

Village News

in Swindon Village, Cheltenham

*Your local newsletter sponsored by the Parish
Council and delivered by volunteers.*

February 2024 Edition No.500

Upcoming Events



FEBRUARY

Sunday 11th **Litter Pick.** Meet 10.30am at Cross Hands
Pub

Monday 12th **Parish Council Meeting**

Wednesday 14th **Valentines Day**


Wednesday 21st **Swindon Village Society.** Talk –
'Cider Making in Gloucestershire' by Andy
Mellor.
Village Hall. Visitors welcome. 7.30pm.

MARCH

Monday 11th **Parish Council Meeting**

Sunday 17th **Litter Pick.** Meet 10.30am at Village Hall
Easter Family Event details to follow

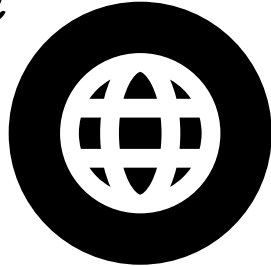
Wednesday 20th **Swindon Village Society.** Talk –
Votes for Women – the campaign in the
Cheltenham area' by Sue Jones.
Village Hall 7.30pm. Visitors Welcome



A Connected Community!



Using your phone's camera to hover over each QR Code square below for direct link access.



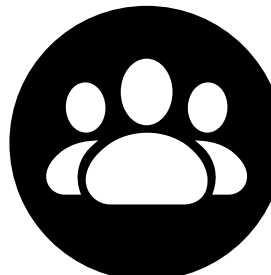
Parish Council Website

For full, detailed information from and about the Parish Council visit www.swindonparish.org.uk



Parish Council Facebook Page

A public page for live information and news updates from the council:
www.facebook.com/swindonparish



Swindon Village Facebook Community Group

A private group for the discussion of local issues, sharing and requesting help in the local community.



Anti-Social Behaviour

If you have any concerns about anti-social behaviour do not hesitate to contact the police.



Ring 101 (you may be charged for this phone call) or **email**
101@gloucestershire.police.uk

NB: Get an INCIDENT REPORT NUMBER and let the parish know about it. If the police are not made aware of the problem THERE ISN'T A PROBLEM.



A Note From The Editor

Happy New Year!

It might be several weeks into 2024 when you read this – but I am reliably informed that good things come to those who wait.

Talking of which, it is a leap year. So, ladies if you are fed up waiting for the proposal of your dreams, this is the time to take matters into your own hands. Best of luck and any stories of success (or just entertaining) we'd be happy to print it next month.

I think I've written before about not joining in with the whole New Year resolution malarkey. I don't like the constriction of being told what I can or can't do – even if it's dictated by some daft idea I had on January 1st. In the past I've aimed to lose weight, do more exercise and make time for me. None has been particularly successful. Today marks the second day of a dry weekend – The first after many wet ones. It might be chilly but if anything would inspire me to get outside then it would be this. Sadly, I am inside finishing off some work and editing the Village News.

We are finding our feet with the new printers. The process is longer, so while we are trying to distribute before the end of the month it isn't a certainty that it will happen. Apologies if you do not receive the Village News when you expect it but be assured that it will be with you as soon as practically possible.



Karren



Swindon Parish Council

SWINDON PARISH COUNCIL REPORT

I wrote my last report in mid November and this is going out to you at the start of February. Something happened between those two events. Umm, oh yes, Christmas and New Year! As this is my first and only opportunity to say it to you, Happy New Year!

In planning, new documents were released by the prospective developer of Home Farm. The documents arrived on 13th December. With only 21 days allowed for review and comment this presented great difficulties for people who were hoping to enjoy some time off during the Christmas holiday. An attempt to avoid close scrutiny? Perhaps we are too cynical.

The documents were mainly a response to comments on highways matters. Originally it was proposed that traffic in and out of Home Farm would use the roads through the coming Elms Park development. With outline permission for Elms Park still pending the developers are trying to argue that the existing roads are adequate to support both construction and residential traffic. The Parish Council is absolutely opposed to this. Can you imagine Quat Goose Lane and Brockhampton Lane being used in this way? Your councillors worked hard in the run up to Christmas drafting comments and producing a leaflet outlining the council's concerns. They personally distributed the leaflet to the homes that would be most affected. As a result of raised public awareness many more comments were submitted to the Borough Council.

Continuing with planning matters, the Parish Council is gearing up to get involved in consultation on the Strategic and Local Plan. This document will replace the infamous Joint Core Strategy (JCS) and the Cheltenham Local Plan.



