouring village schools who will benefit can get one before the schools go back this month.

### Potholes in Spring Lane

After requesting an explanation as to why nothing has happened on planned works programmed for 1st July, I received the following from Highways:

Highways can confirm that the work that was due to take place in early July was delayed and has been moved into the new 'Elastomac' process in the next few months (the exact date is to be programmed). This change in programme was a result of the 'Elastomac' process being far more suitable and efficient for these types of holes.

As soon as I have a revised work date, I will, of course, update everyone.

### Lavendon potholes

Rectory Orchard: I have escalated the potholes situation at this location, asking for a timeframe for when work will commence. As soon as I receive a response, I will update the residents of Lavendon. The same goes for the remaining potholes at the bottom of Olney Road.

### MK City Plan 2050 drop in session, Olney

This was well attended at varying times during the event between 2-8pm. We had around 50 people turn up. The main issues raised were around transport (bus services/MK Connect, A509 through the town), infrastructure provision (health and education in particular), and solar/wind areas of search within the plan. All issues raised will be fed back to MKCC by the planning policy manager.

# Olney Ward **Councillor Corner**



Cllr Keith McLean



Cllr Peter Geary

**CONTACT US:**
Keith: 07983 456081
keith.mclean@milton-keynes.gov.uk

Peter: 07774 939404
peter.geary@milton-keynes.gov.uk

### Olney - 20mph Speed Limit

Well, after what seems to have been a very long time, the 20mph zones have been implemented. The areas covered by the Traffic Regulation Order are as previously reported, but the new Yardley Manor development has also been included. The speed humps on Yardley Road have also been installed and marked. We will ask for follow-up speed monitoring by Milton Keynes City Council (MKCC) in a few months, and perhaps the Community Speed Watch team could undertake some deployments?

### Verge Cutting and Litter Picking

Ironically, the day before this article was written MKCC wrote to Keith regarding these subjects. The communication included: The new contract is enshrined with 'contractor shall not cut litter'. Those of you who drive along some of the 'B' roads in the Ward will have noticed that the contractor does not seem to have followed this mantra, as there are multiple examples of litter where one item has become two or more items!

With regard to the 'A' roads, the proposal is to close them at night to enable litter picking to occur before verge cutting. As reported last month, a Traffic Regulation Order will be required to enact traffic management, but a month later, this will remain in the planning stage. We wonder if the plan is to start in 2025!

### Potholes and the State of the Roads

Summer is normally a time when we see our roads improve, with lots of potholes being filled and most of the resurfacing happening. While quite a bit of work has been happening this summer, it's not quite as much as we had expected. We have received a number of reports about significantly deep potholes (6-7 inches deep) not being repaired. Historically, Milton Keynes Council would fill all potholes that were over 2 inches deep, but at the end of 2023, they took highways inspections back from the contractor and did it themselves; one of the reasons was it would give them flexibility in what potholes were to be filled. This could have been a positive; theoretically more potholes could have been filled; however with the reports we have received, it seems this is being used as a reason not to fix some potholes. If you find potholes, please report them online through the council system. If you get a response that says they will not be repaired and they seem deeper than 2 inches, please get in touch with us so we can build a case to force the council to change its mind on these decisions. Roads in rural areas often suffer much more with poor road conditions, so it is important that we get this sorted out.

### New City Plan Consultation

A reminder that the draft New City Plan (NCP) is being consulted upon until 5pm, 9th October. The consultation can be found at www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/city-plan. We are aware that most parish councils in the Ward will be discussing the matter at their September meetings prior to making their submission. Why not pop along to your PC meeting and contribute to the PC's response?

We cannot stress enough how important it is to make your views known about any aspect of the draft Plan. Do not leave it to others; your views matter!

### Ward Councillors surgery

We will continue to hold our Ward councillors' surgery over the summer as we do every month on the first Friday of the month, at the Olney Centre from 7pm. Please do drop by if we can help with anything or contact us using the details provided above.

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# Newport Pagnell & Olney Lions Club

Plenty of Service Activity this Month!

**SERVICE ACTIVITIES**

**Maintenance of Avenue of Oaks**

A few of us, led by Friend and tree expert Martin, popped over to Newport Pagnell this month to give our trees a bit of TLC. This follows some recent vandalism to all of the trees.

First off, may we say a massive thank you to the local folks who stepped up and carried out some initial First Aid on the trees. It really restored our faith. Thank you so much. You did a great job of restoring the beauty and tranquillity of the scene.

We put some wire netting around the base of the trees – to stop small animals gnawing/scratching at them; re-seated and re-tied the support posts (with pads of hessian between the trees and the poles); trimmed some of the lower branches – (this should compensate for any damage to the roots when they were pulled up and encourage growth generally too). Unfortunately, one of the trees was a write-off – it had been hacked down at the base of the trunk. This one will be replaced in the Autumn. Thanks again, Newport Pagnell.

**Spectacle Recycling**

In addition to the other recycling projects, we also collected around 1,200 pairs of specs during this period for recycling / re-purposing.

Lions Clubs throughout the UK collect unwanted and damaged spectacles. These are then sent to Lions facilities, which process tens of thousands of recycled spectacles each year. All donations are examined by a team of Lions and other volunteers in our recycling workshop. Sorted pairs of glasses may then be sent for grading and distribution by Medico France in Le Havre.

**Message in a Bottle**

During this period, we delivered a batch of Message in a Bottle (MIAB) to the Senior Citizens Group based in the Olney Centre. Lions MIAB is a simple but effective way for people to keep their basic personal and medical details, which can be found in an emergency on a standard form and in a common location – the fridge.

MIAB helps emergency services personnel save valuable time in identifying an individual very quickly and knowing if they have any allergies or take special medication.

Paramedics, police, firefighters and social services support this Lions' life-saving initiative and know to look in the fridge when they see the Message in a Bottle stickers supplied. The initiative provides peace of mind that prompt and appropriate medical assistance can be provided, and next of kin/emergency contacts can be notified.

**A New Member Joins our Pride!**

This month we held our business meeting in Lion Tatiana's beautiful garden. We had beer, prosecco, and snacks. Thank you, Tatiana, for arranging such a relaxing meeting. I'm really delighted to report that at our meeting, we also inducted a new member into the Club – Lion Liz Cook. She is going to be a fantastic asset to the Club – with her enthusiasm, energy and great ideas! Great to have you on board, Liz.

**FUND RAISING –– LIONS TOAST EVENT**

John Ferris may have retired from the Club, but he is still actively supporting us by running another Lions Toast Event. Taking place in association with the Carlton House club, this event will be something very close to every Scotsman's Heart, and that is 'Money'. Relate that to Whisky, and suddenly? The next topic for Lions Toast will be held on Friday, 15th November, at the Carlton Club, and I hope you can put the date in your diary and come along to join us.

Over the past few years and with little sign of abating, collectable Whisky has increased massively in value, and that has, not unnaturally, seen a significant increase in 'opportunities' to make significant gains for an individual looking to invest. Unfortunately, this has seen an even bigger opportunity for the less-







than-honest members of society, a new pathway to their riches, and a risk for the rest of us to help them. Being aware of what is around us is a major ally if we are not to fall foul of some very clever people.

The press and media have been awash with 'opportunities', 'success stories', and 'massive profits from whisky sales', and whilst these do exist, the overall steep rise in the value of Whisky these days has brought out scammers galore who are simply after their 'clients' cash.

In an effort to put some realism into the mix, our next event will be looking at how some people have, indeed, made significant capital out of investing in Whisky, but we will also be looking at the signs to look for in less scrupulous approaches which come daily via the mass media and popular social media. Oh, and we will also be giving you an opportunity to try some of the whiskies we have already featured in previous tastings as we begin to "Drink the Remainders" of our not-insignificant stocks of remainders! To add some meat to the evening, John plans to take you back to Pub Food a' la Glasgow in the 1960s. It's a wee bit different from past events but one which we hope you enjoy as much for the social atmosphere as the content.

Please put the date in your diary and when tickets become available, we'll be back in touch.

PS: If you have a particular favourite whisky from the past, drop us a note, and we'll see if John has it. A dram will be reserved for you on a first-come, first-ordered basis (subject to availability).

**DONATIONS**

**Afternoon Tea at the Kitchener Centre**

A few of us attended an afternoon tea event at the Kitchener Centre in Olney. Along with other local organisations, we had supported a project to transform a tired and neglected overrun area into a beautiful new garden space at the Kitchener Centre Gardens. Thank you for inviting us along!

**Lions Youth Exchange Programme**

Lions District runs a Youth Exchange Programme supported by NP&O Lions (amongst other Clubs), whereby a number of young people from around Europe visit England and are hosted by English families. This year the visitors are coming, for a day, to meet representatives of local clubs.

There will be 17 youths plus six guides and two drivers. The programme for the day is that they will visit Bletchley Park and then go to York House Stony, Stratford, to pack food parcels for the Lions Food larder. Then, at approximately 5.30pm, they will go to the DG house for an evening social with a pizza and salad meal with drinks. We have been invited to attend this social to meet the youths and support the zone, and we look forward to it. Each club in our zone has been asked to make a modest donation to cover the cost of the food, drinks and other expenses.

**And Finally…**

Can you help us, please? We urgently need Friends and Members in order to keep up our good work. We usually raise around £15,000 each year, donate to international, national and (mainly) local causes – and do 100s of hours of community service. Reach out to us via our website for further details: https://npolneylions.chessck.co.uk/Contact%20us

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# The Diary: September

**Horticultural Show**
**Sun 1st Stoke Goldington Village Hall, 2pm.**
Annual horticultural exhibition. Entry £1.50 (child free). Tea/coffee and cake £2.50, children's squash and biscuit free. Grand auction of exhibits at 3.30pm.

**Open Mic Night**
**Sun 1st, Two Brewers, High Street, Olney, 7.30pm**
Anyone is welcome to go along and have a play of a sing. More details: 01234 711393, www.twobrewersolney.co.uk.

**Olney Bridge Club**
**Mon 2nd, 9th, 16th, 23rd, 30th, Olney Centre, 6.45pm**
Olney Bridge Club is a friendly club affiliated to the EBU which plays duplicate bridge every Monday evening apart from Bank Holidays. New members welcome. More details: John Claydon, 01234 713045.

**Folio Talk**
**Mon 2nd, Olney Centre Room 4, 7pm**
'The Science of Pearls' talk by Frances Carlaw. Jewellery for sale for charity on the night. Tickets (includes refreshments): £6 in advance: www.ticketsource.co.uk/folio, phone 0333 666 3366.

**Singing for the Brain**
**Mon 2nd and 16th, Heron's Lodge Guide Centre, Loughton Lodge, 10.30am-12.15pm and 2-3.45pm**
From Alzheimer's Society, the sessions use singing to bring people with dementia together in a friendly and stimulating activity. More details or to book a place: Alzheimer's Society, 01908 232612 or miltonkeynes@alzheimers.org.uk

**Love To Move**
**Mon 2nd, 9th, 16th, 23rd, 30th / Tue 3rd, 10th, 17th, 24th, Portfields Community Centre, Newport Pagnell, 11am-12.30pm / 11.30am-1pm**
Weekly seated movement class that is age and dementia friendly. There is physical, cognitive and emotional benefits in moving and having fun. Entry: £4 single, £7 couple, includes refreshments. More details: Sue, 07768 282010, chases403@gmail.com.

**Intervention Art Trail**
**Mon 2nd-Fri 27th, Three Hares Gallery, Olney, 11am-4.30pm**
Wayne Warren exhibition 'Olney Water' Intervention Art Trail in the museum and gardens. Usual admission applies (free children's art trail). More details: 01234 711516.

**Art in the Garden**
**Tue 3rd, Cowper & Newton Museum, 2-4pm**
Bring your own art project or start a new one in the peaceful surroundings of our lovely gardens. Chairs and tables provided in all-weather garden marquee. Refreshments will be available for donations. Entry: free with annual pass or £4 (child free).

