

Village News

in Swindon Village, Cheltenham

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

May 2026 Edition No.523



MAY

Thursday 7th Polling Day

Monday 11th Parish Council meeting.
7.30 Swindon Village Hall, bar area.

Wednesday 20th Swindon Village Society. 7.30pm
A talk by Paul Murphy about Amy Johnson. Britains most famous pre war female aviator who lived in Stoke Orchard
Visitors Welcome - £3

Sunday 31st Litter Pick. Start 10.30 Village hall

JUNE

Monday 8th Parish Council meeting.
7.30 Swindon Village Hall, bar area.

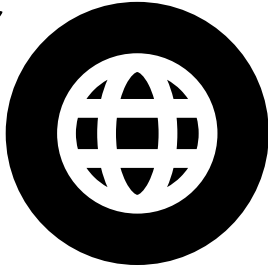
Wednesday 20th Swindon Village Society. A visit to the gardens at Daglinworth House near Cirencester. Travel details and timings next month

Sunday 28th Litter Pick. Start 10.30 Village hall

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)
email101@gloucestershire.police.uk
<https://www.gloucestershire.police.uk/ro/report/>

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

Last month I wrote about counting my blessings and my lovely Nan Evelyn.

You may recall that she lived in a cottage with no hot water or inside toilet. What is really shocking is that this was less than fifty years ago. I was eleven when she died and I have very clear memories of her and the house. The smell of Oil of Ulay still makes me think of her. I would stay overnight with her every week, in her bed. We'd have multiple heavy layers of bedding to keep us warm as there was not heating upstairs. If I stayed on a Saturday night, we would go the bakers and get a Chelsea bun to have when watching the wrestling on her tiny portable TV which was a 60th birthday present from my Mum. Her first and only TV. The rest of the time was spent reading and playing games.

Sunday mornings were all about making lunch. I "helped" although other than making gravy with proper gravy powder and not granules, I can't think what I actually did. I do remember being coerced to drink the water the cabbage was cooked in as it was good for me! Preparations were started early, so that it would be ready when Mum and Dad arrived.

Childhood memories are usually rose-tinted, but I do remember this as being a very happy time. Nan and I enjoyed each other's company and we laughed a lot.

Whilst scrolling on social media, I saw Jimmy Carr had recorded a video about "What is happiness?" He's not one of my favourite comedians; I'm not keen on humour that mocks others, but I was intrigued. He defines happiness as "the quality of your life minus envy". Obviously, this is heavily simplified but looking back, my Nan was a happy lady. Yes, the neighbour over the road had an indoor bathroom, but there wasn't a huge amount to be envious of. Most people in her street were in the same position as her.

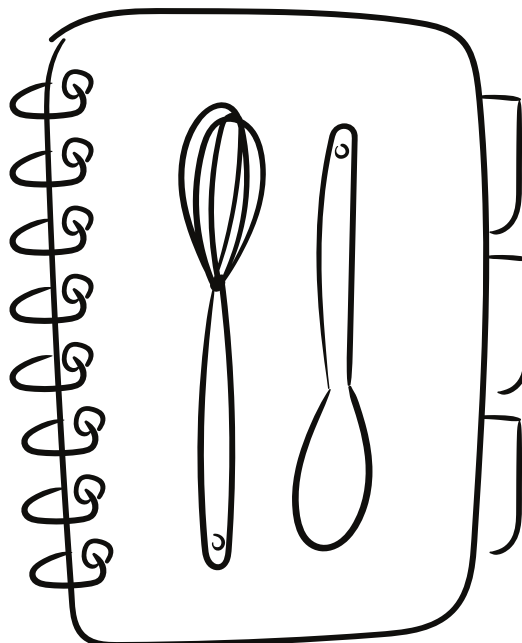
Today, we have a much more luxurious life, but there is an expectation that we live at or beyond this standard. With the addition of social media and people showing us how great their lives are, we are in danger of the green-eyed monster invading our lives. According to Mr Carr, the more envy we allow into our lives, the less happy we will be. Why do we do that to ourselves? Perhaps part of the answer goes back to counting our own blessings and not someone else's?

