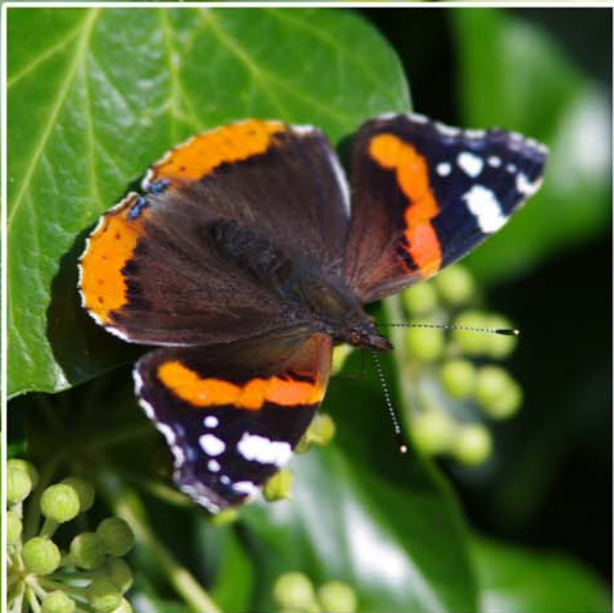


NORTH ASTON

News

September 2025

#419



NORTH ASTON NEWS

SEPTEMBER 2025, No:419

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Notes from the Chair

What a great summer it has been! However, it seems normal weather has returned for the start of September and the new school year. The trees will be sighing with relief at the recent rain. A number of children in the village will be starting school for the first time or going up a class. Always a tough adjustment after the long summer break.

Enjoy the autumn

Best wishes,

Christopher

You can phone Christopher on 340358

or you can email him using: chair@north-aston.co.uk

Village Meeting - Agenda

There will be a Village Meeting this month, in the Old Bakery as usual. The date has been pencilled in for Thursday 9th September, 2025, starting at 7:00 pm. If there's any change to this, notification will be sent out by email and through the village WhatsApp group. The provisional Agenda is as follows:

Formal Business

1. Welcome
2. Approval of Minutes of last Meeting (14 April 2025) as published in the May issue of the North Aston News
3. Treasurer's Report
4. Village bank accounts – an update
5. Mid-Cherwell Neighbourhood Plan – approval *
6. Traffic Calming – moving forwards *

Informal Business

7. Village Fête Review
8. Marquees vs Gazebos
9. Defibrillator
10. Any other business
11. Date of next Meeting

* See brief note and explanation of both these topics on Page 3. If you have any other items that you'd like raised at the Meeting, this can be done through Any Other Business or by contacting Richard via email: secretary@north-aston.co.uk.

RIDE + STRIDE for Churches 2025

This year's **Ride & Stride** will take place on **Saturday 13th September**. This is an opportunity not only to explore the local countryside, but also to raise some much-needed funds for our local parish church.

In previous years there's been strong participation from North Aston residents, most especially the youngsters, and several hundred pounds have typically been raised for the Oxfordshire Historic Churches Trust. Of that money, half goes to our own church of St Mary's. Along the way, there's not only exercise to look forward to, but also cakes and refreshments!

Entry and sponsorship forms can be downloaded from the website at www.ohct.org.uk/ride-and-stride/ where a new online sponsorship form setup is offered. Alternatively, rely on established technology and ask Clive for more information on 338434.

Cover: It has been a miserable summer for vegetables, but a great one for fruit and nuts. The walnut tree on the Green is laden. Watch out on sunny days this month for the year's last butterflies. Photos: MP.

Planning

There are no new applications this month, and the last three outstanding from previously have all been approved. To examine these in detail, search for "North Aston" on the CDC Planning Register web page at www.planningregister.cherwell.gov.uk/ **3 Greenside Cottages, North Aston, OX25 6HU.** The request to amend the details of a previously approved application has been permitted. Ref: 25 / 01881 / NMA

Juniper House, Somerton Road, OX25 6HX. An application to remove a conifer hedge has been approved. Ref: 25 / 01894 / TCA
Nicholson Nurseries, The Park, North Aston, OX25 6HL. The application to extend the opening hours for the Yurt café has been approved. Ref: 25 / 01469 / F

MCNP, Traffic and Meeting

As itemised in the Agenda on Page 2, there will be a couple of topics discussed at the Village Meeting this month that require a little explanation.

North Aston is a participant in the Mid-Cherwell Neighbourhood Plan and a member of the MCNP Forum. This is where details of the Plan are discussed and each village is able to put forward opinions on how the Plan should be implemented. In the May issue we revealed that a Review of the Plan had been finalised, and residents were invited to read through the document and submit their thoughts by the end of May. The participating Parish Councils and Meetings then had until June 20th to prepare further feedback at an 'official' level.

Since then, all the various contributions have been taken on board and a final draft has been prepared. This is almost ready to be submitted to CDC, and will help to shape the way the various villages and communities will develop and grow over the coming years. It needs to be approved by each individual Council or meeting, and a form needs to be signed and submitted with the support and approval of the Meeting.

