









































Upton News

July 2025














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The month ahead




Village calendar

Mon	Tues	Weds	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Sun
30	1	2	3	4	5	6
	 					 
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
	 					 
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
	 					 
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
	 	 		 		 
28	29	30	31	1	2	3
	 					




Village Hall

-  Parish Council
-  Village Fete
-  Uptonogood
-  Wine club
-  Brownies
-  Community coffee morning
-  Upton Christmas Readers
-  Dance & Fitness
-  Karate
-  Dog training
-  Kinetic gymnastics
-  Tea Birds WI
-  Nature Garden work group

St Mary's Church

-  Parish Eucharist
-  Lay-led service
-  Other service

Waste collection

-  Black bin
-  Green bin + Brown bin
-  Green bin + Brown bin + extra garden waste

Other

-  Weekend/public holiday
-  Clocks change
-  Upton News deadline

For details of events at the Village Hall please see [here](#):

For details of services at St Mary's Church, please see [here](#):

Sunrise, sunset & twilight



Village News

St Mary's Church

Service times

Date	Time	Type	Prayer focus
6 th July	9:15 am	Lay-led service	Children, Our village schools, Sunday Club
13 th July	9:15 am	Parish Eucharist	Those recently baptised, Baptism visitors
27 th July	8:00 pm	Parish Eucharist	Our worship, Musicians, organists and choirs

The online services continue every Sunday at 10.30am. Login after 10.00 am to chat beforehand or to check your technology. Please click [here](#) to access log-in details on the Churn Churches website.

Note to contributors

Contributions to Upton News are always very welcome. Please include your name, address and contact details (email and/or phone number) in case clarification is needed: we will not be able to publish your contribution without these details. The editor reserves the right to place, edit, shorten or omit contributions as required.

Please send your contributions by email to uptonox11news@gmail.com

The deadline for the July 2025 issue is **29th July 2025**.

Father Jason writes ...

I wonder if you have plans for a Summer holiday?



Some years ago, I went on a short holiday with a group of friends to the island of Iona, a small island off the west coast of Scotland. We drove up to Oban, and then took the ferry over to Mull. We then crossed the island, and took a second ferry over the short stretch of water which separates Mull from Iona. We happened to take the car, but it is possible to get to and from Iona by public transport.

Iona is a small but beautiful island, with plenty to see. Back in 563, an Irish missionary, St. Columba, visited the island and established a monastery, which became one of the centres of Celtic Christianity. Missionaries were sent out from Iona to mainland Scotland and to the North of England. The abbey survived until the 16th Century. In the 1930s, an inspirational Scottish minister, Revd George MacLeod, had the vision of rebuilding the abbey buildings, and using the buildings as a base for a new type of Christian Community, which would seek to empower and inspire Christians to serve the needs of contemporary society. This community is known as the Iona Community, and it continues to flourish.

There are many places to stay on the island. My friends and I booked ahead and were able to stay in the abbey buildings, but there are other places to stay as well. Because the island is so well known, it attracts visitors from around the world, so it is best to book well in advance.

The island has been described as a “thin” place. What is meant by this phrase? It is meant to describe the sense of being in a holy place: many people who visit Iona feel that being on the island brings them close to God. It feels as if there is very little separating us from God – the boundary between earth and heaven feels very “thin” on this Scottish island. In short, it is a holy place.



I think it does us all a lot of good to spend some time in a holy place - a place where we feel that we might almost stretch out our hand and touch God. We don't have to go as far as Iona to find a holy place - there are holy places all around us. I do hope you will be able to spend some time in a holy place over the next month or so - a place where you can feel close to God, and can rest in God's love. It does us all a world of good.

Upton Parish Council

Upton Parish Council held its most recent Parish Council Meeting on Wednesday 27th June 2025 at the Village Hall. A summary of the main points arising is given below

Upton needs one more parish councillor - could you help? We meet once a month and do our best to help keep Upton the lovely village it is to live in. It's very important that we have a full quota of councillors because if we do not, the parish council can be replaced by the district council who will not have a focus solely on Upton. Please help us have a full team and a strong village by volunteering to help. Contact the chair [Francoise Yates](#) if you might be interested.