Karren



What is the name of the dish made with these ingredients?

1. Beef, red wine, button mushrooms, pearl onions
2. Rice noodles, spring onions, beansprouts, crushed peanuts, fish sauce
3. Spaghetti, eggs, pecorino romano, guanciale, black pepper
4. Egg whites, caster sugar, whipped cream, fresh fruit
5. Chilies, chocolate, one or more of peanuts, almonds, sesame seeds, with garlic, onion, cinnamon, cloves, cumin, black pepper, coriander
6. Onions, gram flour, turmeric, cumin and/or coriander
7. Some or all of chicken, andouille sausage, prawns, crab with onion, celery, pepper, okra
8. Mascarpone, coffee, ladyfingers, cocoa powder
9. Rice, mixed vegetables, egg, gochujang
10. Minced lamb or beef, aubergine, tomatoes, cinnamon or nutmeg, bechamel sauce





Swindon Parish Council

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

It's nice to be reunited with old friends. With the installation of the permanent traffic lights in Manor Road we waved a tearful farewell to the temporary traffic lights. As it turned out it was not "goodbye" but "until we meet again". Driving through early in the morning of the 24th March the permanent lights had given up the ghost and we were back to "who dares wins". The following day the good old temporaries were back on duty. A week later they had also stopped working!

Electricity is the issue in more ways than one. The "permanent" lights were wired into an inappropriate source of power which tripped or blew. The temporaries were battery powered and - the batteries were pinched!

On 16th April the temporaries were back to being stuck on red and the next day they were, once again, not working.

The issue is now in the hands of the lawyers, with the developers and the County Council arguing about responsibilities. Don't expect a resolution any time soon.



There is a lot of surveying activity going on in the fields between Swindon Lane and Hyde Lane. In the Joint Core Strategy the land remained Green Belt; it wasn't allocated for future development. The successor to that document is now

being drafted; whether these fields are being considered for development I know not. We have regular visits from deer. I'll ask them if they know what is going on.



Swindon Parish Council

Borough and Parish elections are taking place this year. A poll will not be necessary for the Parish as we have nine seats and only five candidates. Lynne and Ruth decided not to stand again, a personal decision that we all respect. They have been fantastic colleagues and have made a valuable contribution to the community. Well done to you both! We are hopeful we will shortly recruit two newcomers onto the Parish Council. If they decide to join us they will be warmly welcomed.

There will be a poll on 7th May for the Borough Council. If you are going to vote (I hope you do) please remember to take along some photo id.

As part of the election process I receive updates to the electoral register. As previously reported the Parish has been split into a north ward (north of the Tewkesbury Road) and a south ward (guess what; south of Tewkesbury Road). The south ward is much smaller geographically but is home to one third of our electorate. If you are voting in the south ward you will no longer have to trek across to the Village Hall as you are in the Springbank Borough Council ward.

Parish Councillor Tom is planning to devise a Procurement Policy for the Parish Council. We are a small parish. We often wonder what difference we can make in the overall scheme of things, but much can be achieved if everybody does what they can. Tom would like us to focus on supporting local companies and local employees when we buy goods and services.

As I write Swindon Lane is being resurfaced. My two year old grandson would love to get his hands on some of that machinery. So far the work seems to be going well. The road is closed after the school run and re-opens mid afternoon.



Swindon Parish Council



The process of recruiting my successor continues. Ideally it would be good to find someone from the area with Local Government experience. Such candidates are hard to find. In an effort to attract a greater range of applications we posted the job on a national job vacancy website. We attracted much more interest, mainly from people who are clearly unsuitable, including someone working in heavy industry in Failsalbad and someone willing to relocate to Dubai. We are now generating a shortlist with a view to conducting interviews.

Anyone interested in becoming a Parish Councillor or a Parish Clerk please get in touch, especially if you live in this country.

