

King's Sutton Times
No 234, Winter 2025

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for late November publication

The King's Sutton Times very much welcomes articles and photographs relating to the village and its residents.

Please submit contributions, by email if possible, to Helen Forde, ksteditor@kingssutton-pc.gov.uk

Contributions should be in Word and photos should be sent separately as jpgs; please remember the **publication dates** are later than the date required for copy, so events between the two dates will not be included.

We reserve the right to edit or refuse any item submitted for publication.



Helen Forde

Editor

KSTeditor@kingssutton-pc.gov.uk



Yolande Jaquet

Advertising

KSTadvertising@kingssutton-pc.gov.uk



Rev Abby Lintern

Features

KSTcopy@kingssutton-pc.gov.uk



Jennifer Kelly

Layout

KSTlayout@kingssutton-pc.gov.uk



Meriel Lewis

Design

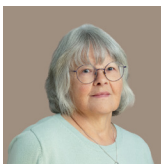
KSTdesign@kingssutton-pc.gov.uk



David Barratt

Proofreading

KSTproofs@kingssutton-pc.gov.uk



Ann Morton

Distribution

KSTdistribution@kingssutton-pc.gov.uk



Pat Carter

Club Liaison

KSTliaison@kingssutton-pc.gov.uk



www.kingssutton-pc.gov.uk



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View from the village

After the fabulous summer weather, the autumn has really set in at the time of writing, though there are still apples on the trees, and in boxes at many village gates. The crops of fruit and vegetables this year have been more abundant than I can remember, not least the walnuts which, unusually, the squirrels have been begging us to help out with! The Annual Show in the middle of August was proof of the range, quality and quantity of flowers and produce, let alone the diligence of King's Sutton gardeners; congratulations to all and especially the winners of the front garden awards.

In a village where we are bereft of buses, apart from the wonderful Ability bus, the railway plays an important role for those travelling to work or on holiday. Russell Hafter reminds us that the services were not always what they are now as the railway network developed, but he also noticed the photograph of the new(ish) rolling stock which Chiltern Railways will be using from 2026; the background view is unmistakable, and we all know where the photo was taken.

Christmas will not be far away when this issue of KST is distributed and although there is no Christmas Fayre this year (congratulations to Charlotte and Adrian on the arrival of their new daughter), family and church celebrations will be continuing as usual. If anyone fancies using the 17th century recipe for mince pies it would be good to know what they taste like, though perhaps the quantities might be slightly reduced.

The front cover of this issue is back to the gardening and horticultural theme – ivy, traditionally associated with Christmas but in flower in mid-October; the fact that ivy, like some hollies, stayed green throughout

the year led some in the past to believe it had magical properties and consequently its use to decorate homes in the winter months. Roman and pagan midwinter celebrations also used it for decoration and it symbolized, variously, eternal life, rebirth and the spring season or even death under certain circumstances. In this context however, it brings with it the Christmas and New Year wishes of the whole team to all King's Sutton residents, their families and friends.

Helen (editor)

KING'S SUTTON

"King's Sutton is a pretty town,
And lies all in a Valley.
There is a lovely ring of bells,
Besides a bowling alley.
Wine and liquor in good store,
Pretty maidens plenty.
Can a man desire more?
There ain't such a town in twenty!"

According to a nursery rhyme published by Halliwell in 1760

There must be hundreds of rhymes of other villages or events etc. There are many about villagers complaining about the church bells being sold to repair the church. I am collecting any, not just about villages, so pass on to me please and if I get enough I will publish them to raise money for charity. There are some saucy ones that might not get published, but send anyway. Post them through my letter box or send them by email.

Dave Hall

sueanddave.hall@gmail.com

Village diary

50+ CLUB

As the year quickly comes to a close, we celebrate the fact that despite the financial and political problems of the country, locally we still attract a large membership, which has grown over the year. We now have 60 members, so we must be doing OK.



November saw us going on our last coach trip for this year. We were a little disappointed at the number of people going, which resulted in the coach being half full but despite this everyone said what a wonderful day it had been. We included a river cruise in the package and the weather was kind all day. We had an unfortunate start to the trip as the driver was looking for us in Orchard Way in Banbury, (wrong information in his sat nav), but even with the delay in starting out, we still had four hours to see the lovely Henley on Thames and take in



lunch before heading to the boat station. The 2-hour cruise was made very interesting by our guide, Graham, a witty commentator with wonderful knowledge of the river and buildings, as well as some of the celebrities who have owned them; he drew many quips from the passengers.

Our Christmas Party will be on 10 December. This is part funded by club funds so is only open to members, but I know it is one of our favourite times of the year. With full entertainment following a hot lunch, this is a great way to conclude our programme for 2025.

We do not meet in January so our first meeting in the new year will be on 10 February. This is our AGM when the programme for the year is published and a new committee elected. This is usually followed by a short quiz or similar entertainment. If you are interested in joining the club, please come along and meet the others and see what we will be offering throughout 2026.

Keith Moses

KING'S SUTTON FILM CLUB

We are coming to the end of this season and I must say it's been a good one, attendance has been increasing each month, even though the entrance fee rose to £7 in September.

As it stands, we are in a good position to continue next year; we will be looking for funding for the hall rental after April 2026

when our current agreement with the Parish Council ends, however I am hopeful that they will consider a continuation.

By the time you receive this article the November film will have shown, which leaves the final film for the year *Last Christmas*, which is written by Emma Thompson who also stars in the film, along with Emilia Clarke and Michelle Yeoh, a really good film for this time of year.

I would just like to wish you all a very Happy Christmas and New Year and look forward to seeing as many of you as can make it in February 2026. Keep a watch on the posters around the village and the Film Club Facebook page for our new season's offerings in 2026.

Finally, thank you all for your continued support, we very much appreciate your efforts to keep us going for another year.

Jacqui Creed
jacquicreed54@gmail.com

KING'S SUTTON WI

We meet on the third Wednesday of each month, at 19.30, in the Millennium Memorial Hall for a cuppa and an activity or talk. Guests are welcome, at a cost of £4. We also organise outings and meet monthly for coffee; do come and join our friendly group, all ages welcome.



This autumn the WI helped with an event at the youth club, 'Bystanders can be Lifesavers'. We provided pizza for 30 kids and donated money to St John's Ambulance for coming to teach CPR with them.

We've just had three great talks from village residents, the first about the King's Sutton Beekeeping Project, the second about a mother's diaries from the 1950s and another on decorating Christmas baubles. Do let me know if anyone has a topic they'd like to talk about.

The Christmas lunch will be held on 17 December which must be prebooked.

In 2026 our talks will include '**Fraud and Cyber Crime**', '**Inside the Oxford Science Museum**', as well as craft sessions.

Sue Ashdown
sueashdown63@hotmail.com
or on 07817 303625

KING'S SUTTON VILLAGE SHOW AND GARDENING CLUB

I am delighted to say that the 2025 Village Show year was a great success! The talent and enthusiasm shown by entrants once again resulted in entries of a very high standard. We would also like to thank all those who came to support our Village Show by making an entry donation, partaking of the refreshments, and taking a chance on the Tombola. The King's Sutton Gardening Club, who organise the show, are particularly grateful to everyone who helped, in so many ways, to make it such a success. Without the support of these individuals our traditional village show could not take place.