Swindon Parish Council

The Local Green Space that we won through a prolonged argument with the planning authority and planning inspector will again be called into question. If we value where we live we must be prepared to fight to defend it. This process will take years and I'm afraid you'll be hearing more about it from me as time goes by.



Lots of tree matters now. The first one is seasonal. The Parish Council would like to thank local hero Nathan for preparing the Parish Council's entry to the St. Lawrence Christmas Tree Festival.

Brilliant work!

"I can at last stop talking about the chestnut trees in the Amenity Area. Work has been completed with one tree felled and the other reduced. We are going to seek a better name for the Amenity Area. Ironically I discovered that it used to be called 'The Chestnuts'" on the day I had one of them felled. More works are planned for the area. I have received quotes and am waiting for the Borough Council tree officer to give the go ahead.



Swindon Parish Council

I was chatting to a tree surgeon in the Amenity Area in early December. It was windy and we joked that it would probably be best if we didn't stand under some of the trees. I was walking back along Church Road and a branch crashed down from one of the trees, narrowly missing



me. I hope the parish would have taken care of my widow. Our litter pickers were out in force on Sunday 7th January. After the New Year race meeting there was certainly a lot to pick up! We started at the Village Hall. One group headed west and another east. I haven't seen any of the westerlies since. Perhaps they are still out there somewhere! We have set new litter pick dates. They are on the website and on the Village News calendar page. The new faces that joined us last time seemed to enjoy their hour with us!

The allotments holders recently held a meeting to discuss various issues of common interest. The good news is that the badgers have moved on; the bad news is that the deer have moved in. Thank you to Ian for all he did for the allotment holders and the Council and thank you too to Chaz, wonderfully assisted by Gill, for taking on the role.

The Parish Council has set its budget for 2024-2025. We believe in transparency. The Parish Council chair James has written a piece elsewhere in this issue to tell you our thinking.

As you probably know I live next to the railway. The only trainless days (other than strike days) are Christmas Day and Boxing Day.



Swindon Parish Council

Ironically, the level crossing broke down on Christmas Day. The crossing was showing red flashing lights to the traffic but the gates were stuck in the “up” position. I can think of the following possible responses from Network Rail. (1) Fix the problem. (2) Switch off the warning lights given that there are no trains and let traffic pass unhindered. (3) Lock the gates in the “down” position and let the traffic queues and frustration build. Predictably, Network Rail went for option 3.

Shaun Cullimore

Clerk to Swindon Parish Council



A photo by Malcom Staples



Swindon Parish Council

Swindon Parish Council 2024/2025 Budget

A question that I know you've all be asking lately: how does the Parish Council get its money? Seriously if you have been, drop me an email; you should be a parish councillor! Well, like every level of government, you, the taxpayers provide most of the Council's funding. For Parish Councils this is done via a mechanism called the precept. The precept is the amount of money that Cheltenham Borough Council pays the Parish Council each year to fund our activities and is paid for through Council Tax. For the current tax year, a Band D property in Swindon Parish paid a total of £2,066.85 in council tax, of which £17.21 went to the Parish Council. The total precept for 2023/24 is £12,175.58.

Over the past several years we have all been impacted by uncertain economic times, first with the pandemic and more recently high inflation. As such, for several years the Parish Council has made a conscious decision to freeze the precept. We believe this has been the right thing to do. We are fortunate that we have had sufficient reserves, along with underspend on several projects to do this. We hope this has provided you with some small relief.

This year we will (hopefully!) see the purchase of the Village Hall Car Park finalised. We are buying the car park from Cheltenham Borough Council to secure its long-term future, ensuring it remains free to use by all users of the park and village hall. We believe this is important, especially given the congestion and safety issues during school drop-off and pick-up along Church Road.



Swindon Parish Council

While we have secured a grant that will fund the actual purchase, the car park will need maintaining and improving. This could include things like new automatic gates, crossings, re-painting, resurfacing, and maintaining vegetation and trees. We have been provided professional advice that over the next decade this could cost up to £80,000. This is what is behind the rise: we need to ensure the Parish Council remains in a sufficiently robust financial footing to be able to maintain and improve the car park.

For our 2024/25 budget we have allocated funding for lots of exciting projects including: a big summer celebration, redevelopment of sundial in the park, and improvement of the park & play area.

You can dig into all the details of the budget here:

<https://swindonparish.org.uk/> under quick links, financial information.

Of course, if you think we should be spending money on different things, or not increasing our budget at all, come and talk to us! Our next meeting is on Monday 12th February 2024, 7:30PM at Swindon Village Hall. We would love to hear from you.