**'Quiet'**
**Tue 3rd-Sat 28th, Three Hares Gallery, Olney, 11am-4.30pm**
Local artist Teresa Riley features her colourful, vibrant still life work in oils, pastels and other media in an exhibition called 'Quiet'. Tuesdays to Saturdays throughout September. Gallery entry is free. More details: www.cowperandnewtonmuseum.org.uk.

**Olney Archaeological Society**
**The Olney Centre and Zoom, 10am - noon**
Tue 3rd, 'Henry II and Eleanor of Aquitaine' – a talk by Matthew Lewis, Chair of the Richard III society. Remote lecturer. Tue 17th, 'Cursus Monuments of Buckinghamshire and the Great Ouse Valley' – a talk by Dr David Saunders. Visitors welcome at The Olney Centre: £4. Tea, coffee, biscuits included. More details: www.mkheritage.org.uk/oas.

**Newport Pagnell Probus Club**
**Tue 3rd, Swan Revived Hotel, 12.15pm**
Popular cub hosts a lunch and a talk. This month: Carolyn Green – Camphill Village Trust, 'Planning for the Future'. For more information or to visit, contact: John Brimley, 01908 605378, johnbrimley37@btinternet.com; Neil Beeton, 01908 914771, neilbeeton@sky.com.

**Refreshments in the Courtyard**
**Thu 5th, Cowper & Newton Museum, 10.30am-12pm**
Enjoy homemade cakes, tea, coffee, speciality tea or juice and a relaxing stroll around the beautiful 18th century, tranquil gardens. Entry: £6. Includes a free talk on the 'Story of the Amazing Grace Orchard' at 11.15am.

**Olney Senior Citizens Club**
**Fri 6th, 13th, 20th, 27th, Olney Centre, 2-4pm**
Popular social club's regular meetings include in September: Whist and Chat (6th), Bingo (13th), Quiz Afternoon (20th), Harvest (2.30pm at the URC) (27th).

**BOFF - The Big Olney Food Festival**
**Fri 6th-Sun 8th, Market Place, Olney**
Comedy Night welcomes in the town's annual Food and Music Festival.

**Hangout Hub**
**Fri 6th, Olney Centre, 5.30-7.30pm**
It's the launch of the new meeting place in Olney for the town's young people. Catch up with friends, do your homework and have a safe place to go for interests and sport, it's for anyone in years 7 to 10 at school. More details: 01234 711679.

**Memory Club**
**Fri 6th, Olney Church Hall, High Street South, 1.30-3pm**
The group meet again after the summer break on Friday, 6th September in, from 1.30pm - 3pm. All are welcome to meet for a chat over tea/coffee and biscuits, followed by a group activity and gentle exercise. We look forward to seeing you!

**Coffee Mornings**
**Sat 7th and Sat 21st, Baptist Church, Olney, 10-11.30am**
Pop in for coffee and a piece of cake in friendly surroundings. Donations in aid of Olney is Kind.

**Macmillan Coffee Morning**
**Sat 7th, St. Laud's Church, Sherington, 10am-12pm**
Enjoy refreshments and cake while meeting new and old friends in the relaxed atmosphere of the church as they raise funds in support of this charitable institution that is needed by so many.

**Turvey History Society**
**Sat 7th, 10.30am and 2.30pm**
The Society are celebrating this year's Heritage Open Day theme of Routes – Networks – Connections, exploring how places in the landscape today have shaped the village. Walks are free but numbers are limited, so booking is essential: turveyhistory@gmail.com by Friday 6th. More details: www.turveyhistory.org.uk.

**Model Railway Exhibition**
**Sat 7th, Carlton House Club, Olney, 10.30am-4.30pm**
Olney Model Railway Club are presenting this exhibition of model railways, showing what can be done when it comes to creating wonderful mini-scenes. Entry: £4, child free. Refreshments available. More details: www.olneymrc.org.uk.

**Hardy Plant Society**
**Sat 7th, Moulton Community Centre, Moulton, NN3 7AX, 2pm**
Enthusiastic about hardy plants and would like to know more? The

Northamptonshire branch is offering a free 'taster' session (normally £5) with a talk by Ingrid Millington, 'Plant Hunting Holidays'. Easy parking, raffle and refreshments. More details: hpsnorthantsmem@gmail.com.

**Lavendon Village Hall**
**22 High Street, Lavendon**
Hall at the heart of the village's community offers lots of fun events. For September these include: Live music (7th, time tbc) and Bingo (27th, 7pm). More details: lavendonvillagehall@gmail.com.

**Macmillan Coffee Morning**
**Sat 7th, St Laud's Church, Sherington, 10am-12pm**
Friendly drinks morning to support people living with cancer. More details: Pam Sims, 01908 610434.

**Denton & District Gardening Club**
**Mon 9th, Denton Village Hall, Denton, 7.30pm**
Val Bourne, an advocate for gardening with nature in mind, will talk about 'Southern Hemisphere Plants at Spring Cottage'. Visitors welcome: £5. There will be a raffle and home-made refreshments. More details: m.pateman@yahoo.co.uk, 01604 890875.

**Newport Pagnell WI**
**Tue 10th, Brooklands Centre, Newport Pagnell, 7pm**
Comedy and magic show. Visitors welcome: £5. Refreshments are served and they hold a raffle. More details: newportpagnellwi@gmail.com.

**Cameo** (Come and Meet Each Other)
**Wed 11th, Baptist Church, Market Place, Olney, 2 -4pm**
Dogs for Good is a charity that trains dogs to help people affected by disability and other conditions. John and Linda Grist, DfG volunteers, will explain their role as 'puppy socialisers' with current pup in training 'Caddie'. Join in for chat, table games and tea. All welcome. More details: Chris James, 07970 973226, Christine Chatt: 07786 658767.

**Heritage Open Day**
**Thu 12th, Cowper & Newton Museum, 11am-4pm**
Heritage Open Day theme 'Routes – Networks – Connections'. Find out about trading routes, stagecoach routes, how letters were stamped... there are so many interesting stories on our doorstep. Refreshments and garden trails too.

**Monthly quiz**
**Thu 12th, Two Brewers, High Street, Olney, 7.30pm**
More details: 01234 711393

**The Arts Society North Bucks**
**Thu 12th, Holiday Inn, London Road, Milton Keynes, 11am**
The world's Greatest Paintings: 200 years at the National Gallery, a talk about the gallery's foundation in 1824 and the collection as it stands today. Coffee from 10.15am, lecture a 11am. More details: www.theartssociety.org/events.

**Olney WordFest**
**Sat 14th, Olney Centre, 9am-10pm**
Olney's inaugural WordFest is a community project that's all about bringing people together through the love of reading. The festival offers opportunities to listen to and meet authors and take part in workshops including writing stories and making books. More details: www.olneywordfest.org.

**Newport Pagnell Cultural & Literary Festival**
**Sat 14th, Riverside Meadow, Newport Pagnell, 12-5pm**
Celebrate shared and diverse heritages through arts, dance, food, fashion, books and music. More details: info@npculturalevent.info.

**Inner Wheel Newport Pagnell**
**Tue 17th, Olney Centre, 2-4pm**
Speaker for September's meeting is Theresa from BranchoutMK, talking about their work growing and selling flowers and bouquets, supporting adults with learning difficulties. Visitors welcome: £5 includes refreshments. More details: Jackie, innerwheelnewportpagnell@gmail.com or www.innerwheel.co.uk and follow the link to District 26.

**MK Job Show**
**Fri 20th-Sat 21st, Middleton Hall, centre:MK, Milton Keynes, 11am-5pm**
Showcasing thousands of employment and training opportunities, from senior positions to mid-level roles, to entry level, graduate schemes, traineeships, and apprenticeships. There is something for everyone at this careers fair. Entry: free.

**Medium evening**
**Fri 20th, Two Brewers, High Street, Olney, 7.30pm**
Interesting night of entertainment. Bookings necessary as this gets fully booked early. More details: 01234 711393, www.twobrewersolney.co.uk.

**Folio Children's Craft Club**
**Sat 21st, Olney Library, 10.30-11.30am**
Suitable for children ages 3-9 years. Parents and carers must remain with their children throughout the session. Book in advance: olneyfoliofriends@gmail.com or in person at Olney Library 01234 711474. Sessions are free, donations are welcome.

**Olney Runners Squeaky Bone Relay Race**
**Sun 22nd, Turvey House, 10am**
Return of the popular local race, Squeaky Bone, in the beautiful Turvey House grounds. Teams of four compete on either the short (2.3 miles) or long (3.5 miles) course. All welcome. More details: www.squeakybone.co.uk.

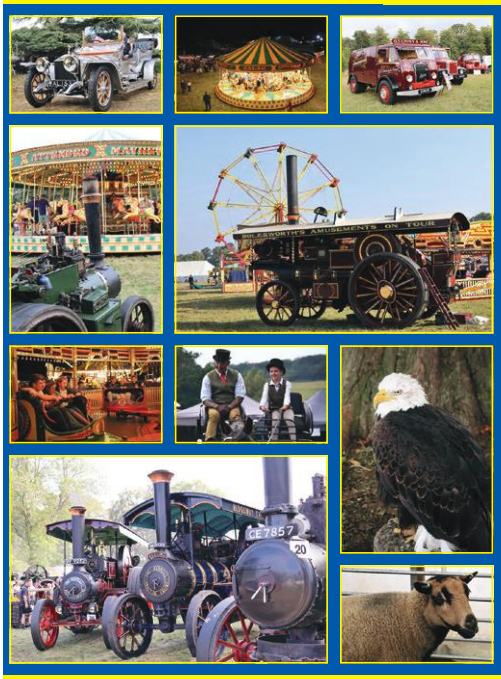
**Harvest Supper**
**Tue 24th, Sherington Village Hall, 7pm**
Traditional supper and harvest auction. Take your own preferred drinks and any contributions to the auction will be gratefully received. Tickets: £12, child £6. More details: Pam Sims, 01908 610434.

**Olney and District Gardening Club**
**Tue 24th, Olney Centre, 7.15pm**
Matthew Biggs, Gardeners Question Time panellist, will talk about 'Perfect plants for difficult places'. This is a different talk from that listed on this year's programme. Non-members welcome: £5. More details: Chris Richbell, 01234 24170.

**Cameo** (Come and Meet Each Other)
**Wed 25th, Baptist Church, Market Place, Olney, 2 -4pm**
Rachel from Help Ukraine BAMK, a charity based in Milton Keynes, will talk about the group's mission to help the people in Ukraine including planning to help in the lead up to Christmas. Join in for chat, table games and tea. All welcome. More details: Chris James, 07970 973226, Christine Chatt: 07786 658767.

**Macmillan Coffee Morning**
**Fri 27th, Carlton Club Olney, 11am-2pm**
Fundraising event at the town's club building in aid of this good cause.

**Folio StoryTime**
**Sat 28th, Olney Library, 11-11.30am**
Popular drop-in session of stories, songs and rhymes suitable for children ages 3-7 years but all welcome.

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# Progress and all that...




I've been reading about Huw Edwards, the news reader. I'm not going into the record of what he was found guilty of, as that has been well documented, but surely it is time for the BBC to be accountable for it's 'Talent'.

Yes, they call it talent. The man read the news for goodness' sake, and let's be honest, most of us at a push could do that. He was paid £479,999 per annum and despite his 'resignation' was awarded a £40,000 pay increase. The BBC are now asking Edwards to repay £200,000 of that, but I don't think he will. After all, people aren't suddenly going to say what a good bloke he is if he does, so I'm guessing he'll keep it. He'll need it as the likelihood of future employment is minimal.

But my argument isn't so much in individual cases, as what the BBC pays certain people. They say that it's the only way they can keep their 'Talent'. Well let them go I say. Put a news reader on a decent salary by all means, say £80,000 a year, and if they get offered more by a commercial organisation, let them go and get another one. Who the hell cares who reads the news?

I have a nostalgic fondness for the BBC. Many of the stage comedies I've been involved with originated from the BBC. Steptoe and Son, Tony Hancock. Porridge, Ripping Yarns and so on, but that was then, and interestingly the writers of those were not especially well paid, and they were, without doubt, talented.

I've no problem with people being paid huge amounts, that's market value, but not when the tax payer is footing the bill.