Trophy	Winner	Description
Cyril Smith Cup	Linda Cousins	Highest number of points in the Horticultural Classes
Banksian Medal	Linda Cousins	Highest number of points in the Horticultural Classes
Robert Bignell Trophy	Joint Winners – Dee Thorburne & Henrietta Carter	Rose classes 13 & 14
John Lawrence Cup	Vanessa Morrison	Succulent/Cacti
Bell Allotment Cup	Dee Thorburne	Highest number of points in classes 21 – 41 Vegetables
Meredith Owen Cup	Carole Girling	Home Produce – classes 53-66
Handicraft Cup	Carol Wincott	Handicrafts – classes 69-77
Junior Cup	Sevi Knowles	Juniors – classes 78 -86
Wenbar Cup	Ezra Bullock	Best Exhibit in classes 78-86 (for Lego model)
Timms Homes Floral Art Cup	Dee Thorburne	Floral Art
Jack Essex Memorial Trophy	Henrietta Carter	King's Sutton in Bloom – best front garden
Ernie Twynham Cup	Lynda Miller	Garden basket
Jean Daymond	Dee Thorburne	Best overall floral art exhibit
Photography Cup	Amelia Lock	Photography
Junior Photography Cup	Sevi Knowles	Junior photography
Best in Show	Pat Baptist	Awarded for her quilted entry in class 74
RHS – Special Recognition Award	Paula Waite	Awarded to recognise her longstanding contribution to the club.
Children's Entries		
Category	First Prize	Runners up
Face on a paper plate	Isabelle Barry	2nd Grayson Knowles, 3rd Rocko Watts
Jam tarts	Bella Burrell	2nd Georgia Burrell
A drawing or painting	Olivia Morley	2nd Sevi Knowles
Fairy cakes	Sevi Knowles	
A photograph of a plant	Sevi Knowles	
A model made from Lego	Ezra Bullock	2nd Charlie McGarry

We would also like to thank all the local businesses and organisations who make amazing donations to the show including the tombola prizes –

King's Sutton Parish Council, Stanbra Powell Estate Agents, Gigaclear, Little Cheesecake Corner, Elle Coco hairdresser, Holly Victoria beautician, Tealicious café, Cotefield Nursery, Hilliers Nursery, Lemon Zest Body Therapy, FFW Ltd, Butcher's Arms, White Horse, the Ewe Tree, Brow Elegance, Fired Up studios, Botanical Bath and Body, Graham Winton and King's Sutton Film Club.

At the end of the day, the donations that had not been won at the Tombola, were auctioned off, which proved to be great fun.



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KING'S SUTTON GARDENING CLUB.

We are an enthusiastic and friendly club, whose members have a wealth of experience in growing flowers, shrubs, fruit and vegetables. So, if you are keen to learn more about horticulture, why not join us for our meetings at the Millennium Memorial Hall, held on the last Wednesday of the month. Guest entry is just £3 and our annual membership only £12. This covers the costs of our speakers and refreshments. We are looking forward to meeting members and guests at our next meeting.

On Wednesday 24 September, we were treated to a talk on Heritage Apples by Andrew Howard. We were given samples of traditional British varieties of apples, to illustrate their different qualities. After the talk, wine and cheese were served along with more tasty apples to sample.

Our next meetings will be:

- Wednesday 26 November – Linda Seabrook – Christmas Flower Arranging.
- Wednesday 14 January – AGM with buffet

The club supports local planting projects and donates to village organisations such as the King's Sutton Primary Academy and the Pre-School. We like to encourage the next generation to discover the joy of growing flowers, shrubs and producing home grown food.

This summer we once again planted up and maintained the containers opposite the Post Office. Each autumn the club plants daffodils around the village in open spaces. This autumn we are planting in the



Square opposite the White Horse, Orchard Way, the green opposite the Post Office and Sandringham Road.

In the summer, a volunteer from the Gardening Club, helped set up an afterschool Gardening Club for pupils at the King's Sutton Primary Academy. The children learnt how to prepare the ground for planting flowers and vegetables. They visited our local allotments and learned about the importance of growing food, planting, composting and watering. The children were introduced to 'No Dig' gardening and created their own gardening using this method. They were also learning about the importance of working in harmony with nature and the vital work bees do in successful gardening and farming.



The school's No Dig garden

This coming year we are providing herbs such as mint, sage, rosemary and thyme for a sensory garden at King's Sutton Primary Academy School. The Club has also provided King's Sutton Pre-School with autumn flowering plants to provide colour for the beginning of the new school year. In addition, we are working with the Baptist Church Youth group planting daffodils around the church grounds.

We are looking forward the next Village Show which will be held on 15 August 2026, so look out for more details of this event. If you are interested in helping with the show, please get in touch with the Show Secretary.

Frances Gurney
Francesgurney13@gmail.com

MILLENNIUM MEMORIAL HALL COFFEE SHOP

We run the coffee shop, every Friday, 10.00-12.00 noon, having started on the 2 January, 2024. We are well into our second year, and we continually work to enhance the experience.



Unlimited tea, coffee and juice for £2, with the added extra of a choice of delicious biscuits available. We have introduced a monthly raffle and periodically have very popular bingo games. It has been a rewarding and successful time, and as we are a not-for-profit group, we are able to donate funds back into worthy causes in the King's Sutton community.

Friendships have grown and it is so enjoyable and heartening to be part of a community which cares about each other. We have discussions, laughter and fun in a relaxed environment. We are very welcoming to newcomers and it is a wonderful way of integrating into village life. With winter approaching, it is a great way to get out and we will make you very welcome.

Dates to look forward to are Christmas bingo on the 5 December, and the visit by children from pre-school on 12 December.

KING'S SUTTON BRIDGE CLUB

On the 21 October King's Sutton Bridge Club were hosts to the annual running of the Local Teams' Challenge Cup. It was held in the main hall of the Millennium Memorial Hall and attracted the maximum numbers of players who can play there – 18 teams, 72 people.

We enjoyed a glass of wine and canapés before play, and coffee and cake at half time. King's Sutton resident, Eileen Nash, was the manager of a complex event and everyone, visitors and home teams, agreed that Eileen had done a terrific job. Other members of the club gave up a lot of time to serve food and drink and do the dreaded washing up for such a lot of people.



Eileen Nash





Winners: Peter Finbow, Robert Procter, Annabel Wade and Mary Ann Sheehy

The players came from ten different clubs, two from Oxford and one from Stratford as well as the more local bridge clubs of Banbury, Bicester, Bloxham, Buckingham and Quainton. We played twenty hands of bridge to decide the top team. The winners were a team from Oxford and Stratford using the team title 'Rest of the World'.

King's Sutton Bridge Club were third in a very high standard of players; so, well done Nigel, Gwen, Eileen and Clive. We've said that 72 is the maximum number of players but that's in the main hall. If other clubs or teams would like to join us, there's always the small hall to fill!

We look forward to the next running of the event on 20 October 2026.

Ken Langdon

NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH



**Could you be King's Sutton's
next Neighbourhood Watch
Coordinator?!**

Our current Neighbourhood Watch Coordinator has now stepped down after over four years of trying to make a positive change for our community.

Are you passionate about our village and its



residents? Do you want to help try and make it a safer place to live?

Please email: kingssuttonnw@gmail.com or send a PM to the Facebook group if you are interested.

King's Sutton Pre-school

Pre-school is back in full swing after the summer holidays! The summer gave us a chance to prepare our building and garden for our growing community, updating our policies and training, and for our team to rest and recharge. Pre-school is buzzing, full of opportunities for exploration, investigation, and experimentation, especially with all the wonderful, exciting changes happening in autumn.

