

GREAT SHEFFORD PARISH NEWS

The Lent Lunch and Duck Derby were both very well supported and enjoyable events, the Duck Derby had ideal weather for the day, although the breeze sent many ducks into the banks of the river and they didn't reach the finish line. Approximately £2000 was raised for our village churches with lovely home made cakes available in the Village Hall afterwards, which was also well supported.

Many children enjoyed the Easter Village Trail, helped no doubt by the sunny weather.

It is a good to have a contribution again this month for Nature Notes from Richard Barker - thank you.

A reminder for all that the village Parish Assembly takes place in the Village Hall on Monday 12th May - this is the opportunity for residents to speak directly to Councillors, here what the clubs and societies, etc in the village have been up to and find out a bit more about what is happening in our village.

This month's Parish News is on the light side as I will have not have access to my computer after the 25th, so I am afraid any articles submitted after this date will have to wait until the June issue - this includes the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on the 7th, but these will be available on the village website in due course: greatshefford.org.uk.

If you have an article which you think other readers would like to see, please send it to: gtsheffordnews@gmail.com by 25th May.

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Linda Bowden

Editor

Village Calendar May 2025

Thursday	1 st	6.15 p.m.	Pilates, Village Hall
Friday	2nd	9.30 a.m.	Craft Club, Village Hall
Saturday	3rd	10.00 a.m.	Churchyard Working Party, St Mary's
Sunday	4 th	10.30 a.m.	Communion by Extension, St Mary's GS
Wednesday	7th	7.30 p.m.	Bellringing, St Mary's
Thursday	8 th	6.15 p.m.	Pilates, Village Hall
Friday	9th	9.30 a.m.	Craft Club, Village Hall
Saturday	10 th	7.30 p.m.	Bingo & Raffle, Social Club
Monday	12th	6.15 p.m.	Yoga, Village Hall
Monday	12 th	7.30 p.m.	Annual Parish Assembly, Village Hall
Monday	12 th	Follow above	Parish Council Meeting, Village Hall
Wednesday	14th	7.30 p.m.	Bellringing, St Mary's
Thursday	15th	6.15 p.m.	Pilates, Village Hall
Friday	16th	9.30 a.m.	Craft Club, Village Hall
Sunday	18th	10.15 a.m.	Café Church, St Mary's
Monday	19th	6.15 p.m.	Yoga, Village Hall
Wednesday	21st	7.30 p.m.	Bellringing, St Mary's
Thursday	22nd	6.15 p.m.	Pilates, Village Hall
Friday	23rd	9.30 a.m.	Craft Club, Village Hall
Saturday	24 th	7.00 p.m.	Race Night, Social Club
Sunday	25 th	4.00 p.m.	St Stephens, Shefford Woodlands
Sunday	25 th		Articles for June Parish news to be received
Wednesday	28th	8.30 p.m.	Cheese Club, Social Club
Wednesday	28 th	7.30 p.m.	Bellringing, St Mary's
Thursday	29 th	6.15 p.m.	Pilates, Village Hall
Friday	30 th	9.30 a.m.	Craft Club, Village Hall

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NATURE NOTES

Blue Haze

Bluebells are flowering early this year. There we will see a carpet of blue flowers in our favourite woods in early May. There will be a blue haze in the countryside.

This should inspire us to go for a walk or a drive to a local beauty spot... especially as we live in an area of outstanding natural beauty.

My favourite walking area is the Lambourn Downs because the views are spectacular, however the birds and butterflies are becoming less numerous. Some local birders prefer Coombe Gibbet because it is thought that they can observe the summer migration here. They know where to park to go for a little wander.

This year I saw my first flowering bluebell on April 9th. Was this a harbinger of spring or the product of global warming? There were other flowers in warm sunny spots - enough to get my flower books out. Those familiar with technology will be able to use an app on their powerful mobile phones to identify wild flowers

Over the years I have learnt a number of flowers including wood sorrel, lesser celandine and white campion. A few of these were poking their heads above ground on April 9th and bizarrely seeing them cheered me up.

Sadly we bird watchers have less and less birds to enjoy ... the RSPB recently reported a catastrophic decline in house sparrows! So amateur naturalists are getting into flowers and butterflies. But butterflies seem to becoming less numerous as well.

The RSPB's latest report on the "big garden bird watch" has just been published and I think it is all doom and gloom. The population of all birds except goldfinches has declined dramatically.

Nest Boxes

Losing such a quantity of birds each year leads to extinction!?. But we can all do our bit to help stop the trend by building nest boxes. I am currently working on a design for house sparrows. Although I have limited skills I have plenty of time and patience.

It was amazing how pleased I was when a nest box turned out like the picture on the website and was used by blue tits last year.