Maybe it is time to re-assess the BBC. Most people no longer watch TV live as it were. It's all on catch up and a compulsory tax of £169.50 a year seems archaic now. Just get us to pay a subscription and then if you want the BBC, you can, and if you don't then you don't.

Talking of keeping unnecessary things, I see there is a push to keep The Point in Milton Keynes. Or the 'What's The Point' as I call it. It is an eyesore which had its day for about 10 years after it was built.

I remember going there in the 80s and quite enjoying it, but it was a long time ago and when the parking was all free. Yep, one of the selling points of Milton Keynes was free parking. What happened there? Yes, we also went to the new McDonalds until I realised what ghastly food it was and I've only been to a McDonalds twice since then. One was when I had a meltdown in Essex when there was a misunderstanding about a McFlurry which I have written about (but if you don't know about it then just ask me as it was quite funny looking back on it). And the other time was when I visited Milan and went to the square where Mussolini had been strung up on what was then, in 1945, an Esso garage. The garage has now gone and in its place is, yes, you've guessed it, a McDonalds. I was disappointed that there was no mention of Mussolini. No 'Big Benito Burger Meal', or 'Mussolini McFlurry'. Not even a sign saying 'No Hanging Around the Forecourt'.

But the Esso garage, like the Point was not thought worth keeping. There are other historic monuments that have gone, but possibly shouldn't have. Spandau Prison springs to mind, built in 1876, a magnificent building but sullied by the fact that Rudolf Hess, the Nazi, was the only prisoner in there for many years until his death in 1987, when it was demolished. That's now a shopping centre which the more humorous locals call 'Hesco's'. Hess was a bit bonkers but did fly over to Scotland in 1941 to attempt to broker peace and was never released. He ended up at the Nuremberg trials and was incarcerated in Spandau, unlike most of them who were hanged. I still feel that Spandau would be an interesting place to visit but no, it went, due to the Germans being concerned that it may end up as some kind of nazi shrine. So, I can see where they're coming from, but getting rid of buildings doesn't erase history.

Hitler's bunker is now a car park and I definitely think they should have kept that for historic reasons, but on a plus note, I'm told there are no parking fees there, unlike Milton Keynes.

Of course, we have our own car park here at the new Aldi shop, which covers up Roman Mosaics. I still don't go with the argument that the best way to preserve Roman Mosaics is to cover them up never to be seen again by anyone. It's cobblers. Maybe one day, when the world is a saner place, there will be calls for car parks to be demolished in order to uncover items of historic significance.

But on the plus side Aldi should be open by the time you read this, so never again will you have to worry about where to get a wetsuit, a didgeridoo or a Teasmade, as the middle aisle will sort that out.

That's Progress Folks.....




*See you next month*

*Dave...*

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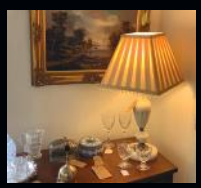


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# Chris Curtis MP for Milton Keynes North



I would like to start this month by saying a massive congratulations to all of our brilliant A Level and GCSE students who have worked so hard. It has been fantastic to read through all the amazing success stories of Ousedale students. But whatever your results, you should be so proud of your accomplishments in completing these exams and I wish you the best of luck with your next steps.

## Out and About

It has been exciting to get out across our city, towns and villages during the summer. I really enjoy meeting people as part of my work to represent all our communities.

A few weeks ago, I spent a day in Newport Pagnell with the Town Mayor Paul Day. We visited some places around the town, including Middleton Pool where I learnt to swim when I was a youngster! It was great to learn more about the Newport Pagnell Town Council and the issues currently impacting the town. I will continue to work with all our parish and town councils on how I can better support them in serving their communities.

I also had an interesting time visiting our very own Stonepit Vineyard at Rectory Farm on one of our rare sunny British days. The vineyard was holding its monthly open day, and I was able to taste the delicious locally-grown wine.

It has been a jam-packed summer with some brilliant events in the constituency, and it has been a pleasure to speak to so many wonderful residents. I look forward to meeting many more locals and organisations in the coming weeks and months. Please do get in touch with me if you are working on something in the constituency that you think I should hear more about.

## A Key Priority

One of the most important priorities for me as the MP for Milton Keynes North is tackling the NHS waiting list times. The NHS is going through the biggest crisis in its history and patients are being failed on a daily basis. I want to be honest about the challenges facing the county and our constituency, but also make clear that I am serious about tackling them.

As I'm sure you are aware, in Milton Keynes we have the longest NHS waiting list times in the country. I know the frustration of the 8am scramble for GP appointments and being stuck on waiting lists for months and sometimes years on end. This is not good enough and must change. We are a delivery-focused government and have made significant progress in the first few months to ensure we get our NHS back on its feet. This includes recruiting more than 1,000 newly qualified GPs across the country.

It is particularly important to me that we get spades in the ground for our new Women's and Children's hospital for our local area as soon as possible. I have had and continue to have many conversations with constituents about their experiences with waiting lists and access to healthcare.

I have also had meetings with Milton Keynes University Hospital about the key issues that hospital staff are facing. In the coming weeks, I will be meeting with the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, Wes Streeting, to discuss the importance of building this new hospital and the vital impact it will have on our communities.

I am also aware that there are some issues with local GP surgeries, particularly in Newport Pagnell and Olney. Over the last month, I have met with healthcare professionals from across the constituency, including Dr Herman, who is a managing partner at Cobbs Garden Surgery. I am looking at how I can best support their campaign to build a new GP surgery for Olney to improve local services.

## Please Get in Touch

As your local MP, I am always keen to hear your views and help you in any way I can. Please do not hesitate to get in touch with me and my team at: chris.curtis.mp@parliament.uk.





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# BACK TO SCHOOL – ARE YOU READY FOR CLASS?

The weather might still be fine and the evenings remain light for a few more weeks yet but, as far as schools are concerned, summer's over.

August is now turning into September, which means it's almost time to get back to class.
It's an exciting time for many: some pupils will be moving up a year, others will be starting at a whole new school. But whatever the situation a new academic term brings hope, ambition and opportunity.
So it's important to make sure you are prepared for the new challenges ahead and are ready to tackle this important first term. Preparation is all-important and it's never too early to start thinking about what you're going to need for that first day back in class.
Have you got all the right clothing? Do you have a new lunchbox? A drinks bottle? Have you stocked up your pencil case with all the pens, pencils and equipment you need for the new academic year? Do you know what time school starts on day one? Does your school have all your emergency contact numbers?

Here Phonebox Magazine has listed some of the important things to do and think about as the big first day back at school looms.

## THINGS TO CONSIDER:

- Put together a morning checklist of clothing, equipment, musical instruments, sportswear etc that you will need on each day of the week
- Sync your school calendar between pupils (if they have a mobile phone) and parents so everyone knows what's happening each day
- Create a quiet area to do your homework in peace each night. Trying to work in a noisy kitchen or a lounge where the TV is on, is much more difficult. Look for homework 'clubs' in your area
- Make a weekly menu planner to cover your school lunchtimes and snacks taking in, for example, days when you have an activity or event that might run on after school finishes
- Set up a reminders board on or near the house front door. It can be a handy memory jogger for days when there's PE or a school club evening

## THINGS TO CHECK:

- Start time and date for your first day
- Forms and paperwork that needs to be completed (such as emergency contact forms)
- Registration or enrolment and when that takes place
- New items that the school has advised you buy
- School policies – particularly any that relate to school uniform or items you're allowed to bring to school
- School trips or events in the first few weeks back at school
- Packed lunch - plan lunches, breakfast and snacks ahead of time so that you don't end up struggling for ideas in the morning
- School dinners – if you're buying school meals look into the costs and options available
- Commute – make sure you know how to travel to and from school safely and have an alternative route or means of travel in case anything happens
- Health checks and allergies – ensure you have had the relevant health checks and your school is up-to-date with any changes
- Phone numbers – note down any phone numbers and school procedures that you may need to know. What to do and who to call if your child is sick or will be late are particularly useful



# Lavendon Primary School put on a squawkingly good show



Maddie McCabe-Smith got in touch with Phonebox to say that she had recently had the pleasure of watching 'Pirates Of The Curry Bean' performed at Lavendon Primary School. Years 5 and 6 put their talents on show for friends and family with plenty of 'Shiver Me Timbers' action and some impressive singing and dancing.

Directed by Miss Evans (Oak Class) and Miss Bear (Maple Class), the show transported us all the way back to 1728 to 'sail the high seas in a fantastic adventure of the Periwinkle family' and their unexpected journey to a mysterious island!

I was proud to be invited to come along and watch the show. The songs were performed brilliantly by the children and were catchy enough to be stuck in my head all day! Some of the students even had their own solos of which I strongly admired their courage to put on such a strong, entertaining performance on their own.

Teacher Miss Evans proudly expressed the hard work of the children and their independence when curating the play. Everything in the production was impressively made and purchased by the students themselves, from the pirate costumes to the impressive background paintings and props.

One of our superstar actors Esperance shared her experience with the atmosphere of the play. She explained that her fellow cast members were lovely in helping everyone around them, both backstage and on stage. She described, for instance, in the rare cases when someone forgets a line, the whole team is there for support and advice whenever they need it. Esperance also conveyed her excitement of this being the school's first performance to families. Adrenaline seemed to run high with the students as this was their chance to put on their best show, and they certainly did!

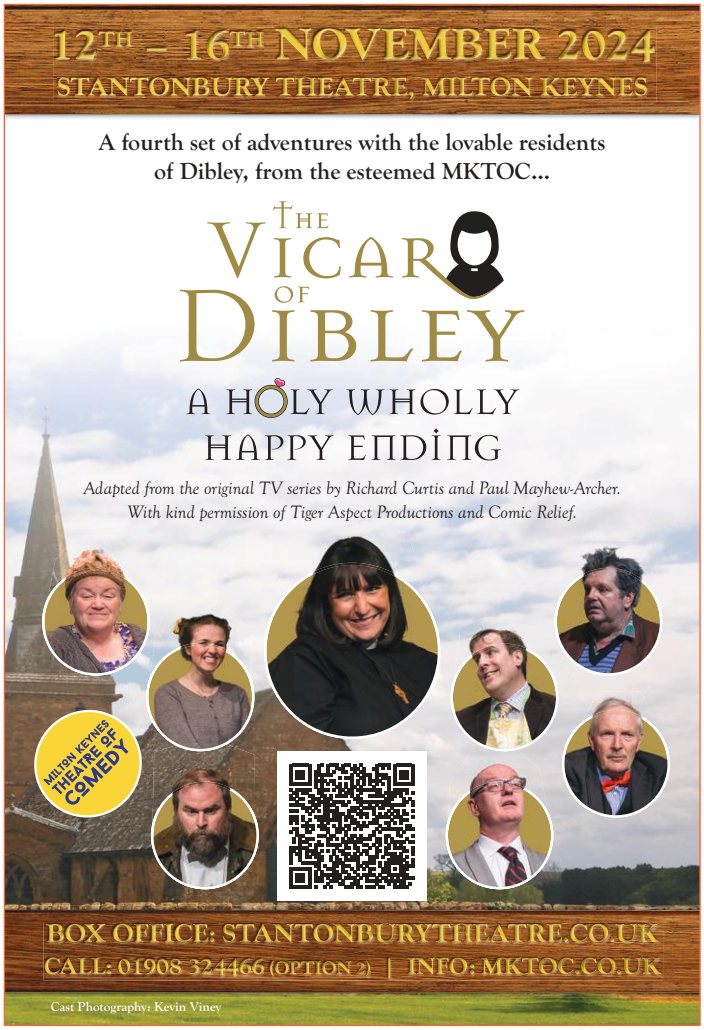
Sisters Vivi and Nelly, two more stars of the show playing a very energetic Captain Redbeard and a colourful Squawk, could not contain their elation at the end of the show. They explained the thrill of production, performing and the environment that comes along with it; the feelings backstage, a perfect combination of nerves and anticipation. The girls were also particularly proud of the freedom that came with the play, in that girls could play the character of a boy with no issue.

The show ended with a big singalong performance; the actors putting in 110 percent, evidently proud of the performance they had just displayed, as they should be.