James Cornish

Swindon Parish Council Chair

james@swindonparish.org.uk





St. Lawrence's Church

Licensing service for Revd. Jacqueline Henson

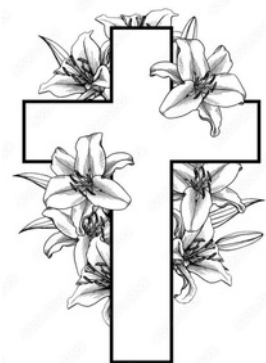
If by any chance you have received this magazine before the end of January, here's a reminder that Revd. Jacqueline Henson will be licensed and formally welcomed to the North Cheltenham Team Ministry at a special service in St. Lawrence's church on Wednesday 31st January. At the time of writing, we're not sure if the service is at 7pm or 7.30pm.

The service will be followed by refreshments in the Village Hall. Everyone is welcome to attend but a phone call to Karen Evans (01242 241678) would be helpful in assessing numbers for seating and catering.

Revd. Henson has already met some local people at the school, at Chatterbox and at the Christmas Tree Festival and we are looking forward to working with her.

Karen Evans

From the registers



Funerals

We commemorated the lives of

Margaret Morris

6th December

Shirley Webb

13th December



St. Lawrence's Church

Regular Services

1st Sunday of the month:

10.30am Together @ Ten Thirty all-age worship

6.30pm Holy Communion

All other Sundays:

9.15am Holy Communion

6.30pm Evening Prayer

Every Wednesday:

10.00am to 12noon Church open for private prayer

St. Lawrence's Church is part of the



Enquiries about baptisms or weddings

If you would like to enquire about baptism (also called christening) or would like to book a wedding in St Lawrence's church, please contact Karen in the Team Office on 01242 244373 or admin@northchelt.org.uk

You can contact the clergy via the office or by email:

Revd. Nick Bromfield (Team Rector) nick.bromfield@northchelt.org.uk

St. Lawrence's Church

Chatterbox



Every Tuesday
10.30am to 12noon



Pop in any time
Coffee/tea and biscuits
and a good old chat about anything and everything.
Everyone's welcome, old or new.
(It's free!)



Marle Hill WI

Marle Hill WI met on Monday 8 January 2024. Our speaker was Mike Jackson who gave us a very interesting and informative on how the programme, Antiques Roadshow was televised when he was a producer for the show.

We continue to enjoy our Book Club, Knit & Natter, walks, workshops, meals out and social events.

Our next meeting is on Monday 5 March 2024 and we meet at St Nicholas Church Hall at 7:30pm.

Our speaker will be Gerry O'Brien whose talk is entitled "Follow the Whispers – Travel the World for Wildlife.

Do come as a visitor and you will be warmly welcomed.
If you want any more information contact Sara Jefferies.

Sue Davies
Marle Hill WI



Bekah's Bites

Dauphinoise Potatoes

Creamy, garlicky potatoes that boost any roast dinner. Good to cook in batch then portion into dishes and freeze.

Ingredients:

- Onion
- Bag of potatoes
- 600ml double cream
- 1 pint of full fat milk
- 1 tablespoon of salt
- 2-6 cloves of garlic
- Butter

Method:

1. Peel the onion, leave whole and add to a sauce pan.
2. Slice the potatoes into rounds just thinner than 1cm and add to the saucepan.
3. Crush the garlic and add to the saucepan along with the salt, milk and cream.
4. Bring to a boil then a simmer and cook with a lid on for 20 minutes.
5. Add the potatoes in layers to a buttered dish, pouring the creamy liquid over the top, then dot the top with little pieces of butter.
6. If cooking straight away, cook in a 220 degree oven for 20 mins. If cooking later, cook for 30/40 mins.



Happy new year all! If you're anything like me, over winter you've been having ideas in your head for what to do to your garden in Spring and beyond.

I think Winter is an important time for reflection as a gardener and as such I think I should share some of my gardening 'failures' last year, as you only ever see the success stories on Gardener's World etc.

Cabbages are notoriously difficult from seed, but I thought 'how hard can they be?'. Turns out, very difficult. 3 out of 12 made it out of my seed tray, then they all died within two weeks. In hindsight, I think this was mainly down to me not having a greenhouse, just a plastic growhouse, meaning they didn't get the warmth and light they need early on to develop a strong root system. Only attempt with very low expectation!

Swede was better but rather comical. I grew three under a cloche from June, harvested in early December after some frosts, but they were small, very small. All three were only enough for two small portions, the wife said it was the best swede she's ever had, but had to laugh as she was wanting more! Again, I can only think they didn't get enough light, in shade half the day and behind my very tall sprouts when the morning sun was out.