One can put up bird boxes all year round and in winter they are used as roosting sites. So this year I have put up a few more thanks to a kind landowner.

My wife and I like walking along the Lambourn Valley Way and we sometimes see a barn owl hunting. This always reminds me of the years we spent trying to rescue them from extinction in Berkshire. Nationally they were on the red list as it was known then and we ended our project with them on the green list.

Being an optimist I must say spring is the time of year when I hope to see all the “summer visitors” return. Swallows and house martins are easy to spot but the warblers are more difficult to identify and perhaps a good challenge.

Sedge warblers are a speciality of this area and easily seen on Hungerford Marshes or along the Lambourn Valley. They are incredibly easy to identify and even a tone deaf birder, like me, can recognise their call.

Personally I am looking forward to hearing, seeing and counting a squadron of screaming swifts flying around the church in May. A spectacular sight but even better in Woolston, near the White Horse, where a lady has converted the loft of her house to a nesting site for swifts!?

Children aged from 5 to 75

Now that spring has sprung and summer is around the corner we should all go for walks or rides in the countryside. Young children should be encouraged to look for wildflowers. They are the easiest to spot.

Primroses, cowslips, white - dead nettles and foxgloves are a speciality of this area. As are bluebells but with these the “clever- kids” start looking for Spanish bluebells ... I gave up on this as I did looking for four leaf clovers.

Bizarrely I now enjoy walking through natural burial grounds. They are so full of wild flowers such as orchids and hellebores. At Red Barn near Lambourn I even spotted harebells last year. This year I have admired the black thorn blossom, gorse and red kites as well as the occasional hare and barn owl because my wife kindly does our driving.

Richard Barker

For those wanting to see bluebells close up whilst supporting a worthy local charity, there is a bluebell walk on the 4th May at East Garston: [East Garston Bluebell Walk - Sunday 4th May 2025](#)

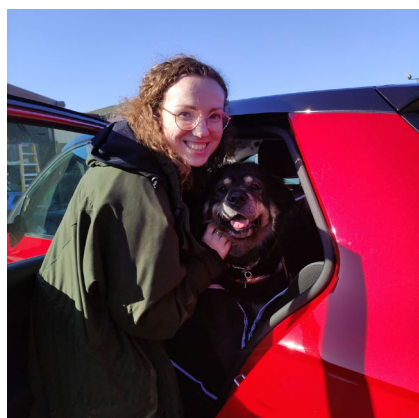
Editor



Happy Easter! We hope you all are enjoying the sunshine.

April has been a brilliant month for us over at NAWT Berkshire. The sunshine has meant the flooding onsite has started to go down and our animals have certainly been enjoying the nicer weather!

As we move into May we have some very exciting events coming up! On the 4th we will be at Lambourn Vintage Machinery Spring Show where we will be running a fun dog show for our pawsome friends to take part in! Then on the 26th we will be at Yattendon Fete to chat about all things rescue! Come along and hear stories and insights into life at a rescue centre!



Looking back at April, we were thrilled to say goodbye to many wonderful animals as they found their forever homes! A special shoutout goes to the delightful Elsa, who had been with us since January. We recently heard from her family, and they couldn't be happier—she's doing so well and settling in beautifully!



Meanwhile the charming Henry, a fabulous 15-year-old ginger boy is still searching for his perfect forever home! This sweet guy absolutely loves to snuggle up in a cosy spot on the sofa. While he's super affectionate, he's also got a bit of a sassy side, so he'd prefer to be the only pet in the household. Henry is quite the active little fellow and would appreciate having access to a garden to explore. If you think he could be your new companion, feel free to check out his profile online! www.nawt.org.uk/rehoming.



We're on the lookout for more wonderful fosters to help foster animals! If this sounds like something you'd enjoy, please reach out to our Volunteer Coordinator Sarah at s.hardwick@nawt.org.uk.

As always, don't forget to follow us on Facebook (@nawt.berkshire) to stay up to date on all our latest news!

3 UK BLUES AWARD 2025 NOMINEE

BEST ACOUSTIC ACT, BEST CONTEMPORARY ACT AND
EMERGING ACT OF THE YEAR

GREG BRICE

**BLUES
IN BRITAIN**

'incredible talent as
a guitarist and
songwriter'

**SPRING
DUO
TOUR**

featuring
Jack Thomas
on Bass

**BLUES
MATTERS**

'A brilliant set,
mellow, musical, and
thoughtprovoking, a treat
for the senses, a great musician.'

FATEA

'the most
exquisite
finger-picked
acoustic blues that
you could wish to hear.'