We also need volunteers to help raise money for playground maintenance. While RoSPA 's inspection of the playground was very positive, there is some rotten wood that will be expensive to replace. We would be really grateful if a group of villagers, with the time and interest, could help apply for grants to cover the upkeep of the playground.

In the unlikely event of a major emergency in Upton, perhaps flood or major storm, we would like to compile a list of villagers who are qualified, trained or retired, in any kind of medical/first aid discipline. Whether you are a doctor, nurse, or have had first aid training in your workplace we would be grateful if you could contact us so that we can organise an emergency first aid list and respond swiftly if ever needed.

We would like to say a huge "thank you" to the generous villager who has offered to use her considerable experience to produce and undertake the village survey. She will need some assistance with this so please contact us if you could help. We are very grateful and look forward to seeing the results of her hard work. Thank you!

Some villagers have asked if they could reinstate community speed watch. We are very grateful for this but they need four additional volunteers to operate the scheme.

If you could help with any of the above topics, please contact the [Chair](#) or [Parish Clerk](#).

As always, the Council would like to invite comments from all villagers on any matter with which they have concern. These should be sent by [email](#) to the Parish Clerk. Please note that the Minutes of previous Parish Council meetings can be found [here](#).

The next Parish Council meeting will be held on 23rd July 2025 at the Village Hall. Please note that an Extraordinary Parish Council meeting will be held at on 3rd July 2027 at 7:30 pm in St Mary's Church to discuss two planning applications: one at Pentreen, Stream Road and the other at Wattle Farm cottage. All residents are welcome to attend and contribute to a shared discussion about the parish's response.

Upton Wine Club

Saturday 14th June was a special day in the Upton Wine Club calendar because it marked the 20th Anniversary of our club. For the past 20 years we have averaged an overall annual membership of 50+ residents from our village and have sampled over 1,600 wines! Although many members keep coming because they have an interest in wine, either just enjoying it or looking to try something different or even wanting to learn a little more into what makes a quality wine, I believe that a key factor in the club's success is its social side.

During each monthly meeting, we always allow time between tasting wine for our members to catch up for a social and this Saturday we took that to the next level. Upon arrival, members enjoyed a cocktail, a Bellini made from mixing peach juice and prosecco. This is a great welcome drink for small or large parties. After some celebrations, where we thanked past chairmen Mike Collins and Will Betts and secretary, Fiona Betts for their support in setting up and its continual running over the years, we settled in to a wonderful BBQ. We enjoyed the food with two whites, a *Coral-do-Mar Albarino* from the Rias Baixas region, which had characteristics of stone fruit and a wonderful citrus flavour and a *Buitenverwachting Buiten Blanc*, a crisp, medium-bodied Sauvignon Blanc from South Africa. For the red we had a *Codici-masserie Primitivo* from Italy, a beautifully red berry/dark fruity, jammy wine which is great on its own but amazing with some food! We finished the evening with some amazing chocolate brownies and a dessert wine called *Elysium black Muscat Quady*. If you have not tried this and enjoy sweet wine, do try it: it's simply wonderful with any sweet dessert!

And what better way to finish the evening than a line dance! A first for the wine club but so popular it wouldn't surprise me if it didn't become a candidate for another Upton club! A massive thank you to all that came along and enjoyed the evening and to all those who made it such a fantastic celebration. The wine club is off now for the summer months but will be back again on 17th **September 2025** for a new Season. Look forward to seeing all the familiar faces again and if you wanted to come and give it a try, don't forget all the details can be found on our [website](#).



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Upton Village Fete

Save the Date: Saturday 6th September 2025, 12 noon - 4 pm

Planning is in full swing for this year's Upton Village Fête, and we'd love your help to make it another fantastic community day!

We are currently looking for volunteers to help with:

- running stalls (books, plants, tombola, hampers, refreshments, and more)
- helping with set-up on the morning of the event
- lending a hand with clearing away afterwards

Whether you can spare an hour or the whole day, we'd be so grateful for your time.