There's a common theme with the above, Winter Veg is more difficult, but none the less, I was very pleased to have our homegrown potatoes (kept in blackout storage bags since August) and sprouts to eat over the Christmas period. If I could only recommend one vegetable to grow your own this year, it'd be potatoes, they're so easy to grow, even in pots, and taste amazing home-grown.

Go grow with Dale

And now for something completely different. As a resident of St Lawrence Court, a now 3 year old 'new' estate, myself and other residents want to rework the messy wildflower areas, left by the builders. The small wildflower area some of you know if you walk past Manor Farm (formally Mrs Davis') down the nature path, is pictured below. Initial ideas are to transform it into a flower/insect friendly area, with a small path within, that's also child friendly. It's a lot of work for just myself, so in short, if you fancy helping turn it into a beautiful area of the village, bring your gardening gloves (spades would help but not required), on Saturday 2nd March from 1pm. I'll post about it closer to the time on the Swindon Village Parish Facebook Group.



Until next time, Happy Gardening!, Dale

The answers to the following questions begin with the letters CHELTENHAM (but not in that order!). Where the answer is a name, it is the initial of the surname that is the one contributing.

1. Which hugely successful Broadway and West End musical is based on the American Revolution?
2. Which singer had success with songs entitled "Two out of Three Ain't Bad", "I'd Do Anything for Love" and "You Took the Words Right Out of my Mouth"?
3. In which Indian city would you find the Taj Mahal?
4. Where was Charles invested as Prince of Wales in 1969?
5. Which metal has the chemical symbol Pb?
6. Which UK Prime Minister was in post for the shortest length of time?
7. Who wrote "the Wasteland", "the Love Song of J Alfred Prufrock" and "Macavity: the Mystery Cat"?
8. Which "Loose Woman" (as in the ITV daytime show) was the mother of entrepreneur and DJ, Jamal?
9. Which Jurassic Park actor played the role of Inspector Campbell in Peaky Blinders
10. Who has presented the Last Leg on Channel 4 since 2012?

EASTER EGG HUNT



17th
MARCH

1PM - 6PM

DISCO

GOODY BAG

ACTIVITIES

HOT DOGS & BURGERS

Keep an eye of posters and Facebook for
more details and how to book.



Swindon Village Hall

Happy New Year to you All!

We hope you all had wonderful Christmas and enjoyed the time spent with your families.

We would like to thank all of our volunteers for helping us throughout the year. Without you we could not hold many of the events or keep on top of maintenance of the hall and bar. We really appreciate it.

We have been busy over the festive period.

We started with Carols in the pub which was very well attended. So much so that we may have to consider Carols in the hall next year! Thank you to Karen Evans for organising on behalf of the church.

Next came our Father Christmas Grotto. We had some lovely feedback and were told that it was the best local one they'd been too. It made everything worthwhile.

Last in the calendar for 2023 was the New Years Eve Party. Many thanks to Martin, his family and all bar volunteers for making this happen. It was a great way to celebrate the end of last year.

The hall has been decorated over the Christmas break and it is looking very smart. We are having the curtains, chairs and carpet cleaned in due course to finish the fresh look. To maintain this, we need your help. If you are a visitor to the hall, please do not attach anything to the paintwork; no pins, Sellotape or Blue (or any other colour) Tack.

We are also extending the animals ban to the inside the entire hall. Obviously, this does not apply to assistance dogs.



Swindon Village Hall

We are already busy planning future events for you. The next date for your diary is Sunday 17th of March for Easter Egg Hunt, Family Disco and children's activities complimented by food from Dogs Catering. Watch out for tickets on sale through our Facebook page and posters around the village. Adult tickets will be £6 (including food voucher and drink) and Children £3 (including Easter egg hunt, disco and activities)

If you have an event in mind and you would like to organize it for your fellow villagers, please contact us, we are happy to support you.

Take Care , Jana





The Swindon Village Society

In last month's edition I told you of some of our bookings for next year but as I write this I am stuck for something to write and so you are going to get the same again but with some additions.

In February we will be told the history of cider making in Gloucestershire.

In March it is Votes for Women – the campaign in the Cheltenham Area.

In April we have a talk on the five thousand year old Belas Knapp long barrow and on Humblebee, the nearby wood.

In May John Heathcott will be taking us on a walk around Northleach, a small town with a lot of history and a magnificent church.

The June talk is not yet booked.

In July there will be a garden visit but we need the annual garden visit brochure to be published before we select somewhere suitable.

August is our traditional garden party – lukewarm wine in a drizzle – not to be missed.