GREAT SHEFFORD VILLAGE HALL

Friday 16th May

7pm-11pm

TICKETS £10



available on the door
or online at
gregbricemusic.co.uk/shows

LICENSED BAR



News from Chaddleworth St Andrew's and Shefford C.E. Primary Schools

Here's an update from us at CSF for April...



The sun
shone and
spring had
certainly
sprung for

our Easter Service at St Andrew's Church in Chaddleworth. We were so impressed by the clear, accurate reading of the Easter story by Robins, the expression and actions for the spring poem shared by Kingfishers, the thoughtful words shared in Owls prayer and the quality of the vocabulary and organisation of thought in the Easter poems shared by Red Kites. Everyone's tuneful singing filled the church and brought a smile to our faces. A big thank you to all the families who were able to join us for the service and also to Reverend Mike for leading the service and welcoming us all to church.



I LOVE the
church.
EVERY

After our Easter service it gave opportunity for us all to be together and share a big 'thank you and goodbye' to Mrs Wilson who originally came to our school to teach French and then stayed as a catch-up tutor to support our children post lockdowns. We are so incredibly grateful for all that Mrs Wilson has brought, and given, to our school.

Red Kites were then able to enjoy the church grounds and beautiful spring weather, embracing the simple pleasures of nature and each other's company- truly living life in all its fullness.



We have also enjoyed not just one, but two friendly sporting events with our local school, Brightwalton!

Football friendly...

Our first friendly took place on Monday when they joined us for a football match against our 5/6 mixed football



team. After a little warm up it was time to get going and the weather couldn't have been better for us! It was great to see a match being played on our field, with all the team playing extremely well despite feeling the heat! We lost one game and won the next! A big 'thank you' to Mr Simpkin for being our referee. We're now looking forward to a rematch in the Summer term! Mrs Brown

Netball friendly...

On Tuesday we welcomed the Brightwalton netball team to join us for warm up and skills



activities

before heading into competitive games too.

Bounce passes, dodging, pivots, defending, sprinting and goal shots brought the game to a close as a 10-10

draw! Well done to all the players for their resilience and team work.



Bikeability- level 2...

Our year 6 children who had passed level one were able to move on to level 2 of Bikeability last week. Taking their bikes out



on the open roads to practise their cycling and safety skills. A BIG well done to every child who successfully passed level one or two of Bikeability this year!



Chocolate making at Chaddleworth...

On Wednesday, Owls were lucky enough to visit Chapman's Chocolate Factory. The children became designers and made chocolate bar wrappers that would attract consumers. They also melted chocolate and created their very own chocolate bars by adding delicious ingredients. Mrs Chapman



PTFA news and updates...

Our amazing PTFA team organised a really special opportunity for our children last week to make some choices at the 'Mother's Day gift room'. We hope that the special ladies in our children's lives felt spoilt with the gifts chosen and received!

The PTFA were back this week, with a special visitor too! Yes, the Easter Bunny joined us for the peg hunt! Every child searched high, and low, for their named peg to swap in for a tasty Easter treat. What fun!







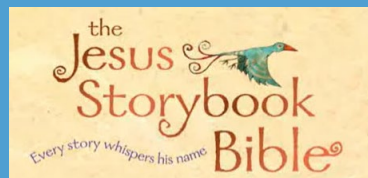
Please leave all donations under the bike shelter. Our collection will be on Wednesday 30th April.

 Clothes	 Paired shoes	 Handbags	 Hats
 Bags	 Scarves and ties	 Bras	 Jewellery
 Socks	 Belts	 Soft toys	 Household linen
 Household curtains	 Household towels	 Household bedding	

Our class worship Bible story focus...

Click on the link to share the Bible story together....

"God's Wonderful Surprise"



Big Question...

‘What can we find difficult to believe?’

Kind regards,

Debbie Munday

Acting Headteacher & DSL

Chaddleworth St Andrew's and Shefford Church of England Federated Primary Schools

'Living life in all its fullness'

Shefford site RG17 7DB

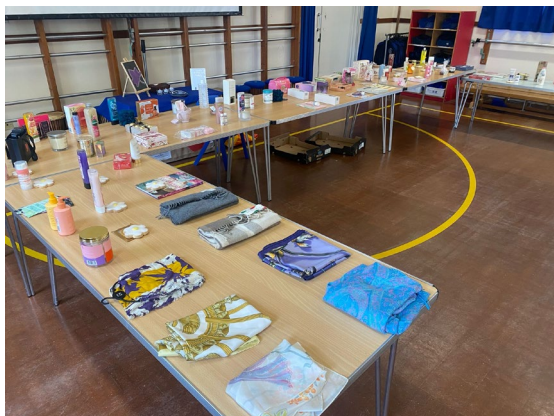
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PTFA News!