We're also on the lookout for donations for our ever-popular stalls:

- hampers: bottles, luxury food items, pamper products
- tombola prizes: unopened gifts, treats, bottles, toiletries
- books: good-quality fiction, children's books, and recent titles
- jigsaws: complete and in good condition
- plants: cuttings, potted plants, herbs, flowers
- preserves: homemade jams, chutneys, marmalades
- face painting: we're also in need of a volunteer to offer this fun activity on the day!

Donations can be dropped off to:

Ann Parham, Pottengers, Chilton Road, Upton

by **Wednesday 14th August 2025**

This is a brilliant opportunity to get involved in a village tradition and help raise funds for our local community.

If you'd like to volunteer or have any questions, please email the [Parish Clerk](#)

Uptonogood? 2025

Thank you to all those that participated at this year's Uptonogood? Whether you rode or volunteered and helped in one (or more) of the many capacities required, the event could not happen without you, so thank you, Upton's thriving community, for your support.



We had some 550 riders on the day, cycling 5 different routes, looked after by 52 Marshals and 7 Sweepers. Once the riding was over, we had 3 fantastic bands, 1 DJ, 387 burgers flipped, 80 sizzling sausages, and approximately 1000 pints of beer and cider consumed!

On the downside, we had a broken chain, broken derailleur, a nasty case of gravel rash, and a broken collar bone. Fortunately, they were all taken care of by Safe Hands and Mountain Mania, our first aid and mechanical support providers.

For once the sun shone throughout the day and although hot, it was not the "hottest day" forecast, with a third of the 648 litres of water purchased for the feed stations being returned unused.

We are pleased to say all our efforts have resulted in approximately £13.5K raised which will now be apportioned according to volunteer/marshal requests but with the majority staying right here in Upton to support the upkeep and improvement of the wonderful facilities we have. Full details will appear on our [website](#) in due course.

If anyone took photos on the day that you don't mind sharing, please [email](#) them to us.

If you are up for doing it all again next year, the date will be **Saturday 20th June 2026**.

All the best,

Mike Tibbetts and Bob Lott

Upton Neighbourhood Watch

As they say: “no news is good news” and nothing was noted in Upton this month.

The group is now officially registered and if you would like to be formally part of the group and receive local updates, do join using this [link](#)

To raise our profile within the village, we are hoping to install some signs and to have a presence at the Village Fete on 6th September.

The latest edition of Which? ScamAlerts highlighted fraudulent QR codes, known as quishing scams. QR codes are two-dimensional patterns of small black and white squares that can be created by anyone. While many are harmless, some act as gateways into a scammer's trap.

Fake codes are most commonly found in car parks as sneaky stickers placed on payment machines, according to Action Fraud, the national fraud and cyber crime reporting centre. Scam QR codes have also been found on online shopping platforms, with sellers receiving dodgy QR codes via email to verify their accounts or to receive payments for sold items. Some reports revealed scams impersonating HMRC and other UK government bodies. Action Fraud issued a warning after revealing that £3.5m was lost to reported QR code scams in 2024.

Before scanning a QR code, you should:

- look for tampering - does the QR code look like it has been stuck over something? If you're not sure, enter the website address manually and avoid scanning the code;
- preview the website address before following it. When you scan a QR code, you should see the address pop up before you're redirected to it. Check the address to make sure it corresponds to the address you were expecting;
- avoid scanning QR codes in public places, such as car parks. Look for alternative ways to carry out the task. If it's a car park, there should be information about other ways to pay;
- try to avoid using a QR code to make a payment;

- avoid QR code scanning apps, as they can increase the risk of downloading malware or being redirected to a misleading advert. Most mobile devices have QR code readers within the phone's camera, so use that to scan QR codes instead.
- avoid scanning QR codes in emails, as these could be used by scammers to disguise phishing links.

If you lose any money to a scam, call your bank immediately using the number on the back of your bank card and report it to [Action Fraud](#).

Our next meeting will be in September (date to be confirmed) and as ever, all are welcome .

Upton Photographic Competition

The Summer 2025 Upton Photographic Competition is now open! This competition is open to all residents of Upton.