**Newport Pagnell Campus**
The Grove, Newport Pagnell MK16 0BJ
**Tel:** 01908 210203

**Olney Campus**
Aspreys, Olney MK46 5LF
**Tel:** 01234 717480

**www.ousedale.org.uk**

**Headteacher:** Mr Andy Burton

# Ousedale School

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## INVITATION

### Prospective Parents' Evening for September 2025 entry

Parents/Carers and Year 6 children are invited to visit our school and to meet some of our teachers and pupils.

**Olney Campus Wednesday 9th October 2024** 6pm start

**Newport Pagnell Campus Thursday 10th October 2024** 6pm or 6.30pm start*

*The Newport Pagnell evening for parents/carers and children from Cedars Primary and Portfields Primary will start at 6pm, for Tickford Primary, Green Park Primary and non-feeder schools the evening starts at 6.30pm.

Our prospectus is available to view on our website **www.ousedale.org.uk**

*"Parents are very positive about the school. They believe that standards of behaviour, safety and teaching are high."* *OFSTED (January 2020)*

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# BOZEAT COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Our **Open Days** for prospective parents with children starting school in September 2025 will take place on the following dates:

Thursday 10th October – 10.00am
Tuesday 12th November – 10.00am
Saturday 16th November – 10.00am
Tuesday 3rd December – 10.00am

We will be offering tours around the site and to the Reception Classroom.

Contact us to book your place via email:
BPS-admin@bozeat-school.net.
or call the School Office on 01933 663840.



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# Village Schools Federation





# School Open Days

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office@castlethorpeschool.co.uk

**Tuesday 8th October**
1.30-2.30pm

**Stoke Goldington CE School**



01908 551253
office@stokegoldingtonschool.co.uk

**Friday 11th October**
9.30 - 11am
**Wednesday 16th October**
1.30-3pm

**St Andrews CE School**



01908 605515
office@standrewsinfantschool.co.uk

**Friday 18th October**
2.30-3.30pm
**Saturday 19th October**
9.30-10.30am

**Newton Blossomville CE School**



01234 881294
office@newtonblossomvilleschool.co.uk

**Wednesday 9th**
October 1.30- 3pm
**Saturday 12th October**
9.30-10.30pm

**Sherington CE School**




01908 218247
office@sheringtonschool.co.uk

**Friday 4th October**
1.30 - 2.30pm
**Thursday 10th October**
1.30- 2.30pm

**North Crawley CE School**



01234 391282
office@northcrawleyschool.co.uk

**Monday 7th October**
1.30-2.30pm
**Thursday 17th October**
1.30-2.30pm

Please do look at our website at **www.thevillageschoolsfederation.co.uk** or contact us by phone for more information.

# FRUIT AND VEG FOR A DAY?

For many, the vegetarian diet is the way to go – some people believe it is the best thing we can do for our planet while others feel it is taking away a key component of the human diet. What do you think?

While both sides of this argument are valid vegetarian campaigners, the curious and even people who just want to try something different for a short time, can all come together for a week and prepare for October's World Vegetarian Day. It falls on the 1st of the month and offers everyone an opportunity to try a vegetarian recipe.

The vegetarian diet goes all the way back to 1000 BCE when groups from India and the Mediterranean believed that a meatless diet led to philosophical enlightenment. The first official recording was not until 530 BCE when Pythagoras was found encouraging the practice to his pupils.

In India, Buddhists stood against the idea of eating meat on the ethical grounds of killing animals for food, which Hinduism later picked up as well. However in some Buddhist nations such as China and Japan fish was excluded from this rule and continued to be eaten.

It's a widely supported diet consumed by over 1.5 billion people but many people still want to know why they should give up meat, which is a core component of their diet.

## *Here are some of the arguments:*

### CLIMATE CHANGE

By eating a vegetarian diet we can reduce our carbon footprint on the world. Many people do not realise the impact of the meat trade on the planet but it makes up 26% of all global greenhouse emissions. For every year you eat like a vegetarian, you will save emissions equivalent to six months of driving in a car.

### HEALTH

It's equally important to know what it can do for our bodies too. Key to becoming a vegetarian is that you are easily going to hit your 'five-a-day' every day! Additionally, vegetarian meals naturally contain more fibre and less saturated fat.

### ANIMAL WELFARE

Due to the rate at which animals must be farmed in order to keep up with our large population and high demand for meat some are kept in conditions that many believe is unnatural. There are also fears from experts over a lack of biodiversity in our oceans as fish are intensively farmed.

So what does a vegetarian meal might look like? And how can you make a few small changes to try a veggie meal?

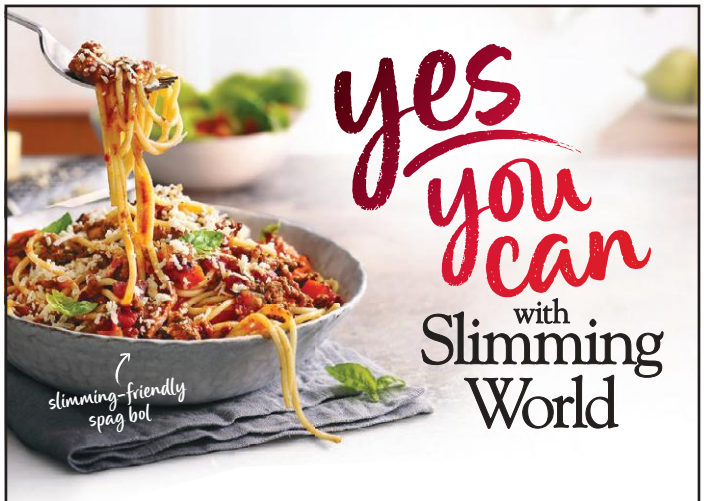
## *Here are five easy ideas to get you started:*

1. **Vegetarian Chilli** – Replace the mincemeat of the chilli with either a corn substitute or just a healthy amount of black and kidney beans
2. **Black Bean Quesadillas** – A Caribbean treat with an easy to make dish consisting of beans, salsa avocado and tortillas or pitta bread
3. **Vegetable Curry** – You can simply replace the chicken or lamb with a corn substitute or pick a variety of vegetables of your choice. Potatoes and carrots are a great place to start
4. **Pasta** – It's simple to make and easy to add vegetarian alternatives. Replace popular toppings such as chicken and sausage for sweetcorn and peppers for a tasty dish
5. **Salad** – Throw together a colourful assortment of your favourite salad veg to build a savoury and tasty salad. Add a little cheese for an extra layer of flavour










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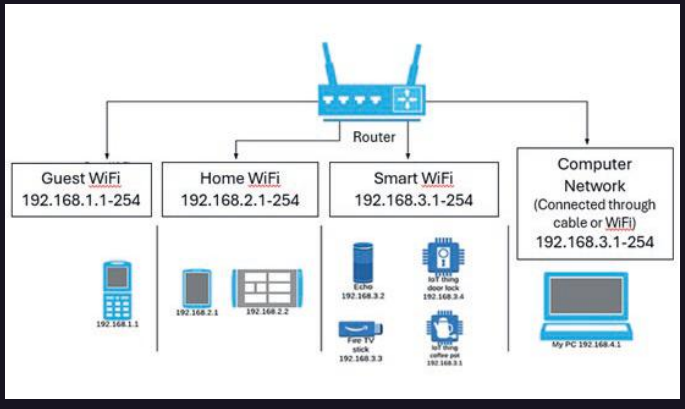
# How to Protect Your Smart Home




In today's interconnected households where every family member and countless smart devices are seamlessly connected to a network controlled by a mobile phone, life has never been more convenient and entertaining. Yet, with convenience, there is a danger that cybercriminals can exploit human errors and create havoc in our day-to-day living.

Despite today's advanced technology progress, security risks and bugs continue to plague both developers and users of smart home devices by leaving doors open for digital adversaries to sneak in unnoticed and compromise our network.
We're all prone to reading an email and clicking on a disguised link, unaware of the danger lurking behind it. With our connected devices at home and a lack of proper subdivision, malicious software can spread easily from one gadget to the next, creating one big headache. Besides causing distraction, it can hide silently, monitoring your online activities – accessing online banking, private medical records, and other accounts with sensitive information spread across the digital landscape.
Once a threat has gained access to your network, they could exploit various vulnerabilities, install ransomware that blocks your access to information unless a payment is made, or use your device to launch further attacks, compromising not only your security but the security of others as well.

UK.Gov estimate that UK businesses have experienced 7.78 million cyber crimes of all types and approximately 116,000 non-phishing cyber crimes in the last 12 months.




Let's look at five strategies to protect your smart home.

1] SUBDIVISION / SUBNETTING:
Divide your network into smaller portions e.g. a different IP Address for each category of device; Mobile, Computer, Smart Device, Guest Wi-Fi. All devices can connect to the internet, but not all devices are directly connected to each other.

2] REGULAR UPDATES:
Keep all your devices, including routers and smart gadgets, up to date with the latest security computer software to mitigate vulnerabilities.

3] STRONG PASSWORDS:
Don't forget to change the password when logging into your new device! Choose a unique password for every device and online account – consider using a password manager.

4] NETWORK MONITORING:
It's not just an issue for businesses anymore, with so many smart devices connected to our network, how do you know how much data each device has used on any given period?

5] SPREADING AWARENESS:
Knowledge is power! Reading and talking about cyber threats and effective mitigation strategies recommended by cyber professionals will help you minimize the risk of falling victim.

Sadly, cyberattacks are no longer a matter of 'if' but 'when'. To better navigate any potential problems, stay ahead of digital adversaries with a proactive approach to cyber threat awareness and put a plan in place. Back up relevant files, documents, or photos in case you need to wipe your computer.
By staying vigilant and implementing the above strategies, you can protect your digital assets and your sensitive information from adversaries.

# Discovering local, hidden (and not so hidden) heritage

Heritage Open Days events take place across Milton Keynes from Friday, 6th to Sunday, 15th September. The 10 days are packed with creative workshops, exhibitions, guided tours, cycle rides and more.

Many of the local heritage spots will be opening their doors for free during this time, including Milton Keynes Museum, Great Linford Manor Park, Westbury Arts Centre, Milton Keynes City Discovery Centre, The Stables Theatre, Milton Keynes Arts Centre and Olney's very own Cowper & Newton Museum.

This year's theme is routes, networks and connections, with organisers taking people on interactive journeys as far as Ukraine, India and Sierra Leone to celebrate the contribution different communities have made to MK.

It's also Heritage Open Days 30th anniversary and a special gallery page on the website showcases the wonderful sites, stories and people that have made Heritage Open Days so magical over the years (www.heritageopendays.org.uk)

Bradwell Abbey is featured as a Scheduled Ancient Monument, a hidden gem in the heart of a new city. The team at the Abbey are running a medieval themed day on Sunday 15th September with family-friendly activities such as archery, birds of prey demonstrations and re-enactors.

Did you party at The Point in its heyday? If so, you might want to go to the Documentary Screening about this infamous MK landmark on Friday 13th September at The Sky Room, MK Gallery, 900 Midsummer Boulevard.

**Further details and the programme brochure can be found on the Living Archive website. Brochures can also be collected from Milton Keynes libraries and Get Smart stands in supermarkets.**





*Contrasting heritage sites - Bradwell Abbey (top) and The Point*

# Olney Meadows care home ready for first residents

It's a construction project that has attracted the attention of motorists driving into Olney for more than 18 months. Now Olney Meadows is preparing to take in its first residents.



Fitting out the interior of this luxury care home, to bring many of the features of a five-star hotel, began in August and staff from top interior design company Homesmiths then set about their work.

The 66-bedroom home in Worcester Way, Olney, has been developed by Midlands-based Deeley Construction on behalf of Kingsley Healthcare, a top 20-ranked national large care home group (www.carehome.co.uk).

"We are delighted by the interest in our home that has been shown already by potential residents and their families," says newly appointed home manager Caroline Holdsworth.

"Olney Meadows is a fantastic care facility of which the community can be truly proud. I have worked in the care sector for over 20 years and am passionate about ensuring the highest standards of care and respect to our residents which is Kingsley's hallmark.