On Friday 14th, the children were invited to come to school in non-school uniform, in exchange for gift donations. Then, on Friday 28th March, the PTFA committee set up all the donations, alongside others we had purchased, to create a school gift room. The children were brought in class groups to do a spot of 'Mother's Day shopping' and choose a gift for their mum or loved one. The PTFA supported them as they wrapped and prepared their gifts to bring home at the end of the day. The children loved both the shopping and sharing their choices with their loved ones.



The fun continued into April, with our PTFA Easter bunny visiting school on the last day of term! The Easter bunny joined the children as they searched the school grounds to find the Easter pegs that the PTFA had hidden in the trees and bushes. Each child had a peg with their name on it to find, and exchanged for a chocolate Easter egg treat!



Special thanks go to the school Arts and Crafts club for their support with our Easter fun and fundraising! The children decorated eggs which the PTFA hid throughout Great Shefford as part of an Easter trail. Thank you to everyone who took part; we hope you enjoyed it!

The school arts and crafts club also decorated wooden eggs for the Chaddleshworth



Entertainment Committee's Easter egg hunt on Easter Sunday. These were hidden in the woods and enjoyed by everyone who found them!

We're looking forward to another term of fun and fundraising! Please save the date in your diaries for this year's school summer fete on **Saturday 28th June**!



CRAFT CLUB

This month our activity was “Decoupatch” or decoupage to use the more generic term. This involves covering various articles with torn up tissue type paper. We covered boxes, little vases and some Easter bunnies. The Decoupatch glue gives a slightly shiny and waterproof finish so should prove to be fairly

hard wearing. The little vases are actually empty aptimel bottles. By popping in a pebble or other weight for stability, they make cute little vases for small flowers. The third picture is the



completed needlework of a beautiful mallard drake by our very

talented member Margaret. She chooses a subject, (normally wildlife) finds a suitable picture and painstakingly reproduces it in thread. Each project usually takes several months but the results are always stunning.

We hope everybody had a good Easter and you are looking forward to some more lovely spring weather.

All the best from all the members of our friendly craft club.

Stevie



COMMUNITY SPEEDWATCH



This scheme is operated under the umbrella of Thames Valley Police by volunteers who have undertaken online training.

The village now has four sites approved by the police for speed monitoring, one of which is currently suspended until completion of the Flood Alleviation Scheme. Volunteers operate in teams of three, with equipment loaned by the TVP Police and Crime Commissioner. Monitoring is only permitted within 20, 30 and 40mph speed limits.

We are looking for additional volunteers, particularly those available during the “rush hour”. Have you recently moved to the village and looking to get involved in the community? Are you retired and have some time available in the day when you could support this scheme?

If so, Linda Bowden, Group Co-ordinator can answer any questions you may have and explain the scheme further, she can be contacted on 07850 643952.

Great Shefford Sports & Social Club

Current Opening Hours:

Friday 5:30pm - 11:00pm

Saturday 12:00pm - 4:00pm & 7:30pm - 11:00pm

Sunday 12:00pm - 4:30pm

Contact us:

Email: greatsheffordsocialclub@gmail.com

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61567726790943>

Phone (Sandra): [07748403778](tel:07748403778)

The Great Shefford Sports & Social Club is located behind the Village Hall on Station Road in the heart of our village. We are a friendly, committee run club and we are working hard to develop events for our local community to enjoy in addition to opening extended hours for our members as often as possible.

Maybe you'll have a flutter on the Grand National...perhaps you'll go to Royal Ascot...

Well, have you been to "Royal Great Shefford"?! Back for one night only (until the next time)...

RACE NIGHT

Saturday 24th May, open at 7pm for 7.30pm start

Other events to add to your diaries are the monthly Bingo and Raffle nights, held on the second Saturday of every month, and Cheese Club on the last Wednesday of every month.

- Saturday 10th May - Bingo & Raffle - Doors open 7:30pm - Eyes down 8pm
- Wednesday 28h May - Cheese Club. Around 8.30pm - 9pm, bring a piece of cheese along to share in a sociable nibble

We have 4 games with £10 line prizes and £25 cash House Prizes PLUS a special Flyer game with a £50 CASH PRIZE! These are in addition to the Big Raffle so there are lots of chances to win on the night! If anybody has any Raffle Prizes to donate we would be extremely grateful to receive these.....please drop them at the club, bring them along on the night or contact us to arrange for somebody to collect them from you.

If you haven't been to the club before, we would love you to welcome you for a drink and/or our upcoming events. If you have any comments, suggestions and/or questions about GSSSC please contact us & we look forward to seeing you at the club soon!