Shaun Cullimore
Clerk to Swindon Parish Council
parish.clerk@swindonparish.org.uk

Services at St. Lawrence – May 2026

Sunday 3rd May	9:30am	All Age Holy Communion
	5pm	Evensong
Sunday 10 th May	9:30am	Holy Communion from the Book of Common Prayer
Sunday 17 th May	9:30am	Holy Communion
	5pm	Evensong
Sunday 24 th May	9:30am	Holy Communion
Sunday 31 st May	10am	Benefice Holy Communion at St. Mary Magdalene, Elmstone Hardwicke



St. Lawrence's Church

RECTORY REFLECTIONS - REV JACQUELINE

As Spring makes good progress into May, the Easter eggs have been consumed and schools have returned to the term-time routines. The weather is sporadically showing signs of improvement, and we look forward to being able to enjoy evenings outside in the sunshine. This month the Church celebrates Ascension and Pentecost, where Jesus ascended into heaven fifty days after Easter. He commanded his disciples to love one another as he loved them. Ten days later, the Holy Spirit came to them and gave them each the ability to spread the gospel of Christ all around the world.

Thousands of years later, we are still challenged to love our neighbours. In a fragile world which seems to be full of violence, political instability and hatred, the challenge for us might seem impossible. After all, how can we possibly stop the bombs and rhetoric from the safety of our homes? It is very easy for us to sit back and leave the responsibility for sorting out our social problems to elected members of our councils and Government. Whether or not you believe in the good news of Easter, we are all capable of kindness, understanding and empathy.

To love our neighbours is a practical calling on all our lives. To demonstrate a genuine care for those around us is to show that we need not be frightened of what we do not understand or are unable to easily change. To serve others, to come alongside them in times of need, sadness and loneliness is to move on from mere words to something more tangible. In a world where the behaviour and actions of power-hungry leaders are broadcast into our homes, we might try to show compassion to those in our own communities who need our help.



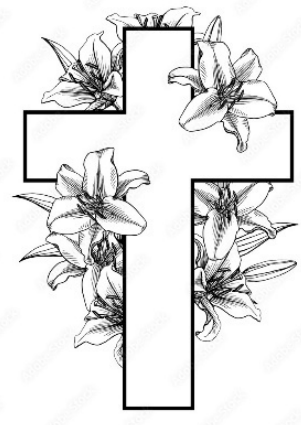
St. Lawrence's Church

After all, Jesus focussed on ministering to a small population and empowered very ordinary people to continue that work after he ascended into heaven. We still celebrate that commission and are encouraged to continue that legacy to improve our small corner of the world to the best of our abilities.

“As God’s chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness and patience”.

(Colossians 3. 12)

From the registers



Burial of ashes

We commemorated the life of

Rosemary Edith Collins 18th March

The Parish of Swindon Village and Cheltenham St. Peter

The Annual Meeting of Parishioners to elect Churchwardens will be held on Sunday 10th May 2026 at 11.00am in St. Lawrence's Church

Agenda

1. Prayers

2. Election of Churchwardens.

To elect Churchwardens x2 to serve for the year 2026 – 2027.

Nominations for the posts of Churchwarden, duly proposed and seconded, must be received prior to the meeting. Nomination forms are available from the Secretary.

Karen Evans (Secretary to the PCC)

5 Manor Road, Swindon Village Tel. 01242 241678

Everyone resident in the Parish or on the Electoral Roll of St. Lawrence's Church is entitled to attend and vote at this meeting.

This will be followed by:

The Annual Parochial Church Meeting

This is the Church of England's equivalent to an annual general meeting of the parish.

Whilst we would informally welcome anyone who would like to know more about our church's activities, only those on St. Lawrence's Church Electoral Roll (this is separate from the civil register of electors) are entitled to vote.

At this meeting we will receive reports on the past year's activities and the annual financial statement. Elections will be held for representatives to Deanery Synod and the Parochial Church Council.

Please join us for refreshments at 10.30am, prior to the meetings.

Karen Evans

Secretary to St. Lawrence's Parochial Church Council



St. Lawrence's Church

St. Lawrence's Church receives grant from Swindon Parish Council

St. Lawrence's Parochial Church Council and the church congregation are grateful to Swindon Parish Council for a grant of £2,000 to purchase two battery-operated mowers and a strimmer, along with spare batteries, for use in the churchyard.