This term, our main focus is on building relationships, getting to know each other better, and developing a sense of comfort and security.



Pre-school is busier than ever, if you would like your child to attend King's Sutton Pre-school, please submit your applications early to avoid disappointment.

Rebecca Herbert, Pre-school manager

We continue to fundraise for the pre-school and have an exciting event coming up – **tickets are ON SALE NOW** for our **Christmas Panto**. We are thrilled to be hosting 'Sinbad the Sailor' pantomime with the **Laugh out Loud Theatre** company on **Sunday 14 December** from 1.00 pm.

Please scan the QR code or search <https://www.tickettailor.com/events/kingssuttonpreschool/1615363>

WE NEED YOU

You may not be aware that Pre-school is a charity which relies on a committee of volunteers. We urgently need more help from the local community and from parents and carers to ensure Pre-school continues to thrive.

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As many of you may be aware from the news, early years funding up and down the country is facing considerable pressure. The government funding we receive does not match the costs of running the pre-school and we've been campaigning hard alongside other pre-schools fighting for fair Early Years funding.

We need help from anyone who can lend time to fundraise or join our wonderful committee team – it can be as big or as small an amount of help that you can offer but we do need help!

Please ask us for more information if you're interested and get in touch chair@kingssuttonpreschool.co.uk or **01295 816006**.

Emma Watts, chair of the Pre-school committee

King's Sutton Times Primary Academy

The school enjoyed a brilliant end to the academic year, with excellent achievement in attainment results for Early Years, Key Stage One and Key Stage Two. We have achieved above national averages for early years, phonics and Year 6. In Year 6 our combined Reading, Writing and Maths achievement at national standard or above in all subjects was above national for children who sat the Key Stage 2 SATS at 67% combined all subjects – a big increase from two years ago at just 33% combined. Also, at the end of the academic year, children and families enjoyed a range of community events, including Sports Day, the PTFA Colour Run and the King's Sutton Primary Academy Fun Day on the last day of term – to name just a few.

Returning after the summer holiday, children have commenced with a flying start and the school projects a wonderful sense of warmth and belonging. This term we welcome families who visit us ahead of making their Reception Year school application for September 2026. If you are considering





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King's Sutton Primary Academy for your child to start school in September 2026, please contact us to book your place on one or more of our open days: office@kspa.prime7.org.uk.

We offer two types of visit this year, with a school tour and Meet-the-Headteacher session available and a Meet-the-Teacher session. You are welcome to book both.

2026 Reception Open Days:

- 7 January – Meet-the-Headteacher & school tour 9:30 am
- 8 January – Meet-the-Teacher 3:30 pm

Dates may be subject to change. Please ensure you book your place by contacting office@kspa.prime7.org.uk. Applications are made using the West Northamptonshire Application Portal before 15 January 2026. The application portal is now open to parents and guardians to access. Visit www.westnorthants.gov.uk/school-admissions-and-appeals for more information.

Are you considering a mid-year school transfer for your child? You are welcome to make enquiries about places by contacting us: office@kspa.prime7.org.uk or telephone **01295 811289**.

As I write this piece in September for the *King's Sutton Times* Winter Edition, I look ahead to some of the Christmas events we will hold with members of the King's Sutton Primary Academy community. Parents and family members will find all the events and up to date information in our weekly newsletter.

Give a child a book this Christmas – do you have a connection with a company who would sponsor the school to meet our goal to give every child a new book this Christmas? We would love to hear from you! Please get in touch!

Wishing you and your families a very happy Christmas.

Mrs. Wade, Headteacher

Village tributes to Liz Al-Anazi

We promised in the summer issue that a fuller tribute to Liz Al-Anazi would follow; here are memories of her from people all over the village. The themes that come back and back are her warmth, her welcome, her compassion, her energy – and her coffee shop!

Liz was a lovely lady, and when she started the coffee shop, it became one of the most popular things in the village. She added to it with the Christmas parties, always packed with people and several tea dances. I miss her.

I miss the annual meat raffle at the coffee shop, the school singers at Christmas, the tea dances paid for by the [profits of the] coffee shop and the naughty jokes she got on Facebook which had to be told at the coffee shop.

Always a mine of local information and noted for handing out copies of newspaper crosswords and sudoku.

People at Friday Coffee Morning

My wife Emily and I moved to King's Sutton in April four years ago and at the first visit to the coffee morning could not have wished for a warmer welcome and affection that Liz gave to us. My wife who was suffering from Alzheimer's was always well-attended to by Liz and we looked forward to meeting her. We were both sorry that health matters prevented her from continuing and knew that she would be greatly missed. Sadly, my wife died and Liz, paying a visit to the coffee morning, extended her sincere sympathy to me when she was informed. She always gave thought to the needs of others.

Paul Richardson.

In ministry when you move to a new place it's suggested you find people of peace, people who love the community you've been called



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YOUR VILLAGE CARPENTER

to serve, Liz was this for me. When we first met, she literally welcomed me with open arms making me feel instantly part of this amazing community and for that I will be forever grateful.

Rev Abby Lintern.

I first met Liz when I was editor of the *King's Sutton Times* and she joined our editorial team. It soon became evident what a valuable asset she was as she seemed to know everyone and was very much on my own wavelength when it came to our love for and appreciation of the very special village that King's Sutton is. Soon we were holding our meetings at Brookfield House, warmly welcomed by Liz and Zabin and enjoying many a stimulating evening while we put our next edition together.

Perhaps my most vivid memory of Liz is the meeting when she told us with supreme indignation that she had been offered the small reception room at the Millennium Memorial Hall for her proposed coffee morning 'I'm not interested in six chairs' she proclaimed with supreme indignation. 'I want the whole village to come!' It summed her up perfectly and of course she was right. Her coffee mornings, as well as Liz herself, became legendary.

Barbara Harris

Liz had a very good sense of community. She was very hospitable, and we – the wellbeing walkers – always received a warm welcome at the Friday coffee mornings. She not only remembered people's names, but also which were our favourite biscuits! Liz was a fellow Yorkshire lady and sometimes called 'a spade a shovel'. If we turned up on a very wet morning, she would say 'you are all mad!' She was often driving out of the hall car park to go for provisions when I was driving in. I thought I'd better not hit that Jaguar of hers, or I'll be in big trouble! I miss her humour and also her kindness. We also appreciated the help Liz's

husband and her daughter gave us at the hall, and his organisation of the bus stop library. Our thoughts are with them.

Judith Laycock



Liz Al-Anazi with Bob Burrell

On 17 April this year, at the Annual Parish Meeting, I had the great pleasure of presenting Liz with the award of 'Freedom of the Parish'. This is the highest award a parish council is empowered to give and Liz is only the third person in King's Sutton to have received it. Although the award is now only ceremonial and symbolic, it still remains a powerful indicator of how the person is regarded and valued in their community. It recognised Liz's strong and continuing connection with, and commitment to the village. In particular it marked

- her running of the Coffee Club at the Millennium Memorial Hall on virtually every Monday and Friday for 23 years and the importance of the club in

providing a warm and welcoming social hub

- her fine editorship of the *King's Sutton Times* for some 10 years and
- her role as a trustee of the Poor's Allotment Charity for 14 years

She made an exceptional contribution to making King's Sutton a better place to live and the parish council are grateful for having had the opportunity to properly recognise this.