There are two age categories:

- anyone under 16 years of age
- anyone 16 years of age and above

There are three competition themes:

1. *Upton and Surrounding Area:*
any photograph that shows off the area in which we live (landscapes, buildings, people, nature, sunsets, weather etc).
2. *Photos from your travels*
photographs from anywhere in the world
3. *Black and White*
any summer image captured in, or converted to, B/W

Images can be captured by phone or camera and sent to this [email address](#). Please remember to include a brief description or title. The closing date is **September 30th 2025** and there is no limit to the number of entries.

Good luck and get snapping!!

Local News

Blewbury Players

"A gripping story..." , "... engrossing and uncommonly moving..." , "A great story, compelling characters..." "It is superb in its storytelling as it celebrates storytelling itself as the Monster tells his stories. It is unforgettable..."

Many of you may have read the novel or seen the film of the story. Directing us is Sabina Netherclift, an experienced professional director who runs her own company, Filament Theatre, and has particular interest in physical theatre and community work. She tells us *"This is a wonderful uplifting story about the value of family friendship and ultimately love. It's got these wonderful storytelling elements in it and it's going to be wildly entertaining. Thirteen year old Conor has the same dream every night, ever since his mother first fell ill. But tonight is different. Tonight when he wakes, there's a monster at his window. It's elemental, a force of nature, and it offers to tell Conor three tales if the boy will, in return, tell him the truth. The monster's relationship with Conor is as a storytelling mentor, kind of challenging and helping him to come to terms with what is happening"*.

We have a strong creative team, cast and an imaginative set and are anticipating a moving, uplifting production. We are excited that Sabina is bringing with her Alex Harvey from Ockham's Razor (a contemporary circus company that recently toured performing 'Tess' at Oxford Playhouse and Newbury Corn Exchange). Alex will be acting as an Aerial Movement Director and Consultant. The cast are eagerly anticipating their first rehearsal with him. We are also delighted to be welcoming Lizzy McBain as production designer to complete the team bringing professional expertise. They are of course supported by our wonderful talented local teams both on and off the stage. We are once again grateful to have strong contributions from many younger members of our community in all areas of the production.

We have made a video podcast!! Listen to Sabina talk about the play and what audiences can expect on our [website](#).

The Box Office for *A Monster Calls* is now open. This production is suitable for 11 years+. You can book [online](#) or by scanning this QR code.



Please note that the production is suitable for 11 years +. Tickets cost £16 for adults and £9 for children (up to 18). There are Evening performances **16th - 19th July** and a Matinee performance **19th July**.

We look forward to seeing you at Orchard Dene!

Blewbury School Report

The staff, pupils, and community of Blewbury Church of England Primary School are celebrating a glowing report following a recent SIAMS (Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools) inspection. The report praises the school for living out its Christian vision and creating an environment where both pupils and staff flourish.

At the heart of the school's success is a clear and deeply embedded Christian ethos based on the parable of the sower. The values of love, courage, forgiveness, and resilience guide every decision, nurturing a warm, inclusive culture where all members of the community are respected, supported, and encouraged to grow.

Inspectors highlighted the school's *"culture of respect and care,"* the strength of its partnerships with the church, local community, and the Oxford Diocesan Schools Trust, and its commitment to helping every child succeed—academically, socially, and spiritually. Pupils were commended for their thoughtfulness, empathy, and environmental awareness, with inspectors noting how children are becoming *"thoughtful and proactive advocates for positive change."*

Collective worship, pupil voice, strong relationships, and inclusive classroom practices were all recognised as central to the school's success. The curriculum was praised for encouraging deep thinking and spiritual reflection, with Religious Education described as well-resourced and improving rapidly.



Fire making at a recent residential course)

The report noted two areas for future development: embedding recent improvements to the RE curriculum and creating more opportunities for awe and wonder across the school environment.