Following the closure of the churchyard, responsibility for its upkeep passed to Cheltenham Borough Council. However, the dedicated band of volunteers, The Churchyard Crew, are continuing their good work and the new equipment will make it easier for them; they keep the churchyard so neat, allowing the flowers on graves and memorial stones to show off their glorious colours.

The churchyard is a beautiful place to sit and enjoy the sunshine and a bit of quiet contemplation.

Karen Evans, Secretary to the Parochial Church Council

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 Team Vicar, **Revd. Jacqueline Henson**, by email: revjacquelinehenson@gmail.com or by phone: **01242 220053** or via the office as above.



St. Lawrence's Church

Church cleaners wanted

Could you spare a bit of time to help keep the church looking clean and welcoming by doing some dusting and polishing and running the vacuum cleaner over the carpets? Sadly, some of our long-term helpers have had to give up recently and we'd like to boost the numbers in the team.

They work on a rota basis, either individually or with friends, and it only involves a couple of hours a month, or less if we can find more people.

We know that St. Lawrence's church building has a special place in the hearts of many people even if they don't attend services, and we greatly appreciate their help.

If you think you could lend a hand, please contact May Shurmer on 01242 241033.

Thank you.

St. Lawrence's Church

Chatterbox

Every Tuesday

10.30am to 12noon

Pop in for coffee/tea and biscuits
and a good old chat about
anything and everything.



Everyone's welcome, old or new. (It's free!)



The Swindon Village Society

And so to March, when we had a first rate talk by Richard Goddard on Tewkesbury Abbey. I think we all know what a magnificent building this is and I hope that we are all aware just how lucky we are to have it. When Henry VIII was busy knocking down abbeys all over the place, Tewkesbury survived. In some good measure this is because of the last Abbot of Tewkesbury, John Wakeman. He managed to come to some form of accommodation with Henry when the King and Anne Boleyn visited while surveying the abbeys to see what they profit they could make from them. As a result Henry agreed to sell the main part of the abbey church to the town for £453 which was essentially the value of the roof lead and stone that made up the abbey. This was a large amount of money in those days. Most of the monastic buildings were destroyed but what we see today remained as a parish church. John Wakeman himself did not do too badly by not taking on Henry because he was given the manor of Forthampton to live in, just across the River Severn and then was made the first Bishop of Gloucester. Of course, Gloucester itself had a grand abbey church but Henry was not going to knock that down because a king of England was buried there, Edward II. So instead he created the new dioceses of Gloucester, made the abbey church a cathedral and put Wakeman in charge as Bishop. Until then the whole area had been part of the dioceses of Worcester. One strange result of all this can still be seen if you visit Tewkesbury Abbey and head to the East end. There is Wakeman's cenotaph. It shows the cadaver of a monk with a snake, rat and frog all eating his corpse. In fact this should all be on the bottom level of the memorial and on top should be a fine carving of Wakeman in his vestments. Wakeman's body should be below ground under all this display. In fact, he was not actually buried here at all but instead he is across the river alongside the altar in Forthampton Church.

One other result of all this is that if you go outside the Abbey Church and walk to the old Abbot's house near the West end, there is a fine projecting window (Oriel) window which Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn



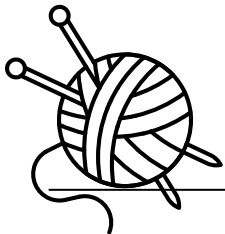
The Swindon Village Society

almost certainly looked out of when they visited. A good tale if you are showing visitors round.

We do finally have a Garden Visit lined up for June. However, we have had to change the date from Wednesday 17th to Wednesday 24th, so if you have a membership card and programme please change it now. We will be visiting Daglingworth House which is just this side of Cirencester. There are three acres of gardens with much to see. There is also a fine church alongside with some interesting pieces inside. More details of arrangements nearer the date. The July talk will be on the Gloucester/Warwickshire Steam Railway. In September we will hear about Snowhill Manor.

Visitors or new members are always welcome.

Barry Simon



Marle Hill WI

Marle Hill WI met on Monday 13 April. The speaker was talking about wildlife in Gloucestershire

Dates were given for future events in and around the County.