The second important topic concerns Traffic Calming. Various important developments have pushed this up the agenda, including the proposed construction of another 8000 homes in Heyford Park, plans for a major Rail Interchange at Ardley, new warehousing at Baynards Green, and the proposal for a Puy du Fou re-enactment park near Bucknell. All could, perhaps will, have an impact on traffic through the village, and installing measures to slow down vehicle movements could become even more important. OCC has put forward plans for the construction of 'build-outs' or chicanes, with possible repositioning of the village boundary. The details need to be discussed and a plan approved. If you have strong opinions on either matter, please do attend the meeting.



August's winners were:

1st Prize (£10): Annabel Bevan (#80)

2nd Prize (£5): Andy Brown (#87)

Congratulations to them both! Makes us feel sorry for those who didn't sign up this year. If you're feeling left out, and you'd like to learn more about the 100 Club, please contact Bev:

Telephone 347434 or email info@north-aston.co.uk.

You've got to be in it to win it!



North Aston Gardening Club



It was with much regret that the North Aston Gardening Club had to take the difficult decision last month to cancel the annual Flower & Produce Show.

The long hot summer, which has proved to be one of the driest on record, played havoc with the normal growing season. There was very little rain early on, when seeds and young plants needed moisture for germination, and then August was equally dry, when vegetables would normally be developing, ready for harvest. The one compensation has been a surprisingly good crop of fruit, especially apples. However, the club admitted that there was "barely a vegetable between us, and certainly not enough to put on a decent show!"

However, it seemed a shame not to have some sort of gathering on the Green, so it was decided that there would still be the Spud-in-a-Tub and Heaviest Tomato competitions, and these were judged at a very well-attended Tea & Cakes gathering on the morning of Saturday 30th, at 10:00 am.

Congratulations to Jean Graham for winning the Spud-in-a-Tub (by some margin!) and to Tuck Hatzigeorgiou for his magnificent tomato. His specimen was so huge that all other rivals withdrew their entries in embarrassment. His single tomato was not far shy of a kilo in weight.

Hopefully next year will see a return to more typical weather and the Show can go on. Rumour has it that new categories may have to be introduced, such as the heaviest melon, the longest Asparagus Bean pod, and the tallest date palm, grown from seed.



In the car park behind the Old Bakery

- Wide variety of fresh seasonal organic vegetables at affordable prices
- Minimal packaging & zero food miles
- Supporting the local economy



Too busy? Why not try our Veg Box Scheme?

Fresh vegetables delivered straight to your door!

Email: northastonorganics@gmail.com

Tel: ((01869)) 347702

visit the website at:

www.northastonorganics.co.uk

Steeple Aston Choral Society

*Come
Sing with us!*



Steeple Aston Choral Society's next concert will be on Sunday 23rd November, and will feature Rossini's *Petite Messe Solennelle*, written for choir with four soloists plus piano and harmonium.

Margaret Bullement says: "The Rossini is not petite - it's a full-length work - and not solemn. It is a gloriously melodic work."

There are various versions online, one is here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CqzrmdevQSI>

The first rehearsal is on Monday 1st September 2025 at 7.45 pm in Steeple Aston Village Hall. All are welcome to join, no auditions.

You can either just turn up, or, if you prefer, message SACS on Facebook or ring Margaret Bullement on 01869 347346.

The North Aston defibrillator is located in the porch at 4 Somerton Road. CPR & Defibrillator training sessions are arranged from time to time. For more information or to book a session, please contact Mark Stay: 347806



Juiced!

Although the vegetable-growers have had a disappointing summer, this year has been exceptionally good one for apples and other hard fruit, including pears and peaches.

If you have fruit trees in the back garden, or up at the allotment, laden with fruit, don't let them go to waste. Press them!

Steeple Aston is organising apple pressing days on Sunday 7th and Saturday 20th September. The Steeple Aston and Middle Aston Community Press will be available at the Community Orchard on Water Lane in Steeple Aston on these dates between 2:00 and 4:00 pm. Just take along your apples, a knife, chopping board and some bottles, and join the fun. Volunteers to help harvest apples, and donations to support the Orchard are welcome.

Alternatively, drop off your apples at Grange Cottage on South Side (not bruised windfalls, please) and they'll be pressed and bottled to raise funds for the Community Orchard.

For further information, or to hire the press for your own Fruit Pressing Party, call Annie Stogdale on 07740 290291, or email her on annie.stogdale@gmail.com

There's Fresh Beef in the **Honesty Shop** most days, with a wide array of delicious cuts of pasture-fed, organic beef - slowly raised right here on the land surrounding the village, and dry-aged for 28 days. Details in the advert below, but note that the shop is open until 9pm on Fridays.

New and very exciting news to come next month!

NORTH ASTON FARMS & DAIRY

Organic, pasture-fed meat, ice cream & more - on your doorstep!