Bob Burrell – Chairman, King's Sutton Parish Council

Visit to Rumwoldstow historical re-enactment open day

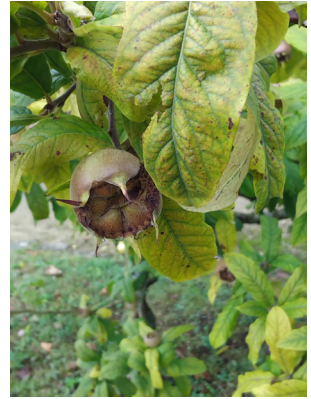
When we saw that we, and any local people interested, were invited to the imagined monastery at Rumwoldstow, (actually on a site just beside the station at King's Sutton) we felt this was not to be missed. Like so many we have an interest in history, watching the archaeological series on TV and wondering what everyday life was like in past days. So, seeing that a group who had obviously done a lot of study and research were offering a look at their interpretation of Anglo-Saxon life we were keen to take them up on it.

After a (relatively) short walk across the fields on the footpath we did wonder whether we were on the right path. A couple of local dogwalkers had no idea what we meant but remembered they had seen something like a shield on a gateway. Right enough, we found two gateways marked by life-sized carved wooden shields, and the smell of woodsmoke. A little further and we came across a stone archway and a cluster of farm buildings where we found a young girl wrestling with the weight of a chainmail jacket (*also known as a hauberk or byrnie*), sword and shield. She seemed rather happy



to take them off! We spent a while with a spinstress using a hand spinning method from before the spinning wheel was invented,





and saw the coarse material made from this wool which, it seems, makes very good and sturdy socks! There was also a bread oven (sadly no samples), and a demonstration of the pastimes of those rich enough to afford an elaborately carved precious backgammon set or other playthings.

Then a man in battle attire asked if we would like to watch him kill someone? Obviously yes, so we were treated to a battle (with the promised 'death'). It was fascinating to hear that the rules for mock battles have changed to avoid real injuries, at least to sensitive areas of the body. That shows that the weapons used are pretty true to life! After a closer look at the rather nasty weapons, we were treated to a tour of the heritage fruit trees in the orchard. Some, like damsons and quinces are known to many, but the old varieties of apples and pears still survive. I had not seen a medlar before, although they are often mentioned in old writings. They are trying to produce a mead based on medlars, but as yet a few modifications are still needed!

It was an enjoyable visit and if they hold another open day, I strongly recommend that you go along for a different and educational hour!

Pat Carter

The Farming Calendar – Summer, Autumn

The 2025 British harvest has been among the most unpredictable in recent years – early, fast, and full of contrasts. Across the country, combines began rolling weeks ahead of schedule, with many noting one of the quickest starts in living memory. Prolonged dry weather brought crops to ripeness far earlier than usual, turning the fields golden before summer had fully begun.

For some producers, the early start proved advantageous, with well-timed sunshine and efficient management delivering clean, good-quality grain. Others, however, experienced thinner crops and reduced grain fill following months of persistent dryness. This season has emphasised the growing variability in British farming: yields have differed



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About me

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enormously from field to field depending on soil type, local rainfall, and sheer luck!

The weather extremes are now contributing to rising food prices. Drought across Britain and parts of Europe has restricted supplies of cereals and oilseeds, leading to warnings that bread, cereals, and cooking oils may become more expensive over the winter months. At the same time, the cost of essential farm inputs such as fuel, fertiliser, and labour remains high, while commodity prices have eased, further reducing margins.



Field drilling

Attention has now shifted to autumn planting. Around the county, many farms have made an early start on drilling winter cereals, taking advantage of dry and workable soils. Yet the prolonged dryness continues to be a concern, as the ground relies on plentiful rainfall to support germination and early establishment before temperatures fall.

At the policy level, uncertainty continues to affect the farming sector. Support schemes and environmental targets remain under review, and confidence among producers is cautious. Proposals to convert more farmland to nature and low-carbon use have intensified debate about food security and rural livelihoods, thus raising questions about the balance between environment and productivity.

Despite these challenges, farming communities across our region remain characteristically resilient. Another harvest has been gathered, next year's winter crops are already sown, and there is cautious optimism that the coming year may bring greater stability – both in the weather and in agricultural policy.

Andrew and Rachel Cherry

The Railways of King's Sutton

I think everyone here values our station, but there is interesting history here too. The Great Western Railway built the Oxford to Banbury line between 1845 and 1850; however, there was no station here until 1872. In 1887, with the opening of the Banbury and Cheltenham Railway, which ran via Adderbury, Bloxham, Hook Norton and Chipping Norton, King's Sutton became a junction station.

What may surprise many is that what is now our main line to London via Bicester North did not open until 1910. Before that, GWR trains from London Paddington to Birmingham had to run via Didcot and Oxford, and could not compete on speed with trains running from Euston.

There were stations that claimed to serve Aynho on both the Oxford and Bicester lines. Aynho for Deddington station can still be seen on the west side of the line to Oxford. Its situation between Aynho Wharf on the Oxford Canal and the Great Western Arms pub shows that the station did not really serve either Aynho or Deddington. The station closed in 1964. Aynho Park station was 200 yards closer to Aynho, being by the viaduct over the B 4031, but passengers would have had a steep climb up to the railway from the street level building. This station closed in January 1963; there is



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nothing to indicate the site when looking from the train.

The Banbury to Cheltenham line was built primarily to carry East Midlands iron ore to the steel plants of South Wales. Clearly, sometimes nothing much changes, as there were massive cost overruns in building the line. Almost £1.8 million was issued as share capital, but when the line was bought by the GWR in 1897, they paid only £450,000. Ordinary shareholders were even worse off, getting only 2% of their investment back. From 1906 a through express service ran between Barry on the South Wales coast and Newcastle Central.

All passenger services between King's Sutton and Chipping Norton closed in June 1951, though the line as far as Adderbury remained open for freight until at least 1964, possibly until 1969. The site of Adderbury station is the industrial estate south of the village, on the A 4260. At the King's Sutton end, there are still the remains of the embankment curving west from the existing railway about ¼ mile south of the station.

There are the remains of a second closed railway to the north of King's Sutton. This line originally ran from Banbury' Merton Street station, to Bletchley, via Farthinghoe and Brackley. The line crossed Upper Astrop Road just north of the turning to Middleton Cheney, and the remains of the railways bridge can still be seen. The narrow road to Middleton



Farthinghoe Station

Cheney climbs steeply from the turning, in order to cross over the route of the railway. Farthinghoe station closed in 1963 and is now the Farthinghoe Recycling and Re-use Centre. Its situation a long way from the village was always a problem, even though it was advertised as serving Greatworth and Middleton Cheney as well. Brackley Town station was at the lower end of Brackley. Its rough location is indicated today by the Locomotive Inn that is on your left as you drive into Brackley.

NEW TRAINS FOR THE LONDON – BIRMINGHAM LINE

Thirteen modern five-car trains that are only about six or seven years old, and originally designed for services from Liverpool to Manchester, Leeds, York and Scarborough or Newcastle (and out of service for probably the best part of three years now) will be operating all Marylebone to Birmingham services in the fairly near future, with the first trains being scheduled for service in the second quarter of 2026.



A five-car train

This picture, taken on 18 August 2025 by Colin J Marsden, editor of the Rolling Stock Review was the first day of the Chiltern Mk 5A training.