Headteacher, governors and trustees of ODS expressed pride in the school's achievements and gratitude to everyone who contributes to its thriving, inclusive atmosphere. *"We are so proud of our pupils, who show kindness, curiosity, and compassion every day,"* said Miss Reeder, Headteacher. *"I want to thank our incredible staff, dedicated families, and the wider community for the love and support that make Blewbury such a special place to learn and grow."*

Blewbury CE Primary School's success is a testament to what can be achieved when a school truly lives its values—and when a whole community works together to help every child blossom.

The full report is available on the school website. The school has room for more children so if anyone knows a family who is looking for school places, encourage them to visit this very special place where they will receive a warm welcome.

Blewbury WI

Blewbury WI's next main meeting is at 4:00 pm on **Wednesday 27th August** in the Melland Room at Blewbury village hall. It will be a *"bring and share"* tea, for Members only, with the theme of *"Ascot"* – Oh My!

Blewbury WI have recently had a super canal boat trip from Hungerford on *"The Rose of Hungerford"*. The weather was fantastic and a good time was had by all.

Blewbury WI is a vibrant bunch of friends. Monthly meetings with interesting speakers plus coffee mornings, Scrabble, walks, theatre trips, Rummikub, book club, craft evenings and the fiendish game of Mah Jong – all activities you can join in if you wish.

If you'd like to find out more, please ring our Secretary, Joy, on 850543 or contact us by [email](#).

Blewbury Post Office

Blewbury Post Office is open 9:00 am to 3:00 pm Mondays to Fridays, with morning-only opening during school holidays.

We would like to mention the next BlewTube event in early July (details below). All money goes towards Blewbury Village Hall funds. We are also collecting used ink toner cartridges, which you can drop off at Blewbury Post Office; again, all money goes towards the Village Hall and we stop them just going to landfill.



BlewTube

Wed 2nd July 7:30pm

Doors open 7:15

Blewbury Village Hall

Tickets £6

Available at the Post Office, on the door and online at



<http://square.link/u/DXCVsVUa>

Astons Online

Astons Online promotes digital confidence in using the Internet, with smartphone apps or online services. Astons Online events and support are free of charge and open to everyone.

We're available for Zoom, Facetime, WhatsApp or telephone one-to-one sessions on Tuesday mornings between 10:00 am and 12:00 noon. The next in-person one-to-one session will be held in Astons Village Hall (OX119EQ) on **Tuesday 15th July** from 10:00 am to 12:00 noon.

United Charities

United Charities aims to support people of all ages living in Upton, Blewbury and the Astons, who may need financial support. We would like to thank all of you who have generously made donations, which allows us to continue reaching out to help individuals and family in need. By making your donations through our [Just Giving page](#) we can reclaim an additional 25% towards our funds (if the donor is a tax payer). All the money we receive goes towards helping people who apply for our assistance, from energy costs and general living expenses to school uniform and equipment.

If you have any questions, please do get in touch with us by [email](#)



Vale News

VoWHDC News

Hello from Hayleigh and Debra



6th June was the anniversary of D Day, and on Saturday 7th June we attended the ceremony at the Harwell Stone to lay a wreath on behalf of VoWHDC to honour the memory of those brave men that took off from the Harwell site 81 years ago to take part in the Normandy landings. It is always an honour to take part in such an event. Thankfully the weather held off just long enough. It was also very nice to see the new memorial sculpture inspired by the Horsa Gliders, to honour the 6th Airborne Division, the No. 38 Group RAF, and the Glider Pilot Regiment.

In the first week of June, the Joint Local Plan for South and Vale was undergoing examination by the planning inspectorate at the Bee House in Milton Park and the sessions were live-streamed. The next steps are for the Inspectorate to consider what they have heard and seen and then make their decision whether to proceed to the next stage of the examination.

Local Government Reorganisation is still in discussion amongst Local Authorities as we begin to gather evidence for our submission to the Government; the deadline is November. The councils have opened a consultation with the public [here](#).

On 14th May, Vale of White Horse had its Annual meeting. A new chair and vice chair were elected – Cllrs Oliver Forder and Jill Rayner respectively. The leader, Cllr Bethia Thomas also announced changes to the cabinet. Cllr Hayleigh Gascoigne is the new cabinet member for Environmental Services, Climate Action and Nature Recovery, having previously been Chair of the Climate Emergency Advisory Committee.