In September we are pleased to welcome back Dr Tim Brain. He returns to us to give us his talk on the 2007 water crisis at which time he was Chief Constable. We have had this talk before but the return is because of requests by both those who heard it and those who missed it and heard how good it was. It has the advantage that we were all here for this crisis and were very close to the action.



The Swindon Village Society

Then in October, John Dixon, Chairman of Tewkesbury LHS, will tell us the tale of 'Our own Bill Shakespeare, Bathurst and the Band of Tewkesbury Boat Builder' In other words – the history of boat building in Tewkesbury. This talk has been strongly recommended by another local history group.

November's event is not booked as yet – I may have to perform my tap dancing routine again.

Apart from all the talks we have not been inactive on the Nimby (Not In My Back Yard – a title we wear with pride) front this year. We have produced two letters firmly against the early development of Home Farm and the disruption that would cause. We have also written against the erection of the massive communications mast in Rivelands Road and suggested some cheaper and better alternatives.

Some of us have also helped a general tidying of the millennial sundial on the playing field including the restoration of the mosaics and the explanatory notice board and also helped the Parish Council with checking local footpaths.

If you are not a member do think of joining us. Our main aim is to keep the village a pleasant place to live and it is most useful when writing a 'snotogram' to the planners to be able to say that we are writing on behalf of 'X' concerned residents. 'X' is currently 82. It would be even better if it were 99.

Annual membership is £10 or £20 for two or a family. And remember the free glass of lukewarm white wine in August!

Barry Simon

Answers to Quiz

1. Hamilton
2. Meatloaf
3. Agra
4. Caernarfon
5. Lead
6. Liz Truss
7. TS Eliot
8. Brenda Edwards
9. Sam Neill
10. Adam Hills

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Email: pushpa@pwfootcare.co.uk
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SWINDON PARISH COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS

Footpaths John Heathcott 527753

Scouts, Cubs, Beavers info@ 1sv-scouts.co.uk

Rainbow Guider Hannah Butler 07464 784155

Village Hall Chair Jana Bridger 07913 911930
swindonvillagehall@gmail.com

Village Hall Booking Secretary Jana Bridger 07514 594351

Village News Distribution Hugh Evans 241678

Play Group (Playgroup hours) 690479

Winemakers' Secretary Roy Harper 662861

School Headteacher Geraint Mills 690016

Friends of the School chairfosvps@gmail.com

Art & Crafts Club Lynne Mumford 07515 461876

Swindon Village Society Barry Simon 521723

Mary Godwin Under 5s (Playgroup hours) mgu5@hotmail.co.uk

Marle Hill W.L. Sara Jefferies 07477894639 / 692500

Save The Countryside Helen Wells 07770 986078

Please inform the editors of any changes to the contact details for village organisations.

Deadline for the next issue of the Village News is the 10th February 2024

Please send contributions to the editors via Karren Parsons
at 29 Dark Lane or e-mail village-news@swindonparish.org.uk

SWINDON PARISH COUNCIL

Cllr. James Cornish (Chairman).....	07950 196709
Clr. Helen Wells.....	220875 or 07770 986078
Cllr. Lisa Whitaker.....	07715 470842
Clr. Sharon Collicutt.....	07884 184423
Cilr. Natalie Blankley.....	07725 948935
Clr. Alison Berry.....	07754 006634
Clr. Lynne Allen.....	07979 890134

Vacancy 1 (please get in touch if you would be interested in joining)

Vacancy 2 (please get in touch if you would be interested in joining)

Mr Shaun Cullimore (Clerk to the Council) 07833 089435
parish.clerk@swindonparish.org.uk

Cheltenham Borough Councillors

Clr. Flo Clucas.....	255844
Cllr. Bernard Fisher.....	07523 421012

County Councillor

Cllr. Bernard Fisher.....	07523 421012
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Allotments Manager

Chaz Pearce..... Please contact via Shaun Cullimore

Swindon Parish and Community Website: <https://swindonparish.org.uk>

ST.LAWRENCE'S CHURCH

Part of the North Cheltenham Team Ministry

Team Rector:	Revd. Nick Bromfield,.....	nick.bromfield@northchelt.org.uk
Churchwardens:	Hugh Evans,	241678
	May Shurmer.....	241033
Tower Captain:	Hugh Evans,.....	241678
Organist:	John Collins.....	511950

North Cheltenham Team Ministry Office

St. Nicolas' Church, Swindon Lane, 244373
Cheltenham GL50 4PA admin@northchelt.org.uk

The office is open on Monday to Friday 9am to 12 noon. Outside these hours please leave a message on the answer phone.

The contents of this newsletter do not necessarily reflect the views of the Editors or the Parish Council.