Russell Hafter

Parish Council News

The Parish Council co-opted **Mike Maunders** to fill its sole vacancy following the May elections. Mike is new to the village and looking forward to getting involved in various groups and projects. The Parish Council has reviewed its statement of key objectives, and the updated version can be found on the website.



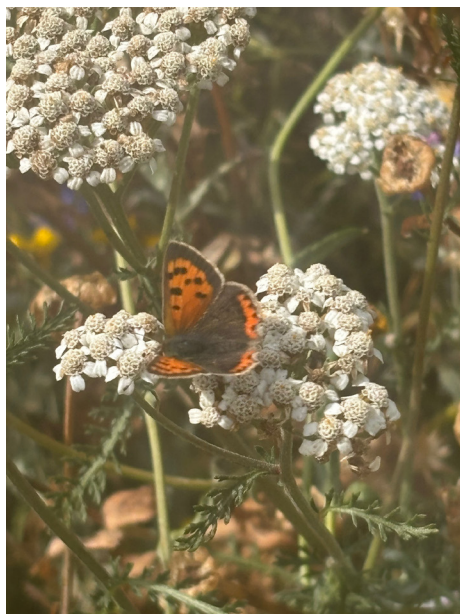
Mike Maunders

At the October meeting, the Parish Council resolved that the Councillor for Highways, Stephen Wood, and the Parish Clerk should review the village road network and submit a proposal to highways for those roads where a 20 mile an hour limit is considered appropriate. This will then be considered by the WNC Highways Speed Panel. A meeting was held in the summer with a highways' representative looking at specific issues on Mill Lane; new signage is to be erected between the cemetery and the village to alert motorists to the presence of pedestrians in that area.

An application has been submitted to Awards for All for the proposed inclusive play project, the aim of which is to upgrade the under 8s play area and ensure it is accessible to all children, regardless of their physical or cognitive abilities.

Regarding Mill Lane cemetery, the Parish Council is exploring whether it may be able to access heritage funding for a project to both celebrate the other heritage aspects of the lower part of the cemetery and to develop the new upper area as a natural burial site and haven for wildlife. We are currently awaiting feedback from the National Lottery Heritage Fund in order to progress this further. The various areas within our cemetery each have their own characteristics: traditional, lawned and (in the future) natural. With this in mind, we are reviewing our policy and regulations to ensure that they reflect the characteristics desired for each area.

Despite the dry summer, the newly rewilded areas on the Rec and at the entrance to



Windsor Close flowered well and many insects were seen feeding on the flowers. The area on the Rec will be increased in size for next year. Other biodiversity measures such as installing bat and bird boxes on the Rec, planting trees, and establishing lavender in the cemetery to attract bees will also be implemented. In addition, the Parish Council would like to plant fruit trees behind the rewilded area at the entrance to Windsor Close and will seek residents' views to see whether they would appreciate the opportunity of harvesting fruit. We are always looking for ways to enhance biodiversity in the village; if anyone has the skills to conduct a biodiversity audit to assist this, please get in touch!

DEFIBRILLATOR TRAINING

The Parish Council was pleased to be able to offer residents the chance to attend a training session on CPR and using a defibrillator in October and thanks the East Midlands Ambulance Service for providing a trainer.

FOOTPATHS REPORT

It's been a steadily successful year on the footpath network in 2025. People are very good at feeding back where I haven't spotted a broken bridge or stile.

Changes include:

- some new direction posts on the Astrop estate, including Walton Grounds, helping people identify the correct paths to Astrop Hill and to Aynho. Thanks go to the estate for that.
- a kissing gate has been fixed on the footpath from the horse paddock toward the Tamil World Historical Society, so thanks also to the landowner for that.
- a bridge on the meadow west of the village has been updated to make stepping up easier and the bridge near the sewage works replaced, so thanks to the council for implementing those.

- a stile over the small horse field near Halestrap Way has been replaced, as has a stile at the top of Paradise, and another near the crossing north from Purston into the next parish.

Interestingly, a bridleway near Astrop Hill Farm had long been misdirected down the wrong side of a fence, and with a little clearing the proper route has been reinstated.

As always, I hope everybody in the parish enjoys our footpaths, and continues to treat the land we cross with respect.

Jeremy Renals
Parish Council Footpath Warden

WASTE AND RECYCLING ARRANGEMENTS THIS CHRISTMAS

Collection changes

The public holidays will affect households on a Thursday or Friday bin collection this year:

South Northants area

- Collections due Thursday 25 December will take place on Saturday 27 December
- Collections due Friday 26 December will take place on Monday 29 December
- Collections due Thursday 1 January will take place on Saturday 3 January.

Garden waste

Subscribers are advised there will be a short break in the garden waste collection service, which will be suspended from Monday 22 December through to Sunday 4 January. It will resume its usual schedule from the week beginning Monday 5 January.

Household Waste Recycling Centres

Recycling centres will be closed on Christmas Day, Boxing Day, and New Year's Day, and will close early on Christmas Eve, at 2.00 pm. With those exceptions they will be open from 10.00 am to 4.00 pm as usual, offering a great way to dispose of a range of materials, from excess household waste, to recycling and larger items that can't be collected as

part of your kerbside collection service. Please remember if you are visiting any of our sites on or after 3 November 2025, you must book a slot in advance.

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Additional recycling

If you have more recycling than your bin can handle, you can put it in clear plastic bags or boxes and present it alongside your recycling bins or boxes. You can also take this to your nearest Household Waste Recycling Centre.

Real tree collections

Crews will collect real Christmas trees from Monday 5 January through to Friday 16 January. You do not need a garden waste subscription to take advantage of this. Residents in the Daventry and South Northants areas should put real Christmas trees out on the day garden waste is due to be collected in their area.

Please ensure trees over 6ft tall are cut in half so they fit in the lorries safely. They can also be taken to your nearest Household Waste Recycling Centre.

Food waste

Food waste bins will continue to be collected on their usual weekly schedule. Please remember you can recycle leftover raw and cooked foods, including veg peelings, egg

shells, out-of-date food, plate scrapings, solid fats, meat and fish bones. Do not put in any liquids and don't forget that when it comes to lining your caddy – any bag will do!

Keep on top of collections

Downloadable bin calendars with information about waste and recycling arrangements for your area will be available from the Bins, Recycling and Waste pages of West Northamptonshire Council's website in November. You can check your collection day and set up alerts on your mobile by downloading the free West Northamptonshire Council app from the Apple or Google Play stores. Find more information about collections together with top tips for reducing your waste and recycling more this Christmas on the Council's waste and recycling pages

CHAIRMAN'S ANNUAL REPORT ON THE MILLENNIUM MEMORIAL HALL AND HEALTH CENTRE TO THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING, 28 APRIL 2025

This report has been prepared primarily for the purposes of it accompanying the Annual Return from the trustees to the Charity Commission and also for a wider audience in the King's Sutton Times. It provides a brief overview of the organisation and finances of the Millennium Memorial Hall and Health Centre during the operating year 1 January – 31 December 2024.

The organisation, trustees and Committee of Management

The trust deeds specify that the composition of the Committee of Management should comprise four trustees elected at the Annual General Meeting together with up to four more co-opted trustees, as well as Representative Members appointed by twelve village organisations.