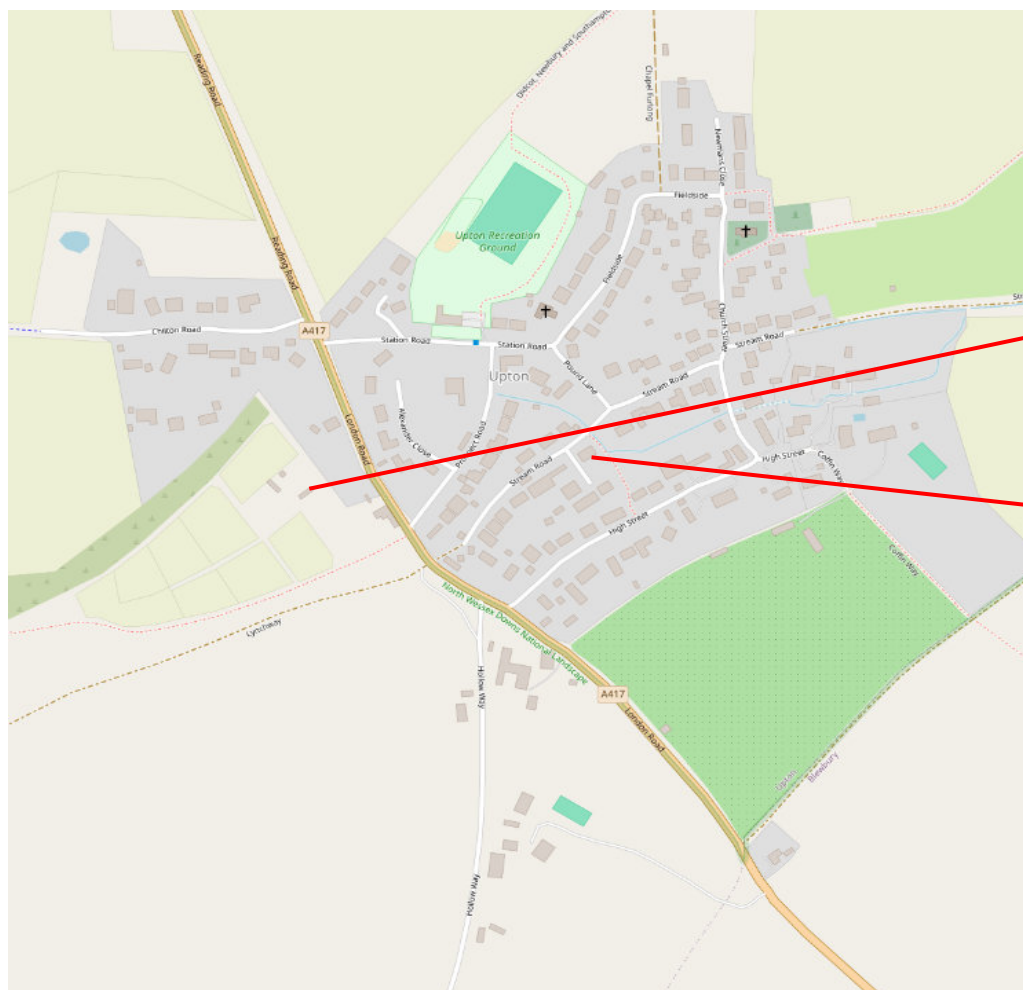
Several residents have asked about the new stickers for garden waste brown bins. The Vale of White Horse District Council introduced a new garden waste subscription on 1st April 2025, changing the way that you pay for your garden waste collection. It will make it easier for you to keep control of your payments – for example, if your bank details change. You now require a permit sticker on your bin, which will be sent to you when you pay. This identifies to the waste crews that you have paid for that year, and they can empty your bin. The colour of the sticker will relate to the year that you have paid for, so will change each year (it's yellow this year). If have any queries please see [here](#) or get in touch with us.

As always, if you have any questions or suggestions for us as councillors, please do email us (email addresses [here](#) and [here](#)). We also post regular updates on our Facebook pages [here](#) and [here](#).