"I am here to welcome anyone who would like to come and have a look around or discuss their family's care needs. Please call me at the home on 01234 923818."

Kingsley's latest flagship care home will provide close to 100 well-paid jobs once it is full. High-quality features for residents include a library, a café, state-of-the art cinema room and a private dining room for residents to celebrate special occasions.

The home features a range of ground-floor rooms with private patios and other rooms with attractive terraces, with a therapy and wellness room also available to residents.

Deeley Construction has built the home to BREEAM 'Very Good' standard, a standard which is used to specify and measure the sustainability performance of buildings.

The care home utilises air source heart pumps for energy supply and benefits from two electric vehicle charging points.

# Churches Together

## Newport Pagnell (CTNP)

### Change is afoot

When I was in primary school in the 1980s, we used to sing songs every day as part of our daily assemblies. Sometimes Christian songs, sometime we might sing The Beatles ('Here comes the sun' was a school favourite when the weather permitted). One song that stands out, and I hope this wasn't just my school, was the song 'One more step along the world I go' by the poet and song writer Sidney Carter.

The song talks of life's journey, going from childhood into adulthood by learning from new experiences encountered on the journey. It was also about learning more about life, faith, success and mistakes. It is a song of faith sung as a prayer asking for God's help in working out how to be steadfast and secure in times of change.

We sang this song at the end of a school year as a reminder to us all that times of change are not to be feared, but embraced as a method of personal growth.

With a number of our young people going from one year to another, from one school to another, or even out of school and into work, university or uncertainty, it's a great lesson to learn. As a country we have experienced much change recently as well; our new government is a major change, but we are still reeling a little from Covid-19 effects and that for some is a really unsettling change. We might be experiencing personal change in working patterns; working from home is something that many are learning to live with. It has great benefits: flexibility with life patterns, less travel time and the like. However, it also means less engagement with others, on a face to face basis maybe. How we keep as part of a community in the digital working age is a real question forged in the fires of change.

Often my prayers are focussed on words such as 'this is new, what am I meant to do with this?' these days. And that is not always a bad thing. If God can help me deal with new things with wisdom, then great; if I have to learn from mistakes, then so be it.

As the song goes: 'It's from the old I travel to the new, keep me travelling along with you'.

**Peter Young**
**Associate Minister, Newport Pagnell Baptist Church.**

## Olney Baptist Church

### Inspiration

Over the last few weeks many of us have enjoyed watching the Olympic Games from Paris and witnessing the success of the British athletes in particular. Whether we are those who normally follow sport or find themselves drawn in to watching the Olympics we cannot fail to be impressed by the dedication of the athletes and their families who have often sacrificed much to get to the Olympics. Each athlete has had to train in their own unique way through exercise, strict diet, and psychological preparation in order to be ready to compete in their chosen discipline.

This is something the Bible recognizes to be true when it comes to the spiritual area of our lives. In the New Testament book of Hebrews in Ch 12 vs. 1-2 this is described as running the race of faith. And just like the physical athlete the spiritual athlete needs to prepare for the spiritual race that God has set before them. But how is this done?

It is done the Bible tells us by throwing off everything that would entangle us and the sin in our lives that causes us to stumble. By doing this the Bible tells us we can run the race of faith and of life that has been laid down for us by God. Helpful as this is it is not enough for life and the race of faith can be tough and we need something to inspire us to keep going. This is something the Bible understands well which is why it tells us to look to Jesus whom it describes as the author and perfector of our faith. When we look to Jesus not just for inspiration but for the strength to complete the race we begin to experience a new spiritual reality in our lives.

This is best described by the famous Scottish runner Eric Liddel who won Gold in the 400 metres at the last Paris Olympics in 1924. Liddel simply said: "When I run I feel God's pleasure". He was able to say this because he had taken up the Bible's invitation to look to Jesus and receive the new life that he had come to give so that he would have the strength to run his race of faith and win. We can do the same if we choose too and the best news is, there are no runners-up. Everyone is a winner.

**Rev Stuart J. Macdonald**
**Minister Olney Baptist Church.**

# All change as architects move

Well-known architects company DCa has moved back to its former offices in Olney's Cobbs Court as it seeks to create a leaner and more agile practice.

The company has returned to its former home after six years situated at the old Nat West Bank building, Bank House, on the town's High Street, which it converted in 2018.

The move follows the retirement of founder David Coles, who formed DCa more than 30 years ago. David will stay on as a consultant to the business as well as advising other organisations on strategy, construction, design and planning. The new-look DCa will be headed by managing director Julian Buttel.

"I have really enjoyed working with amazing people in our business and with our clients and consultants to grow the DCa brand and reputation," says David. "The business will continue under Julian's inspiring leadership – supported by a great team. I will watch with pride, contributing a little I hope, as they take the business forward to achieve ever more success."

Sheila Coles, who has been with DCa from the beginning, will remain as Finance Director.

Bank House is being refitted for the Private Dental Group, currently based in Cobbs Garden. The move creates a larger, more prominent dental facility for Olney and the surrounding areas.



*DCa: David (centre) with Julian and Sheila*

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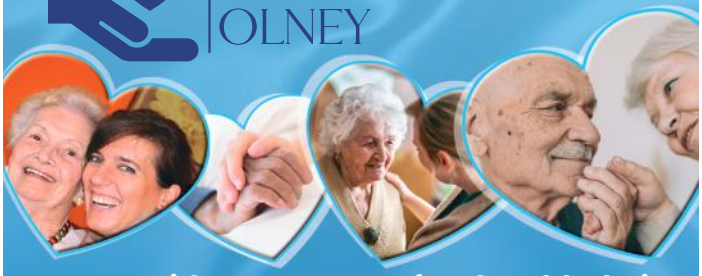
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# September: a busy month in the garden

Although harvesting will keep you busy this month there are plenty of other jobs waiting for you in the garden, including planting, cutting and pruning.

September is a lovely month for the gardener, but a busy one. The extreme heat of August has passed but the sun is still strong and the days pleasantly warm, but the days are getting shorter with the evenings drawing in noticeably.





## Bountiful harvest

September is the month of the bountiful harvest because summer crops are still going strong and the first of the autumn windfall needs to be picked.

## Summer crops

In the greenhouse salad crops need to be picked regularly to ensure further growth and tomatoes are ripening sublimely and are at the height of their delicious flavour. Cucumbers and courgettes are cropping heavily and most gardeners will be looking to give their produce to family, friends and neighbours so as not to waste anything.

Green beans are at their delicious best and can be blanched and popped in the freezer to enjoy out of season.



## Autumn fruit and vegetables

Apples and pears are ripening fast this month and care needs to be taken when picked so as to avoid unripened fruits falling off trees.

Leeks are ready for digging and squashes – the ubiquitous autumnal vegetable – are beginning to fill out and ripen. Picking squashes that are ready makes space for others to grow.



## Planting

Leafy greens and salad crops need to be planted this month. Planting lettuce seeds now will mean you will have delicious home-grown salad in the cold months, and spring greens if planted now will grow slowly as the year moves on.

September is a great time to plant garlic and turnips and radishes can be planted now and will be ready to eat as the weather grows colder.

Other vegetables you can plant include onions, spring onions and shallots. You can also plant peas, runner and French beans now.

When it come to cutting and pruning, of course, your lawns will still require a weekly mow in September but by the end of the month you will notice that growth is slowing.

Many of your summer fruiting fruit bushes will now require a little thinning, including black and red currants and gooseberries.

September is a good time to cut back to the ground any perennials that don't have decorative seed heads.

Late summer/early autumn is also the best time to prune any tender plants such as lavender and rosemary because they don't like winter pruning.



## Watering and shading

As the weather is likely to be warm dry watering regularly is a must in September, especially any pots or hanging baskets that can dry out quickly. On particularly hot days you might want to move pots into shadier spots during the middle of the day.

September is a busy but lovely month in the garden when you enjoy the fruits of your labour but also to look forward to preparing for next year.

# Giving the gift of life

Organ Donation Week runs from 23rd to 29th September and this year the NHS Organ Donor Register is 30 years old. Why not get involved and celebrate the amazing gift of life organ donation can give?



Organ donation is where someone decides to donate an organ either whilst they are alive or after they die. By registering on the NHS Donor Register to donate an organ after you die you take the decision about what happens out of the hands of your loved ones at a time when they are grieving. But there are some organs that you can donate whilst you are alive.

**Become a living donor**

The most donated organs by a living person are a kidney or part of the liver. Each year here in the UK more than a thousand people donate one of their kidneys or part of their liver whilst they are alive. Often the donation is to a friend or family member, but it can be to someone they don't know. People can also donate parts of bone and amniotic membrane too.

**Blood donation**

At the moment in the UK there is a blood bank emergency with stocks desperately low. Blood donors are urgently needed and in just one hour you could save three lives. Your blood could also be used to make plasma which could save someone's life.

**Donation after death**

Here in the UK most tissue and organ donations occur after someone has died. Even though you might be on the Organ Donation Register loved ones always have the final decision on whether your organs will be donated. But the register tells medical professionals and loved ones what your intentions and wishes were, and this can bring much needed clarity on any decisions.

**Opt out**

The law here in England states all adults have agreed to be an organ donor when they die unless they are in an excluded group or have specifically recorded a decision not to donate.

**Think Pink!**

Pink is the colour of the organ donation card and for 2024 during Organ Donation Week the public are urged to get involved and light up as many buildings as possible in pink to raise awareness of the life-giving gift of organ donation.

There are many ways to get involved in lighting up pink as many buildings as possible. Do it yourself, if it's your home or business or for any official buildings you could call, email or write them a letter. The organ donation register has some useful tips and suggestions.

**Donating an organ is a selfless act that could save a life, possibly a stranger's life, so why not get involved this Organ Donation Week and add your name to the register. www.organdonation.nhs.uk**


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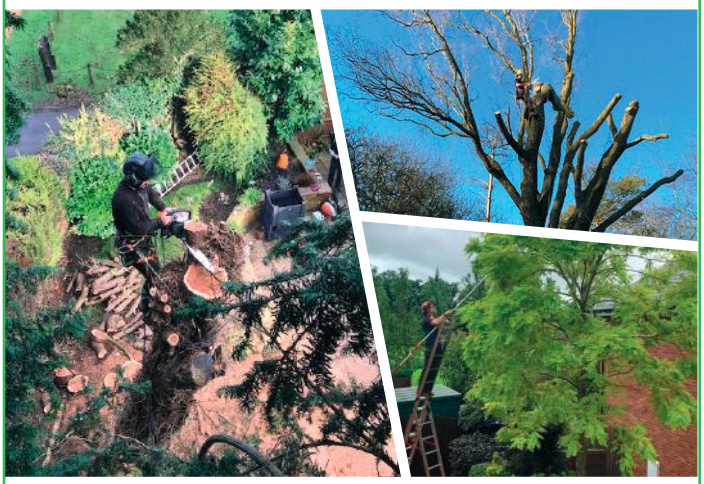
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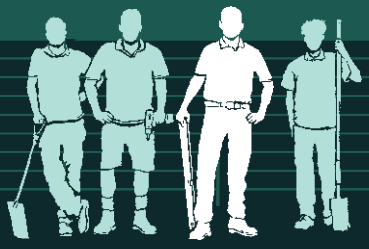
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# SO NIRO, SO FAR



People sometimes ask me what 'PHEV' (pronounced 'fev') means in the context of cars. They will usually know that it's something to do with the growing array of electric vehicles (EVs) but aren't sure about this particular strain of battery powered car.

I tell interested parties that the 'PH' bit of 'PHEV' stands for 'plug-in hybrid'. Cue blank stares. Well, is it a hybrid, they ask – which uses a petrol or diesel engine to charge an electric motor – or do you plug it into the mains to power it up each night?

Well both actually. The plug-in variety of hybrid cars use on-board charging equipment such as regenerative brakes as well as electric power via a cable to charge the battery so that it can be used for short or medium journeys such as trips around town or to neighbouring villages without the engine ever kicking in.

If you live not too far from your place of work, for example, and run a PHEV, you could possibly never use any petrol during the week, providing you can plug the car into a power source each night. And providing you don't race around like Lewis Hamilton, with rapid acceleration and quick overtakes.