The full committee meets once every three months – usually on the third Monday of the month in May, August, November and

February – to decide upon policy, approve payments and to receive reports from the Hall Manager and the Management Sub-Committee. During the past year the latter has comprised the Chairman, Bob Burrell, the Secretary, Ann Morton, the Treasurer, Nicole Grundy and Tim Inshaw. The Sub-Committee has continued to meet regularly between full trustee meetings to identify issues and make recommendations to the meetings of trustees. The charitable trust continues to employ a Hall Manager (16 hours per week) and a cleaner on a part-time basis (minimum of 5 hours per week).

Halls

During the last calendar year the two function halls have continued to be reasonably well used by a mixture of regular societies and clubs and occasional users. It has been particularly pleasing to see the continuation of the weekly Friday Coffee Club sessions following the retirement of Liz Al-Anazi.

However (as the following report on finance makes clear) the trustees are examining how the website might be upgraded to attract more business as Hall hiring charges remain the trust's main source of income.

Health Centre

The income of the Hall continues to be heavily subsidised by the rent received from the rental of seven rooms within the Health Centre part of the building. The trustees aim to ensure that, as far as possible, the tenants continue to offer health or well-being services. At present the ground floor rooms are used by an audiologist (two rooms), a medical aesthetics clinician, a skin therapist and a hairdresser. The first-floor rooms are used as the parish clerk's office and a clinical psychologist's practice.

Finance

As detailed in the Treasurer's separate report, the total income for the building (ie

the Hall and the Health Centre) for 1 January – 31 December 2024, was £64,736.

Total expenditure for the period was £62,815, meaning there was a small surplus of £1,921. This compares with previous surpluses of just over £14,000 for 2017, just under £11,000 for 2018 and just under £6,000 for 2019. This continuing trend of reduced surpluses is due to a number of factors but in the last year the trust has been hit by a triple whammy of increased costs

- firstly, new energy prices mean that during the winter months we have been paying up to almost £2,000 per month for gas and electricity;
- secondly, VAT on our energy use is now charged at 20% not 5% as previously; and
- thirdly, we are now charged business rates in the region of £1,200 per year where previously we received a full rate relief.

Over £25,000 of the year's expenditure was spent on maintenance/repairs and some significant building improvements which are detailed later in the report. Because of these financial pressures, the trustees felt that a 5% increase in hiring fees and rental charges with effect from 1 January 2025 was reasonable. For insurance rebuilding costs the building is assessed at £3,300,000.

Reserves remain healthy at just under £184,000.

Building Improvements/significant repairs

During the year, the trustees agreed to engage a surveyor (£2,000) to inspect the premises and to make strategic recommendations to help ensure the longevity of the building. His report (of over 60 pages) is still being considered, but includes a suggested Planned Maintenance Programme over a number of years covering such matters as enhanced roof insulation,

Grahame Mitchell

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upgrading the toilets and re-pitching the roof above the kitchen.

The following major maintenance work has been undertaken during the year

- redundant fluorescent lighting in small hall upgraded to LED units (£2,500),
- small hall floor sanded and resealed (£4,000),
- air-con unit in small hall repaired (£1,500).

In addition, the following work is programmed for the first quarter of 2025

- replacement of fire control and indicator panel (£860),
- replacement of fluorescent lighting in large hall, corridor and WCs with LED lighting (£7,500),
- upgrading of gas boiler heating system controls (£1,500).

Personnel

I would like to place on record my thanks for the continued dedication and hard work of the Secretary, Ann Morton and our outgoing Treasurer Nicole Grundy. Nicole who is reluctantly having to stand-down due to family and work commitments, has fulfilled the role of Treasurer with great effectiveness and efficiency. I'm very grateful that she has agreed to stay on to ensure a smooth hand-over with her successor. It has been a real pleasure to have worked with them both during what has again been quite a challenging year for the trust.

Conclusion

In conclusion, King's Sutton can be rightfully proud of the success of its Hall and Health Centre, both of which continue to be well used and financially secure.

Bob Burrell – Chairman of trustees / Committee of Management, April 2025

LIST OF TRUSTEES 2024

Elected at 2023 AGM (4)

- Bob Burrell, Chairman

- Ann Morton, Secretary
- Nicole Grundy, Treasurer
- Anne Martis, (former Treasurer, remained as trustee until April 2024)
- Tim Inshaw

Co-opted (up to 4)

- Anne Burrell
- Laura Boggeln

Organisations' Representatives (12)

- Ross Field, Parish Council
- Lynn Warburton, 50 Plus Club
- Anne Hayter, Bridge Club
- David Loughran, Garden Club
- Lynette Owen, WI
- Lynn Reason, Mothers and Toddlers
- Tony Carney, Sequence Dance Group
- Carole Hill, Parochial Church Council
- Robert Sharpe, Playing Fields Association
- Abby Lintern, Baptist Church
- Vacant, School Governors
- Vacant, School PTFA

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Christmas Greetings



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Church News

ST PETER AND ST PAUL'S CHURCH

It was wonderful to welcome so many people to our Harvest Festival in September. The church was beautifully decorated, and the children from our Children's Church read the lesson and led our prayers.

Harvest Festival really marks the turn of the year and, as the nights have drawn in, the long hot summer now seems like a long time ago. However, we still have the fruits of that summer to enjoy. There has been a wonderful crop of apples this year, and the produce from the Vicarage apple tree has been put to good use. Pressed and bottled, our fresh apple juice will be on sale at the forthcoming Christmas Bazaar. We will also have our popular 'Chocolate Tombola', Christmas wreaths and many more stalls, games and gifts for sale.

The Bazaar is only one of the ways that we will be keeping the festive season. Do come along to our events:

- Christmas Bazaar:
Saturday 6 December: 2.00pm
- Traditional Carol Service:
Monday 22 December: 7.00pm
- Crib & Christingle Service followed by
Children's Christmas Party:
Tuesday 23 December: 4.00pm
- Midnight Mass: Christmas Eve: 11.30pm
- Christmas Day Mass: 11.00am

Everyone is welcome, so do make a note of the dates and times.

For many people December is an especially busy month, so some time out from all the Christmas preparations can be precious. Why not take 10 minutes to call into the church and enjoy the peace and tranquillity of this ancient and holy place. It is open every day. Better still, do come and join us for one of our 30-minute midweek services at 9.30am on Tuesdays, 7.00pm on Wednesdays, midday on Fridays or 10.00am on Saturday. As ever, all are welcome.

Wishing you every blessing for the forthcoming Christmas season and beyond,

With all good wishes,

Father Matthew Tel. 811364

Email: fathermatthew.r@icloud.com

Website: kingssuttonchurch.weebly.com

Facebook: **St Peter & St Paul's Church, King's Sutton**

NEWS FROM THE BAPTIST CHURCH

Just a short note from me to go alongside our Christmas greeting to you all to say a huge thank you for all your love and support over this past year. At our many events throughout 2025, and especially during the summer as we said farewell to much loved members of our church and village community.

There are not many people in the village whom I've met who didn't know Walter and/or Sharon, such was their love for this village and the people in it. The Mullis family were a huge part of this church's life for many, many years and we are extremely grateful to

them for all that they contributed especially through our Boys' Brigade for Walter and for Sharon through our Girls' Brigade when it was meeting. Their legacy through Brigade will continue to live on through our Boys' Brigade Company now welcoming girls alongside boys; Walter's constant love and prayers for our Company have, I'm sure, played a huge part in why it will be celebrating its 60th Birthday in 2026.