As a reminder, council meetings are held in public and if you wish to address council or committee, you can contact Democratic Services ahead of time. If you need more guidance on this, please let us know!

Current planning applications

The map below shows the location of all planning applications within the parish of Upton that are *Current* and were registered between 1st January 2021 and 30th June 2025. Details of each application can be obtained by following the hyperlinks on the right-hand side of the map.



[P24/V2170/FUL](#)

[P25/V1188/DIS](#)

Olly Glover (MP)



July marks one year since being elected as the MP for our constituency. Learning how parliament operates, establishing a constituency office and recruiting a team took some time, but I can now reflect on our work over the last 12 months.

Since the election, my team and I have opened over 7,000 cases and responded to 12,500 emails to constituents. Some involve directing local people to the services they need, but others are more complex and take time to work through. Cases cover many topics, from health and care, to immigration and international trade.

Alongside helping constituents on a personal level, I have been able to use cases and local issues to inform efforts to drive national policy changes. I've been asking questions of Ministers in the House of Commons, speaking in Westminster Hall debates, securing one-to-one meetings with Ministers and taking part in cross party groups: the Transport Select Committee, and the Planning and Infrastructure Bill Committee. These are just some of the ways I have been able to voice your issues to the people with power to influence them. Recent successes include getting a decision on an export licence for local business which saved several jobs.

There has been some progress, too, on the big issues affecting our constituency: I secured a meeting with the rail minister to make the case for Grove Station; the County Council has started work on a feasibility study. I have presented a bill to ensure infrastructure targets accompany housing targets, which the Housing Minister has taken an interest in. Finally, after being rescheduled and delayed by the minister's office, I have secured a meeting with the Water Minister

about the SESRO reservoir to make her aware of all local concerns. Of course, on all these and many other local issues, there is more work to do.

Recently, I have had the pleasure of visiting the Cornermen project, based in South Moreton, doing fantastic work to support men's mental health; discussed ideas to get people taking action to reduce their carbon footprint with trustees of local charity myzerocarbon.org at a recent constituency surgery in Wallingford and attended the South East RFCA Armed Forces Briefing at RAF Benson to learn about the relationships between defence and the wider community, and the critical role in our communities and our future defence played by cadet and reservist schemes.

During the summer, I will be undertaking many visits and holding regular surgeries around the constituency. If you would like to come and meet me, please [email](#) me (or leave a voice message at 0207 219 7657). Feel free, as always, to use these contact details for anything else I can help with.

Jackie's Care

Are you looking for trustworthy, one-to-one care tailored to your needs? At Jackie's Care, I am proud to provide high-quality care services, at highly competitive rates, 7 days a week. I can offer the following Services:

- Personalized Care Plans: Tailored to meet your individual needs.
- Shopping Assistance: Help with errands and groceries.
- Medication Administration: Ensuring your health is a top priority.
- Appointments Support: Assistance with scheduling and attending appointments.
- Companionship: A caring presence to brighten your day.
- Administrative Work: Support with paperwork and managing daily tasks.
- Overnight Care: Comprehensive support through the night.

Please contact me by phone (07712455093) or email (jackiefideria@yahoo.com)

Didcot u3a

"Calling all recently retired or semi retired individuals in and around Didcot. Are you looking for new interests and/or making new friends?"

With over 30 Interest Groups (full details can be found on our [website](#)) then look no further and consider joining the Didcot & District U3A to 'Learn, Laugh, Live'!

New members are always warmly welcomed to join (first visit is 'free to see') and chat over tea and biscuits at the monthly meetings held on the third Tuesday of every month for this nationwide self-help teaching and learning organisation in the Didcot Civic Hall starting at 2:30 pm.

At the monthly meetings there will also be an interesting presentation by a Guest Speaker, and over the coming months we have the following Speakers and topics:

15 Jul Slovenia/Albania
 Speaker: Nick Brazil

19 Aug Fraud and scam awareness
 Speaker: Viviana Salmon

For more detailed information about this locally nationwide organisation for retired or semi-retired individuals still wishing to 'Learn, Laugh, Live' then please contact us [here](#). We look forward to seeing you soon!