The next meeting is on Monday 11 May 2026. The speaker is Joyce Brooks who will talk about all things connected to lingerie.

Visitors are welcome to join us at St Nicholas church hall GL50 4PA. The meeting starts at 7:30pm

Sue Davies

Hello Gardeners, it's almost summer! There's lots to be getting on with this month, especially if you're only able to direct sow seeds.

Now is the perfect time of year to direct sow seeds of plants that love the extra heat, like Courgettes, but also flowers such as Cosmos, Sunflowers & Marigolds. In no particular order, this is what I'll be sowing directly this month:

- Courgettes
- Onions (Brown & Red)
- Sweetcorn
- Green Beans
- Cosmos
- Tomatoes

If you're worried about Birds taking your seeds as a snack (there's a lot of pesky pigeons in the village!) make sure you put a cloche over your rows of seeds. I always do this for my onions for the first two months to help them get established without the risk of being eaten.

May is also a good time to give some TLC to your Spring bulbs, such as daffodils or Tulips. Prune the flower heads right back to the base with some sharp secateurs but make sure you leave the foliage to die back naturally. This concentrates the energy back into the bulb, ready for bigger and better blooms next year. Once the foliage has died back, then trim it off. Hopefully, if you have summer bulbs, there will soon be colour in your garden to replace these!

Finally, it's always lovely to see my Wife's Lily's in full summer bloom, but lots of pests, foremost Aphids and Lilly Beetles would love to just demolish them for their dinner. Lilly Beetles are often bright red, but aren't spotted like ladybirds, so pay close attention. If aphids or Lilly Beetles do appear, blast them off with water or just by hand.

Then to keep them off, use a 'Neem oil' solution in a spray bottle. Last year I decided to make a natural solution instead, by just using a mix of Veg/Olive Oil with washing up liquid in water. For this you just mix 1 teaspoon of vegetable or olive oil with 1 tablespoon of washing up liquid (fairy) in a litre of tap water. If you want it extra potent, add in 1 or 2 blended garlic gloves! This homemade recipe is low in chemical ingredients and as such, don't affect your Lilly plant's growth. Spray this solution once a week or after pests are seen.

Thanks for reading.

Dale.

Answers to the quiz:

1. Boeuf bourguignon
2. Pad thai
3. Spaghetti carbonara
4. Pavlova
5. Mole
6. Onion bhaji
7. Gumbo
8. Tiramisu
9. Bibimbap
10. Moussaka

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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 Bookings	Jana Bridger	swindonvillagehall@gmail.com
Village News Distribution	Hugh Evans	241678
Play Group	(Playgroup hours)	690479
	For Sept 24 admission	07949 352507
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	07787 485221 / 692500

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 16th May 2026

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. Alison Berry (Chair)	07754 006634
Cllr. James Cornish	07950 196709
Cllr. Sharon Collicutt	07884 184423
Cllr. Natalie Blankley	07725 948935
Cllr. Lynne Allen	07979 890134
Cllr. Tom Harcourt	07963 581371
Cllr. Ruth Hudson	07850 185871
Mr Shaun Cullimore (Clerk to the Council)	07833 089435
	parish.clerk@swindonparish.org.uk

There are currently two vacancies. Please get in touch if you would be interested.

Cheltenham Borough Councillors

Springbank Ward (south of Tewkesbury Road)

Cllr. Peter Jeffries	07717 493686
County Cllr. Suzanne Williams	01242 230648

Swindon Village Ward (north of Tewkesbury Road)

Cllr. Flo Clucas	01242 255844
Cllr. Frank Allen	07402 011272
County Cllr. Ian Cameron	ian.Cameron@gloucestershire.gov.uk

ST.LAWRENCE'S CHURCH

Part of the North Cheltenham Team Ministry

Team Vicar:	Revd. Jacqueline Henson	revjacquelinehenson@gmail.com 220053
Churchwarden:	Hugh Evans	241678
Tower Captain:	Hugh Evans	241678

North Cheltenham Team Ministry Office 244373 admin@northchelt.org.uk

The office is open on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday from 9.00am to 1.30pm, and on Friday from 1.30pm to 4.00pm.

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.