There's much more that could be said, but I know Walter would want me to remind you to get in touch if there is anything that you would value us holding in prayer for you or your family. If you'd like to find out more about what goes on at the Baptist Church check out our Facebook page, website, or email us.

**Every blessing to you all,
Rev Abby (and all the Baptist Church family)**
revabbyl@gmail.com or 01295 812436

Everyone at King's Sutton Baptist Church wants to wish our whole community a wonderful Christmas and prays that 2026 will have many moments of joy.

We'd love to invite you to join us as we ring out

*The Good News of Jesus' Birth
this Christmas!*

*Come if you have lots of faith, come if you have none,
come and hear the story of God's love for everyone!*

Sunday 7th December at 6:30pm: Blue Christmas Service

A chance to pause and remember loved ones who have died as we prepare to celebrate Christmas without them around our table. A short simple service and all are welcome.

Sunday 21st December at 6:30pm: Carols by Candlelight

A service full of familiar carols and a chance to hear once again the story of Jesus birth surrounded by candlelight. Suitable for all ages. Refreshments will be served after the service.

Thursday 25th December at 10am: Christmas Day Celebration

A short family friendly service to celebrate this very special day.

Darren & Rev Abby are inviting anyone who would rather not be alone Christmas Day to join them for lunch at the Baptist Church if you'd like to join them please email Abby: REVABBYL@GMAIL.COM

CHRISTMAS MINCE PIES IN THE EARLY 17TH CENTURY

For six Minst pyes of an indifferent bignesse.

- Take halfe a peck (about 5-6 lbs in weight) of the finest flower,
- 2lbs of Sugar,
- 2lbs of Butter,
- a Loyne of fatt Mutton, with a litle of a legg of Veale to mynce with it.
- 2lbs of reasons of the Sunn, as many Currons, of Cloves, Mace and Nuttmegys one ownce.

For the Paist mingle 1 pound and a halfe of Sugar with the flower and breake in the yolkes of six eggs, then worke it together with three parts of the two pounds of butter. Sett on a little water and lett it seethe, then Scym and put in the 4th parte of the Butter and when it is melted scym it cleane from the Water and worke it with the paist.

For the Meate. Let it be Seasoned with the pepper and mingled with halfe a pound of Sugar, the other frute and spyce, the Raisons

must be stoned and some of them mynced amongst the meate, the others put in hole, put in the joyce of two Orringes and one Leamone and Rine of them smale minced.



When the Pyes are filled slyce dates and stick in the top, and when you sett them in to the oven wash them over with the yolkes of eggs and pynn them upp in papers.

[The pies would have been made in a standard coffin shape, well known to the cooks of the day so there was no need to describe it. The illustration from Historic England also shows the baby Jesus on the lids of the coffins which was quite a common decoration]

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Helen Forde



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Drumming is good for physical health, well-being, reducing anxiety and stress, and so much more. Its especially good for having a laugh!



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Get that rhythm! Drumming for wellbeing

'I thoroughly enjoy my weekly drumming group, Accent Percussion ... I find it very therapeutic, great fun and good for concentration. Zac, our teacher, is the essence of patience and as a group we blend well together.' – *comment from a member*

Accent Percussion is a Community Interest Company that aims to provide accessible percussion groups for people in our local communities for wellbeing, mental health and fun. We are open to all ages, whether you have any musical experience or not. We also welcome people with disabilities. If you are under 16 please bring an adult along, they can watch or join in. It does not matter if you have not played drums before. Drumming and percussion benefit both physical and mental health. It reduces anxiety and stress, helps relieve depression, lowers blood pressure, develops confidence, and improves

coordination. Playing for just a few minutes has been shown to boost your mood. It is both a release and an expression. There are three groups, one each in Buckingham, Brackley and King's Sutton and we've played at festivals in Buckingham and Brackley, at Stowe Gardens, Wassailing and other community events. Sometimes the three groups play together, making our output all the louder and exciting!

We are also introducing one off workshops for our members in percussion from different cultures. We had an African djembe workshop and we are planning our next workshop in Brazilian and Samba percussion. This will be very lively and there are always new things to learn!

New members are welcome – come and try it out.

Chris Lyle

monkeypuzzlestudio@protonmail.com

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Volunteer service

Can you support the volunteer car service, which provides vital transport for community members who need help getting to their medical appointments? We are already assisting several residents in King's Sutton, and with more requests coming in, we urgently need additional volunteer drivers from your area. This role is completely flexible — you choose when you're available, and there's never any obligation to take on a journey. Every offer of time, no matter how small, makes a real difference. Passengers contribute to expenses at 45p per mile, so volunteers are never out of pocket. By spreading the word within your community, or even considering volunteering yourself, you can help ensure that local residents continue to receive the support they rely on.

Thank you so much for helping us strengthen your community through this service.

Volunteer Centre, Whittons Lane, Towcester, NN12 6YZ

Tel: **01327 358264** www.snvb.org.uk

Registered charity: 1104848

Katherine House Hospice Trek the Great Wall of China for Katherine House Hospice

A big thank you to everyone who has taken on a challenge for us this year, from cycling to Paris to plunging into waterfalls and even skydiving! Your incredible efforts have raised vital funds that help keep your local hospice running. Now we're inviting you to join us for the trip of a lifetime in October 2026, our first-ever overseas challenge, to trek the **Great Wall of China!** Walk along a remote stretch of one of the world's great wonders, taking in breathtaking scenery and sharing the experience with a fantastic group of people.

Our Director of Fundraising and Marketing, Stephanie Lawless, said – *'It's not easy, but where's the fun if there's no challenge? You won't regret signing up for this trip of a lifetime.'* We'll be on hand to offer advice and ideas for your fundraising, and there are lots of ways to reach your target, from coffee mornings and craft sales to quiz nights and community events.

Trek dates: 9–17 October 2026; find out more and register your interest – khh.org.uk/the-great-wall-of-china-trek

Katharine House Hospice key dates for Christmas:

1-19 December – Schools Santa Run

This fun Christmas challenge is designed to be flexible for every school to fit it within the PE curriculum or as a fun extra-curricular activity – khh.org.uk/schools-santa-run

4 December – Lights of Love

A special event at St Mary's Church, Banbury, where we come together to remember and celebrate the lives of loved ones who are no longer with us – khh.org.uk/lights-of-love

13 December – Banbury Christmas Tractor Run

The much-loved Tractor Run is back for its 10th year, and we have set ourselves an ambitious target to raise £100,000 for the hospice. Could you organise a Tractor Run party with a fundraising element to help us reach our goal? khh.org.uk/banbury-christmas-tractor-run

8 & 9 January 2026 – Christmas Tree-cycle

Book your Christmas tree ready for collection by a Katherine House Hospice elf on 8 & 9 January and know that it is being chipped and recycled – khh.org.uk/christmas-tree-cycle

14 March 2026 – Concert at St Mary's Banbury 'Songs for the Road'.



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Adderbury, Banbury OX17 3NG

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Our Neighbourhoods

LIVING AT ASTROP GRANGE!

For those of you who might not yet know, the current Astrop Grange consists of 12 semi-detached bungalows and 10 two-bedroomed apartments in the main house. It's fair to say that all the residents, old and new, enjoy living here very much and we all get on really well, even if we don't actually see each other that often. We believe we are a welcoming community and we do get together when time permits in our 'Hub' which was purpose built so we can hold meetings, social gatherings, birthdays and special family events. There's a weekly sewing group, a weekly Bible Study Group and other groups too.