News from afar

Oxfordshire County Councillor's report



I'm Rebekah (Bekah) Fletcher and I was elected to be the Oxford County Councillor for Blewbury, Chilton, Harwell, Upton and Western Valley parishes in May 2025.

June was a busy month and I've been getting to grips with Parish Council meetings, a lot of council training, and councillor enquiries. The first full council was held on 20th May, at which committee places were confirmed. I will be sitting on the People Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

We will be looking at all services provided to and for adults in potential need of social care or safeguarding, and holding the council to account on providing the best care possible for this vulnerable group of people. It also includes some public health matters (if not covered by the Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee).

At the council meeting, we also gave tribute to and signed a book of condolence for the two firefighters and member of the public who gave their lives at Bicester Motion last month.

If you have any questions for me, please do get in touch with me by [email](#). You can also keep updated on my activity via [Facebook](#)

Transport update

Reading Road, Harwell

From 16th June – 11th July, there will be two-way signals on Reading Road for duct installation works. Some OpenReach network blockages have also been identified and work on these will be carried out at the same time. Delays are likely.

Thames Valley Police Commissioner

Fly-tipping is more than an unsightly mess, it can be big business for criminals.



Matthew Barber

Your voice in
Thames Valley

From rogue traders claiming to be properly licensed, to large scale organised criminal gangs who will use threats and intimidation to illegally dump hundreds of tonnes of waste, the impact on victims and the environment can be huge.

In the last year alone there were more than 100,000 incidents of fly-tipping across the South East and it is estimated that the cost to the economy in England is nearly a billion pounds.

Responsibility for waste dumping falls across several agencies. Local authorities are responsible for investigating, clearing and taking appropriate enforcement action in relation to small scale fly-tipping on public land. The Environment Agency is responsible for dealing with large-scale fly-tipping (more than a lorry load), hazardous waste and fly-tipping by organised gangs. Too often responsibility can be passed from one organisation to another.

So I have joined forces with Police & Crime Commissioners in Hampshire, Surrey, Sussex and Kent in an attempt to get police forces, specialist police units, the Environment Agency and councils to work together to tackle the problem. We held our first meeting in Kent in early June.

Many people don't realise that often criminals who are involved in waste crime will also be responsible for vehicle thefts, money laundering, drug trafficking and a wide range of other offences.

Victims are often hit twice. Not only will rural and industrial businesses be affected by having waste dumped illegally on their land or in their buildings, but they often have to pay for the cost of the clean up - or face stiff fines themselves! This needs to change, and I will be working to put pressure on the government to protect victims.

Thames Valley Police's Rural Crime Task Force have had some successes in tackling organised waste gangs by working with councils and the Environment Agency, but there is more to be done.

We can all play our part. If you discover fly tipping (large or small) please report it to Vale of White Horse District Council. They can investigate offenders. If you see someone in the act of illegally dumping waste, call 999 - it's a crime in progress!

If you pay someone who is unlicensed to take away your waste, you could be fined £600 if they dump your waste! So it's always worth checking the Environment Agency's website to see if someone is registered.

Local directory

What's On

Venue	Telephone	Website
Didcot		
Cornerstone	01235 515144	https://www.cornerstone-arts.org/whats-on
Cineworld	0871 2002000	https://www.cineworld.co.uk/cinemas/didcot/
Wallingford		
Corn Exchange	01491 825000	https://www.cornexchange.org.uk/whats-on/
Wantage		
The Beacon	01235 763456	https://www.beaconwantage.co.uk/whats-on/
Abingdon		
The Abbey Cinema	01235 616000	https://theabbey.ac/web

Service centre

If you are an Upton Village resident and have a skill or trade that other residents might find useful, please contact the editor with a short summary of your skill/trade and your contact details. We will include these in the next edition of Upton News, free of charge.

Listings will initially be restricted to Upton Village residents but if there are any skills or trades not covered, then we may include entries from residents of nearby villages.

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Useful contacts

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