You're thereby saving a shed-load of fuel and doing your bit for the environment.

A standard hybrid electric car, which only takes charge to its batteries from the petrol engine when it's running, doesn't usually have such a large capacity and therefore a much smaller range under electric power.

You'll be able to go short distances under battery power but sooner or later the petrol or diesel unit will fire into life until the battery is charged up again. Still good for the environment and your wallet, but not as efficient as a PHEV.

South Korean car maker Kia has had some success with its electric and hybrid models, not least the Niro, which originally came out in 2016 as a hybrid, PHEV and full electric car (called the e-Niro).

They launched a second generation of the popular model in 2022 and gave it a massive 'ground-up' redesign. Kia has fully embraced the electric era and is committed to protecting the environment as much as possible.

This latest Niro is a key model in Kia's growing eco-friendly line-up – the company promises to have 15 EV models on sale by 2027, nine of which will be available in the UK. In a highly competitive SUV market, Kia wants its Niro to encourage drivers to take their first tentative step towards electrification.

And that's why the car maker provides a three-way choice: hybrid mode, plug-in hybrid or full electric. The car is based on Kia's own 'K' platform which was designed specifically to be able to take any of those three powertrains with varying battery mounting options, as each motor needs a different size powerpack.

I drove the PHEV version which is a good 'halfway house' choice if you are not ready to do away with the petrol nozzle entirely yet.

You can't miss the Niro. It has a design style all of its own with its droopy face and deep set headlamps. This is what Kia calls its 'Opposites United' design philosophy and, whether it's to your taste or you think they've gone too far with the designer's brush strokes, it's certainly purposeful and head-turning when you see it.

That front end incorporates angular daytime running lights, for safety and enhanced looks, while bold skid plates and a smart side cladding set-up adds to the overall rugged appearance.

You get a slightly larger Niro thanks to the redesign – the car is 65 mm longer, 10 mm wider and 35 mm taller than its predecessor – but those small amounts do give driver and passengers more room inside, even with five on-board. And boot space, even with the larger HEV battery taken into account, is an impressive 348 litres.

And that interior tells its own story in terms of Kia's nod to the environment. The car showcases new recycled materials inside the cabin. The roof headlining is made from recycled wallpaper, the seats come from Bio polyurethane with fibres from eucalyptus leaves, and BTX (chemical) free paint is used on the door panels to minimize the impact on the environment and reduce waste.

A 10.25-inch infotainment screen in the centre of the dashboard uses its own built-in SIM to retrieve information such as traffic, weather, points of interest and parking spaces, including potential

To plug in or not to plug in? That is the question, when it comes to making the change to an electric car. Kia's Niro gives potential owners lots of options.



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costs. You can also connect your own devices in and make use of Apple CarPlay and Android Auto.

On the road there's a good, solid feel to the Niro, thanks partly to a redesign of the steering and suspension. The sure-footedness feeds back through the steering wheel, providing a safe and responsive ride.

Power in the PHEV comes from a 1.6-litre petrol engine which is paired to Kia's own six-speed dual-clutch transmission. There are only forward gears in this gearbox – when you want to reverse, only the electric motor does the work saving, says Kia, on tailpipe emissions while you're parking.

The engine on its own gives 139 hp of power but combined with the 83 kW (kilowatt) battery pack and electric motor the car's total output is 180 hp. This is enough to return a 0-62 mph of 9.6 seconds and a top speed of 104 mph. You'll get at least 40 miles of electric-only motoring out of the set-up too, enough for many people's commute and the reason for the car's massive potential economy figure of 350 mpg.

Safety is a major highlight of the Niro and every car, regardless of specification, has features including electronic stability control, emergency stop warning, forward collision assist, hill start assist, lane keeping, tyre pressure monitoring, smart cruise control and ISOFIX child seat fixings.

The Niro also comes with Kia's impressive seven-year, 100,000-mile warranty. So you'll have an element of mechanical cover for a long time down the road.








# QUICK BURSTS:

### With age comes confidence

Older drivers know exactly what they want, which fuel their cars will use and how to negotiate confidently on price, a new study has shown.

Drivers aged 59-77 (so-called 'Baby Boomers') are the most likely to feel confident about buying a petrol or diesel car – 84% of them said this in the latest research from automotive regulator The Motor Ombudsman, released to coincide with the September '74' number plate change.

This compares with 73% of 18-26 year olds ('Gen Z'), 76% of 27-42 year olds ('Gen Y') and 81% of drivers aged 43-58 ('Gen X').

But when it comes to considering an electric vehicle (EV) for their next car it was the younger drivers who showed greater confidence in embracing the battery-powered highway. The findings revealed that 50% of the younger Gen X and Gen Y motorists would consider an electric car, compared with 34% of Gen X and just 21% of Boomers.

The older drivers feel the most confident navigating the whole car buying process – 34% of them said this, compared with 33% Gen Z, 33% Gen Y and 29% Gen X.

### It's the price you Bay

It's known for its bargain toys, unwanted clothes and books, but online marketplace eBay does a roaring trade in pricey car parts too. The site recently revealed the most expensive accessories it sold in the first six months of this year, with performance engines, carbon fibre parts and exclusive number plates among the lots.

Topping the list was an Audi R8 5.2 V10 petrol engine, bought for £16,567. Second and third places were two sets of Porsche carbon bucket seats, the first pair for a 911 GT3 at £13,085 and the second for a Cayman GT4 at £11,962.

At the other end of the automotive spectrum, fourth place was secured by a battery pack for a Tesla Model S at £8,606 – a huge discount over the cost of a brand-new Tesla battery.

The list also included exclusive vehicle registrations, such as ELON X – a must for any Tesla fan – which was bought for £8,606 and DIESEL, which sold for £8,135. A set of exclusive Ferrari luggage also made the list, priced at £8,518, while an entire engine and gearbox from a sporty Mercedes E63 fetched £7,650.

# **Club of the Month:** Tea and Chat

Nobody wants to live alone and without friends, do they? That's one of the reasons why Tea and Chat was set up – to provide people with a welcoming space for some time away from their own four walls.



Launched in 2020 by Debbie Whitworth, Tea and Chat was a welcome relief from the isolation and loneliness that the Covid epidemic had brought to so many people in Olney and the surrounding villages.

"A lot of people were affected at that time and they were frightened to come out," says Debbie. "So this was a way of finding a safe space for people, where they would be made welcome and could relax in the company of other like-minded folk."

As the name of the club suggests, there's always a cup of tea waiting for you (or coffee, if you prefer) plus some biscuits and cakes. But the real attraction for so many is the friendship and greeting they receive. And it's not a club in the sense that you have to sign up to be a member.

"People don't have to sign their lives away," says Debbie. "They can come one month and not the next. We have our regulars but then we get new people coming in. But there are still people who don't know about Tea and Chat and that's why we want people to know we're here."

This is a social gathering with the chance to sit and chat in a cluster and some people will do just that – talk and stay in their own groups, catching up. But there are also special features organised such as seated light exercises to music, quizzes, memory games and occasionally there's a guest speaker.

Anyone of any age group is welcome to the club although it tends to attract the over-60s. Once a year a trip out for the Tea and Chatters is organised – this year they are visiting Castle Ashby to enjoy its gardens and make use of the tea room which this year has been booked out entirely for the group. Numbers vary each month but there are generally around 30 people at each meeting, coming in from the Olney Ward district. But Debbie is anxious to attract new people and to ensure residents are aware of Tea and Chat and what it offers.

"There have been people who have come one month and then not come back but we have persuaded them to return and now we're finding they are attending regularly. Others who came and sat on their own are now coming and joining in with people on other tables. It's good to see."

**Tea and Chat meets once a month at the Olney Centre, usually on a Monday, 2-3pm. There's a small fee of £2 to help cover the cost of the drinks and biscuits. For more information about the group and forthcoming meeting dates contact Debbie Whitworth: 07494 681907.**


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Our business relies on referrals and we get a huge amount of our calls from people who have been referred to us by our existing customers - that simply wouldn't happen if we didn't adhere to our overriding principles.

At the end of the day the old adage that happy customers lead to more happy customers is true and we work hard to make that happen for every installation we carry out!'

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# OLNEY UKRAINE AID NEWS

## Angels' memory

An exhibition of white angels, in memory of the children who have died since the start of the war in Ukraine, is taking place this month.
Organised by Maria Petrinets, who sang at the recent Ukrainian Extravaganza in Grendon, the exhibition takes place in London's Holland Park on 21st September, which is International Day of Peace.
Each year this special day has a new theme. This year it's 'Cultivating a Culture of Peace', which is an appropriate topic for all those affected by the war.
"The project is large-scale, the exhibition is previzna (transportable)", says Maria on social media. "I want to present it in different regions of Great Britain, Ukraine and other countries. This will be our shared story about which we will write a book."
It's hoped the exhibition can be brought to a venue close to Olney in the near future.




## Comfort bags for Christmas next...

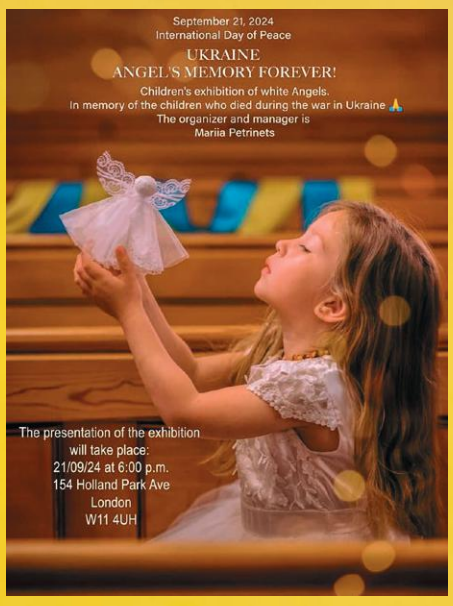
***Lynne King writes:***

Wow! Thank you Olney community and friends. We have sewn, filled and delivered 174 comfort bags to HelpUkraineBAMK based in Milton Keynes.
The thoughtfulness, kindness, dedication and generosity is truly wonderful. These bags have been delivered to the housebound, hospital patients and, more recently, troops in Ukraine.
This project is ongoing and yes... we are now adding Christmas bags to our plans.
It might seem early to be talking about Christmas, but with planning, transportation and distribution to consider, now is the time to think about this next step.
Festive bags filled with 'comfort and joy' will be distributed to orphanages, disabled young people and a specialist group who give counselling to children who have lost a parent.
Would you like to fill a bag as a family, or share one with a group of friends? Please get in touch if you want a Christmas drawstring bag.
Suggested items include: wind-up torch, reflective arm bands, A5 colouring book, A5 notebook, pencil, eraser, sharpener, colouring pencils, sweets, fidget toys, small ball, cuddly toy, glove puppet, small cars, Rubik's cube, dominoes, gloves, soap, flannel, toothbrush, toothpaste, lip salve.
Donations of suitable items can be delivered to me. Contact me for more information: 07766 425523.