During the late Queen's Jubilee Year the residents decorated the front of the building accordingly and invited passers-by to join them for the festivities. Whilst the residents in the bungalows generally look after their own gardens, the Grange building residents take turns in caring for the communal gardens around the main building and also around the 'Hub'. It's an amazing place to live and whilst some folks here still work it is a fabulous place to return to at the end of the day.

Bob Harland



Astrop Grange residents in party mood

LITTLE RUSHES

Built on a very soggy carrot field, Little Rushes can trace its history from 2016 when the first houses were occupied. Our provenance cannot compete with that of Lovells, Glebe Rise or Halestrap Way, but we have our own story to tell.

Barwood Homes, after a prolonged legal battle won the right to build on a technicality. Local opposition was fierce amid concerns to protect the wonderful heritage of our village. Barwood Homes no longer exist, having rebranded as Cora Homes Ltd, but the roads and green space have yet to be signed off and adopted after some nine years of occupation! The saga continues with everyone having their own Barwood/Cora story!

To locate Little Rushes, you will find us tucked away behind Banbury Lane, accessed via Sandringham Road and then onto Hampton Drive leading to the development, which consists of houses on Hampton Drive, Buckingham Close and Sterling Close. There is a varied mix of Ironstone Tew and brick built private and shared ownership homes.

We are also fortunate to have a large public open grassed space, which is well used by dog walkers and often families and children can be found playing games there. Bordered

on two sides by lovely trees, including a row of Field Maple it's an asset to the village. At the bottom of Hampton Drive there are three attenuation ponds designed to collect both run-off water from the development and water that drains from the surrounding fields.

One of our first experiences of a storm was in 2019 when the Fire Brigade was called out to prevent water flooding out of the ponds and into homes near to the ponds. Modification to the system has helped, however with heavy rain our anxieties definitely rise as the system feeds a culvert that itself is close to capacity.

As Little Rushes sits below the level of the local fields, surface water drainage is an annual problem. It occurs when the fields are saturated, and a point comes when friction is lost and the water comes down in a tidal wave, overwhelming ditches and culverts.

This happened as recently as November 2024, threatening houses opposite the farm entrance and Windsor Close. Thanks to the magnificent efforts of residents and a local farmer who donated sandbags the day was saved! In conjunction with King's Sutton Parish Council, we now have our own Flood Warden and plan to purchase some portable flood defences.



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The pond area is also a place to spot wildlife with three muntjac deer living in the adjacent copse. Ducks have been regular visitors and are happy to co-exist amongst the bull rushes and willow that grow abundantly during the spring and summer. Clearly this was the genesis of the name '*Little Rushes*'. In addition, the trees are full of birds, including tawny owls, green and spotted woodpeckers and a sparrowhawk. We also have a very reliable sighting of a badger out for an early morning stroll!

Finally, we must not forget to mention that many residents are making a significant contribution to village life e.g. as members of the Parish Council, Gardening Club, the local Litter Picking Group and the newly formed Bee-Keepers to name a few. I would like to think that in this short period of time, we have helped to make a positive contribution to our village and begun to author our own story.

David Wood

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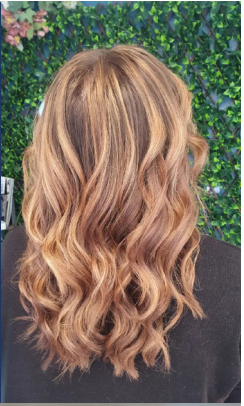
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Cuppa and a Chat

This time we had to adapt how we did the interview of the final two members of the team, **Meriel Lewis** and **Jen Kelly**! Meriel's was done over email, and Jen and I enjoyed a lovely lunchtime dog walk together.

Abby: What do you do as part of the King's Sutton Times Team?

Jen: Once Helen has edited all the articles coming in, I'm the middle bit between Helen and them going to Meriel for design. I collate all the articles into one document with notes for where the photos go before it's sent off for the design stage.

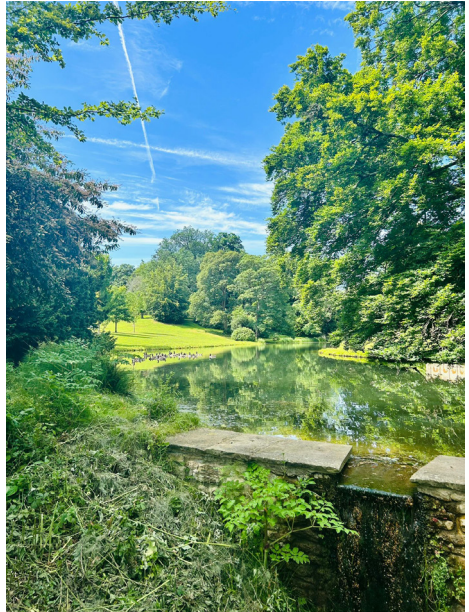
Meriel: I am responsible for the typesetting of the issue – that is creating an electronic version of all the articles and pictures ready to send to the printer. Helen and Jen do the editing and choose the pictures, then I make it all fit on to the pages in the right order and with the right adverts.

A: Jen, where would you recommend for a day out?

J: With the dog, actually even if you haven't got a dog, a great place to visit is Stowe Gardens for a nice walk. There are also lots of great walks around the village, I love that within minutes from my home I can be out in the country side, it's even better when you find a great walk with a nice café!

A: Meriel, as you don't live in King's Sutton is there somewhere near where you live that you would recommend we come to visit?

M: I have only moved to my new home recently but I love being able to nip down to the beach anytime I like, it is six miles of sand and dunes and just beautiful. I would recommend a visit to anyone who comes to this area, bring your walking shoes, a picnic... and a towel for when you can't resist a paddle!



Stowe Gardens



Six miles of empty beach

A: Tell us a fascinating fact about yourself?

J: When I was at primary school, I entered a writing competition and won second place. As part of the prize, we went to the Randolph Hotel in Oxford and the special guest was Roald Dahl, I love his books so it was wonderful to meet him.

M: I worked as a pizza chef in a ski resort!

A: If you could have a cup of tea with anyone, who would it be?

J: This is hard, but I think because I work in the environmental sector, I'd love to have a cup of tea with David Attenborough. But also, someone completely different, Marilyn Monroe as I'd love to find out what really happened in her life!

M: There are so many people but if I have to choose one, it would be Spike Milligan. I listened to recordings of the Goon Shows with my family as a child, went on to read his funny and serious poetry, and his ridiculous books. '*I told you I was ill*' has to be the best epitaph ever.

A: Do you prefer tea or coffee?

J: Coffee in the morning to wake up, then tea in the afternoon. Especially if it's an afternoon tea!

M: Tea, preferably a blend of 50/50 Twinings Breakfast and Earl Grey!

A: Do you have a favourite biscuit? And most importantly to dunk or not to dunk?

J: Never dunk, I can never judge it right and I know I'd have to get a spoon to fish the biscuit out! Chocolate Digestives are the best biscuits. I also like a Garibaldi, even though everyone called them squashed flies biscuits!

M: Garibaldi for the squashed flies but a digestive to dunk!

We hope you've enjoyed getting to know the team a little better! If you have someone in the village that you'd love to learn more about or if you have an interesting story to share do get in touch.

Thanks Team!

Abby Lintern



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