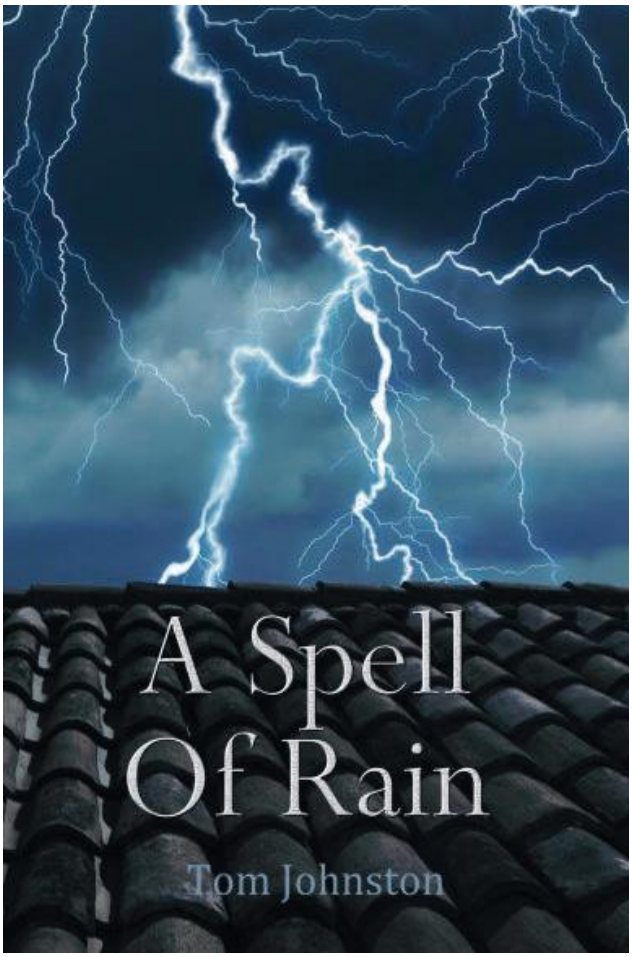

## Julian busks for Ukraine

Olney Ukraine Aid fundraisers have thanked local busker Julian Smith after he performed in Olney, Newport Pagnell and Emberton Park to raise money for the Ukraine effort.
An undisclosed sum was donated by Julian to The Association of Ukrainians in Great Britain.

*From the top:*
*White angels in memory of children who have lost their lives since the war started, an example of a Christmas comfort bag, Maria Petrinets, who is organising the Angels project, and Julian Smith who has been busking to raise money for Ukraine.*

# Could new book spell success for Tom?

Phonebox Magazine's writer Tom Johnston is now an author, following the release of his debut novel 'A Spell of Rain'.




Tom, who's best known for his motoring, entertainment and lifestyle features in Phonebox, turned his hand to fiction during the Covid pandemic. But it has taken until now to get his story about a man cursed by a never-ending rainstorm, published as an 'Ebook'.

"I thought of the story a few years ago and put my initial draft together during Covid when, like many people, I found myself with more time on my hands," says Tom.

"But the story needed work and development and it kept getting pushed to the back-burner while I concentrated on other writing projects, including my work at Phonebox."

But this year Tom made a New Year's Resolution to get the book finished and ready for release. It came out on Kindle, BN.com and other publishing platforms across the world on 30th August.

Now he's hoping the fantasy tale will attract the attention of a TV or film producer, as he has already written and completed a screenplay of the same story.

"That would be a dream come true, of course," says Tom. "Having the book published is one step but it would be great to see the story acted out on-screen one day."

**A Spell Of Rain is available now on-line priced £2.49 ($2.99).**

# CRMK RADIO

## Gold Medals




It is September, the Paris Summer Olympics are over and for sports fans who like the many disciplines the Olympics bring, it's back to watching the 'mainstream' sports of cricket for another two months or football until next summer! I know there are other sports but those two are probably the most popular. Now, if we equated selected Olympic sports to CRMK what would we find?

The marathon is the longest run race at 26 miles 385 yards and the gold medal for longest serving CRMK presenter would be Paul H. His show, 'Live in Your Living Room' is a mix of whatever takes his fancy! You can join him every Thursday from 8pm for music from any age and genre plus his thoughts, opinions and the latest news from Stadium: MK. In the longevity stakes, Paul A takes silver and Kevin the bronze.

It takes just under 10 seconds to run the 100 metres, the shortest race in the Olympics but a photo finish between Paul A and Glyn would be needed to decide the gold for the presenter who is the shortest distance from the studio. The gold for shortest serving CRMK presenter goes to Dean with James and George in silver and bronze. Dean's 'Transmission' show will soon undergo a name change but the format for his midday to 3pm Saturday musical extravaganza will stay the same.

The Paris Olympics saw events held in 17 cities across France. The surfing competition however, was unique as it took place in the French territory of Tahiti. Located 9,320 miles from Paris, the surfing venue broke the record for the furthest medal competition staged outside a host Olympic city. At CRMK, it's another photo finish between Keith H and his 'Sounds from Beyond the Shed', Louise James's 'Post Breakfast Experience' and George's 'The Adventurer's Tavern' who are all vying for the gold medal as the presenter who travels the furthest distance to the studio to present a show.

The 2024 Games marked the return of the Olympics to Paris after 100 years having previously hosted the Olympics in 1900 and 1924. Paris 2024 was the first Olympics in history where there was an equal number of female and male participants – 5,250 each. Unfortunately, that situation does not exist with CRMK as we currently have a large gender imbalance. That said, we would very much like that to change. However, we do have a new female presenter starting this month which is a start.

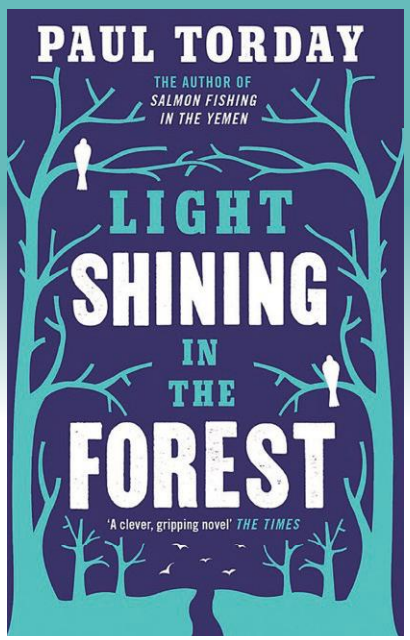
CRMK has a fully functioning studio available for people to try their hand at presenting. New presenters are wanted. You don't have to be a professional or commit to a regular weekly show. Every other week or even monthly would be considered and you can co-present with others. We are open to all and you can have fun whilst doing it. If you've ever thought of presenting a radio show then please get in touch and it could be you getting a CRMK gold medal.

**contactus@crmk.co.uk**
**www.crmk.co.uk**

# BOOK REVIEW

## *Light Shining in the Forest by Paul Torday*

**Reviewed by Thelma Shacklady**




Paul Torday is best known for his debut novel, 'Salmon Fishing in the Yemen,' a humorous, satirical novel with a tragic underside, one which was subsequently made into a popular film. His latest novel is also multi-layered; on the surface it is about three children going missing, initial attempts by the police to find them proving fruitless and the official conclusion that they are runaways, rather than victims of kidnap. The repetition of the phrase: 'Every five minutes a child goes missing in the UK,' serves to confirm this conclusion.

However there is much more to the novel than that. The opening chapter, describing Kielder Forest, is reminiscent of Grimms folk tales with their references to children lost in a forest and prey to witches. The light mentioned in the title occurs in a forester's dreams and we later discover that the first of the missing children belongs to him.

Hints of the folk tale occur at intervals, to be joined by a mystic quality; the missing boy, appropriately called Theo, had certain marks on his palms and also on his forehead. Moreover, his school report indicated that he had 'a calming effect upon the other children.' Is this the reason for his disappearance?

The brothers Grimm and mysticism are lightened by satire. Still on the theme of missing children, the author turns to politics and the suggestion of 'Children's Czars' to solve the problem. Unsurprisingly, Norman Stokoe, chosen as the first Czar, has a great deal of theoretical knowledge about children; he has worked in a Local Education Authority before moving to a Social Services department, and been involved in various intergovernmental conferences relating to children. However, he is totally lacking in practical experience.

Nevertheless, it is Norman to whom a desperate mother turns and he forms an unlikely alliance with Willie, a failed newspaper journalist and Pippa, the secretary he acquired as Children's Czar. Together they search out the events leading up to the disappearance of each child, find connections and the story leads to its inevitable conclusion. This novel is not for the faint-hearted; there are some gruesome details which leave little to the imagination and the concept in the mind of the kidnapper is quite horrific. Nevertheless, it is cleverly written, and, as the reading group notes at the end suggest, worthy of discussion.

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# Book Festival is a novel idea

A new literary festival for Olney takes place later this month. Organiser Sue Upton (right), who has been planning the event for nearly a year, hopes it will encourage people to pick up a book and read.



It was a bit of a 'light bulb moment' when author Sue Upton first thought of bringing a literary festival to Olney. The creator of the 'Paper Boats & Butterflies' trilogy had been running a writing group for budding authors in the town when it came to her that it might be good to have a literary festival here.

"I had been to many of these festivals myself over the years and I thought it just made sense to organise one in Olney, especially with the historical literature traditions and foundations of William Cowper and John Newton here," says Sue. "When I first mentioned it, people said to me that it would be too huge to organise and we wouldn't get it done in time and I thought 'well, let's try it, and we'll make it just one day'."

In January Sue put out a message on the Olney Noticeboard to attract interested people, with a call for volunteers, and was amazed with the attention it created. The following month she held her first meeting of volunteers and interested parties and was delighted to see more than 25 people turning up at a freezing Olney Centre, including authors, book lovers and artists. From that promising start she formed a committee which marked the beginning of the journey to Olney WordFest. Then came further ideas to get the town involved, including its children – which led to the highly popular 'Book Trail' giving young people something to do during the summer. Entry forms are still available for this fun activity.

One look at the Olney WordFest website's list of 'creatives' and speakers tells its own story: there are authors, broadcasters, poets, musicians, artists, script writers, biographers, narrartors and historians among the long list of interesting people to listen to and be inspired by.

For children and families WordFest will provide fun and activities in the Olney Centre's library, with a 'Sherlock Holmes' murder mystery to solve and Alice in Wonderland-themed characters, all featured free of charge.

Much of that happens during the day, before the Olney Centre is transformed for the evening 'showcase' which includes music, singing, poetry, prose, stories and humour from a variety of artists.

Add into the mix a variety of stalls containing books, notepads, stationery, bookmarks and crafts, plus a relaxed café for writers and book-lovers to meet and 'network', and Sue hopes there will be something for everyone at WordFest.

"I want anyone who has a love or an interest in books and literature to come together and enjoy the day," says Sue.

Although WordFest is a celebration of literature and art for budding writers and poets, it's important to Sue that the festival attracts anyone with a passing interest in books.

"I am looking forward to the day," she says. "It has already helped me to network and meet other writers and learn about their arts. And if it can do that for me, then why won't it do that for others?"

**Olney WordFest is at the Olney Centre on Saturday 14th September from 9am to 10pm. General admission is free, with tickets available for author talks and workshops. See: www.olneywordfest.org.**


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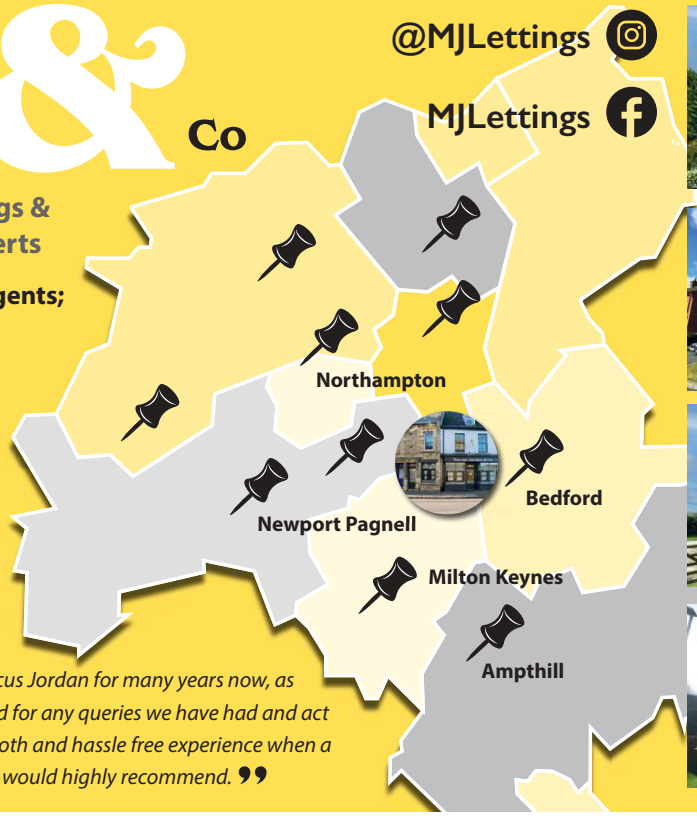
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# Classic food menu for car club members

With so any soft-tops and convertibles on show, it was thankfully perfect weather for Olney Classic Car Club's Annual Sunday run and BBQ last month.

This year's event was based at Grendon Hall, Grendon, and featured a wide range of Caribbean themed food.

Around 50 members and 23 cars enjoyed the suggested scenic route – devised by member Mike Pullen – which took in some of the most beautiful country villages in North Northamptonshire.

With brightly coloured shirts being worn by members, they enjoyed brown stewed chicken and rice, Jamaican shrimp burgers and jerk chicken.








## OLNEY & CLIFTON FISHING ASSOCIATION

LOCAL SPORT ROUNDUP

This season began with great catches for specimen anglers. The last month has seen the first outings for our matchmen with very interesting results.

Our first match was the Fiesta Open. Over 20 anglers were split into three sections and Nigel Bass drew an end peg at the dog bin in Osborne's.

He proceeded to catch a net full of silvers ending up with 8lbs 4oz. Runner-up Eamon Bourke put in a strong performance with 6lbs 2oz from Brock's.

Our second match was the popular Les Wallis Shield which is for teams of four anglers. Each team picks a peg from the hat for each section and then chooses which angler fishes which peg.

The pre-match favourites were the Four Counties team of Paul Caton, Neale Shearn, Nigel Bass and Rob Hewison and they lived up to expectations with a first, two seconds and a third place.

Rob Hewison finished first overall in the match and it was big bream that



helped him to his weight of 25lbs 1oz at the Lavendon Meadows section. More bream were also caught in that section as well as Olney Mill.

Finally this month I have to unfortunately end on a sour note. One or two anglers have not been following club rules with regard to fishing Olney Mill overnight.



We are incredibly lucky to have access to the Mill which the owner allows us. If anglers do not follow club rules then we will have no option but to ban night fishing there.

So please guys follow the rules and continue to enjoy a great stretch of our water.

# The cycle continues for charity bikers

A charity cycle ride that's been raising money for a local church for seven years, is gearing up for another event next month, and entering is easy.

Le Tour de Tyringham Charity Ride is a scenic cycling event that takes riders through beautiful and historic countryside offering a rich blend of natural beauty and historical landmarks.
The ride, which is in its seventh year, raises money for the upkeep of St Peter's Church in Tyringham. Within the three distances on offer the Tour showcase the best of Buckinghamshire's countryside, with a mix of open fields, charming villages, and peaceful lanes, making it perfect for both seasoned cyclists and those looking for a relaxed ride.
"Get ready for the seventh edition of the exhilarating Le Tour de Tyringham Bike Ride," says organiser Hannah Horler. "Having taken oven the running of the event last year, BCS Events are thrilled to return to Tyringham in October for this incredibly popular charity bike ride, where we come together to raise vital funds for the maintenance of St. Peter's Church."
There are three distances to enter, depending on your prowess in the saddle – 65 miles, 50 miles and 25 miles. Entries start at £25.

Why join in?
- Stunning countryside routes
- Great camaraderie with fellow cyclists
- Supports a worthy cause
- Refreshments and support along the way
- Finisher's medal





Event details:
- Date: 5th October 2024
- Location: St Peter's Church, Tyringham, Buckinghamshire, MK16 9EX

## OLNEY BOWLING CLUB

LOCAL SPORT ROUNDUP

The Jock Smail Cup Day was held on Sunday 21st July, with 24 members entered the competition, drawn into 12 pairs, playing 3-woods in 2 divisions. The eventual winners were Dean Crafter and Andrew Griffin with runners up Francis Warburton and Dave Hoyland. Many thanks to Peggy and Desmond Smail for sponsoring the event and presenting the trophy. See photos below.
In the Bucks Plate competition, OBC have won their division and will be promoted to Bucks Cup next year. In the play offs they have beaten Buckingham West End and Amersham and will play Hazells in the final on 7th September. In the Mens Bletchley and District League, OBC have won 2 and lost 2 matches finishing 4th in the division. In the Mixed BDL OBC won 4 and lost 1 match, finishing 3rd in the division.
OBC have had mixed results in their friendly matches this month, beating Wolverton Town, Buckingham West End, Sharnbrook and Cogenhoe, but losing to Wolverton Park and Newport Pagnell (ladies). Join us on a Monday 10.30am or Thursday 11am morning for a friendly roll up and a cuppa. A great way for new or old members to make new friends and keep fit. Come half an hour earlier to get organised. Fancy learning to play bowls? Contact ray.smith.rs95@gmail.com to arrange a taster session. Olney Bowling Club welcomes all ages and abilities.



*The Jock Smail Cup Winners*



*The Jock Smail Cup Runners up*



*Local knitting and crafts organisation Knitty Stitchers*



*Twiddle muffs for care home residents*



# In Brief

### Walk the walk, talk the talk

A new group to encourage local people to walk and chat with others is being organised in Olney. Called Walk and Talk, the plan is to start and finish at the Olney Centre each Saturday morning from 10.30am. It will be a gentle stroll in good company – not a march or race – finishing with a cup of tea. It all starts on Saturday 7th September. More details: **townclerk@olneytowncouncil.gov.uk.**

### Knitters have been busy bees

Local knitting and crafts organisation Knitty Stitchers have had a busy summer, creating interesting and useful items for local causes.

They knitted 20 twiddle muffs for the residents of Bay House care home and then got involved with the Butterfly Volunteers at Milton Keynes University Hospital, who support patients and their families needing palliative care.

"We filled five large bags with blankets, twiddle muffs and toys to give to young children visiting loved ones nearing end of life, together with hundreds of butterflies to leave for relatives at this sad time," says Stitcher Jeanne Minney.

"We were pleased to welcome Lauren, from this wonderful charity, to hand over our gifts and she entertained us with an inspiring talk explaining why these things are so appreciated."

### Memories of Castle Theatre?

Castle Theatre in Wellingborough is turning 30 years old in 2025 and bosses are appealing for local show-goers' memories or memorabilia from the last three decades. It's for an exhibition on the mezzanine floor.

The theatre opened in 1995 on the site of the town's former cattle market and operated as a community theatre, starting with a community production of 'Annie'.

"We want the anniversary to be an homage to the last 30 years and remind people of the journey the Castle has been on, right from the start up to modern day," says general manager Martin Cleverley.

The theatre will be putting on a new version of Annie in April 2025, a part professional, part community project, and are encouraging people to get involved, from backstage, to acting on stage.

**Submit any stories or memories of Castle Theatre by phoning the Box Office on: 01933 270 007 or emailing: castle.marketing@parkwoodtheatres.co.uk.**

### Local charity founder is new Willen Hospice Chair of Trustees

Willen Hospice last month appointed Rachel Medill as their new Chair of Trustees. Rachel spent most of her early career working as a director in marketing and communications in London. Wanting to find a more fulfilling vocation, she moved into the charity sector and for the last 20 years she has worked in a range of local, regional and national leadership roles.

Her priority was always to her local community in Milton Keynes and it was this focus that led Rachel to set up Ride High, which uses horses to transform the lives of some of the most disadvantaged, disengaged and troubled local children.

"Everyone is touched at some time by the pain of the death of someone we love," says Rachel. "At Willen the staff and volunteers give patients, and the people who love them, dignity and care at a time when they need it most. I'm so proud to have become part of this extraordinary charity and team of people."



### Kids get own zone at festival

Folio (Friends of the Library in Olney) is once again running the KidZone activity area to entertain children over the BOFF weekend. Located between the Cowper and Newton Museum and the Pancake Parlour will be a Lucky Dip, a reading and colouring corner, Playdough, Lego and Duplo, face-painting, and a pre-owned toy and games stall.

KidZone will be open on Saturday 7th September from 12pm to 5pm and on Sunday 8th September, 10am to 4pm.

Folio's aims are to raise the footfall in the Library and to keep it at the heart of the community. It supports Olney Library by extending opening hours, arranging talks and events, linking with local schools and fundraising. **To find out more email: olneyfoliofriends@gmail.com.**

### Two big events for September kids!

Willen Hospice is beating the back-to-school blues with two family fun events this



*Willen Hospice are running the 'Mini Moo' on Sunday 15th September at Willen Lake*



*Rachel Medill - new chair of trustees at Willen Hospice*

month: the Mini Moo on Sunday 15th September at Willen Lake, and a weekend takeover of Gulliver's Land on Saturday 21st and Sunday 22nd.

The Mini Moo is a popular family event which sees hundreds of children walk, run or scoot a sponsored lap of Willen's North Lake, receiving a finisher's medal at the end. Families can look forward to music, games stalls and the hospice's mascot, Flo the Cow, cheering the kids on.

The following weekend, Willen Hospice will be taking over Gulliver's Land. As well as all the usual rides, there will be extra stalls and games raising money for the hospice. **Tickets are at a discounted price, with the first 500 just £12.50, while £2.50 of every sale goes to Willen Hospice.**

## Less drama from new membership system

Bedford Drama Company's committee have announced a new membership system managed through the website Membership Mojo.

This new system will allow members to:

- pay for membership and show fees online
- have a full 12-month annual membership
- receive automatic reminders when it's time to renew
- access exclusive discount codes for shows and workshops

**To join, go to: www.membermojo.co.uk/bedforddramaco Membership is £10 for 12 months and there's a 50% discount for concessions for membership and show fees.**

## A level success

Ousedale School in Newport Pagnell has given a snapshot of the A Level results success of its pupils this year. The details include:

- 82% have applied to and accepted university places
- 75% have confirmed places at their university
- 33 students achieved an average grade across all their qualifications of an A/A*
- 87 students, nearly 45% of the cohort, achieved an average grade across all their subjects of a B or better
- 148 students took qualifications with the average grade achieved a C, around 72% of the cohort

"We are delighted to see the hard work of our students, and their teachers, recognised and rewarded in today's Level 3 A Level and Vocational results," says headteacher Andy Burton. "The resilience of our students should not be underestimated as their secondary education was significantly disrupted throughout the pandemic years."




*pic by www.martynhicks.com*

## BOFF - The Big Olney Food Festival & Comedy Night

It's known for its food, music and fantastic vibe, and now BOFF is adding laughter into the mix with, for the first time ever, a dedicated comedy night, in partnership with entertainment agency 'It's Just Jokes'.

The gags will start flying from 7.30pm on Friday 6th September when a dazzling array of brilliant International comedians take to the stage in the Market Place marquee. A full night's entertainment is promised – with the first act kicking off at 8.10pm and the show ending at 10.30pm.

The BOFF committee still need volunteer help across the brilliant weekend for a variety of jobs, more details available at www.thebigolneyfoodfestival.co.uk/volunteers

## Quiz Corner

Answers to the word scramble on Quiz Corner are:

BOOKS CALCULATOR WATER RULER STAPLER SHARPENER TISSUE SCISSORS PAPER LAPTOP MARKERS NOTEBOOK


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# BACK TO SCHOOL BRAIN BUSTERS

QUIZ CORNER

As it's almost time to pack your bags and get ready to go back to school for the new term, we thought we'd give you two quizzes to try your hand at – a Word Search and a Word Scramble.

They might even help to jog your memory as you prepare your belongings and get ready for the start of term. Enjoy our brain teasers – but don't take them to school and do them during lessons!

And try this word scramble too, below, of things you are likely to be taking to school. Answers in In Brief (page 57)

| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Z | G | N | S | T | U | D | E | N | T | L | V | Q |
| P | D | O | S | A | Y | U | A | J | E | I | G | U |
| Y | E | T | E | L | X | A | O | Y | G | L | U | E |
| Q | J | E | C | L | U | B | O | O | K | S | E | F |
| W | U | B | E | E | J | N | S | T | G | H | R | R |
| R | U | O | R | T | E | A | C | H | E | R | A | K |
| I | R | O | X | J | I | X | T | H | Q | P | S | R |
| T | P | K | O | W | J | P | B | M | B | E | E | E |
| I | M | A | M | D | E | Z | H | U | D | O | R | L |
| N | A | L | P | N | I | G | Z | T | M | R | X | U |
| G | T | K | C | E | R | M | L | B | N | L | G | R |
| R | H | I | L | G | R | G | N | I | D | A | E | R |
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