Order online	Visit our shop	Join a milk round
<p>Fresh beef boxes plus individual cuts of beef, lamb and rose veal, ice cream & more!</p> <p>Free delivery within 15 miles (on orders over £40) or collection from the farm</p>	<p>Open 7 days a week 8am - 7pm</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fruit & veg - - Meat & dairy - - Cupboard essentials - <p>Find us at: <i>The Old Bakehouse, North Aston, OX25 6HX</i></p>	<p>Twice-weekly deliveries Monthly invoice Reusable glassware Delivery before 7.30am</p> <p>Milk, yoghurt & cream plus extras including bread, butter, eggs, juice, meat & ice cream</p>

Find out more at www.northastonfarms.co.uk

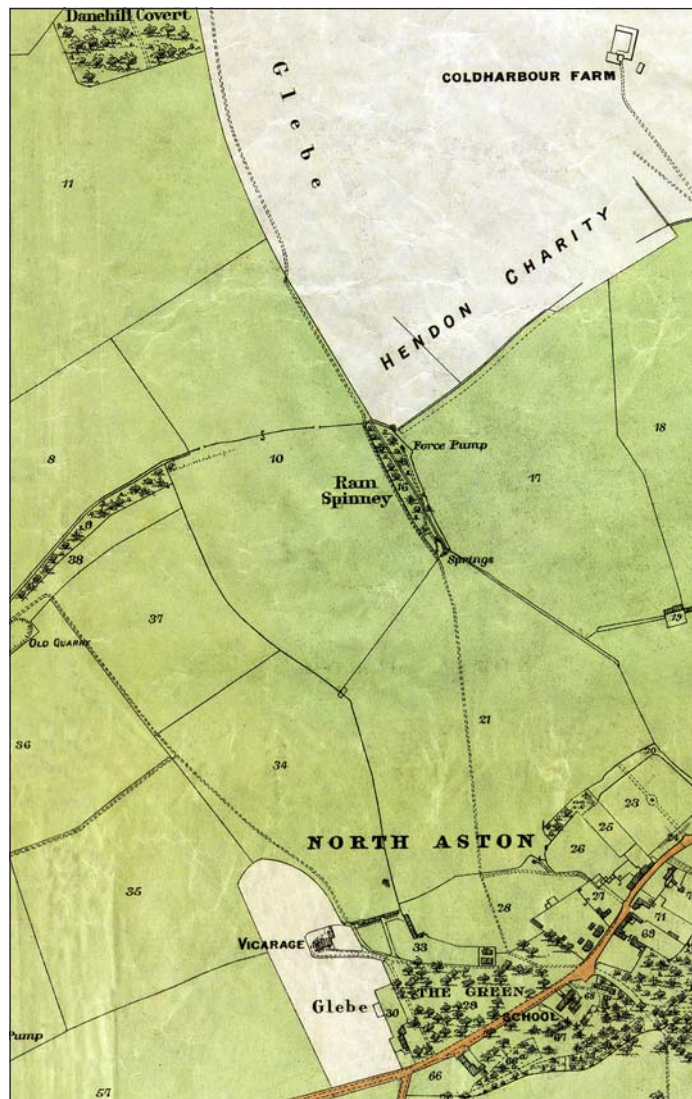
North Aston History Notes

With Stephen Rees

So here we are, approaching the end of summer, and I suppose the obvious item for my bit this month – we call it *Steve's Bit* when sending it to Marcus, and sometimes ruder words if I think it's a load of old tosh – is the heat and lack of rain we endured through August. However, a bit of local (to me) history first. It is all linked, in case you think I've gone off on one of my *Tales of the Past* ...

I moved out of Mum and Dad's house (now Tony and Bev's) in, I think, 1992, and settled into Number 18, where Wendy and I still live now ... and always will, hopefully. In the corner of the plot, down by my workshop, there's a hole in the ground. It's not a proper pond or anything, just a weedy hole. When we were kids it was a lovely thing, with steps going down about 8 or 10 foot to a square open well. It's where the five houses down in our little corner of North Aston used to draw their water, before the days when there was running water into the houses. When he was little, my dad used to come down and do this for the older tenants, and charged a penny, or so he told me.

In his wisdom, the man who lived here before me decided to dig it out, and make a pond, but he never finished it. In truth, he made a complete muck up of it, but hey ho. Anyway, since we have been here for the last 32 odd years it has always had a couple of foot of water in the bottom, and we



A fabulous shot of a dahlia flower from Angie Hanna

have kept fish of varying sorts in it. We even had ducks on it once. So, the point of this tale is that, for the first time in my memory, it has dried up. So too has the stream that runs out of it and heads down into Ram Spinney. In my life I've never seen it dry. Blimey, that's the kind of year we've had!

Ram Spinney gets its name from the old water ram that's there. It's in bits now, but you can still find it. It used to pump water up to North Aston Hall, and be their only supply of water. It was a fantastic Victorian-designed bit of kit, and used four gallons of water for every gallon it pumped up to the Hall, but it could lift that single gallon over many, many feet, without electric and with almost no maintenance. It just kept on working, constantly.

They were all over the country years ago, and we still have a few derelict ones on the farm. There was another that was fed by a lovely underground brick-built reservoir, and pumped water up to a holding tank at Fox House. I used to go with Clive, back in the 70's, to look after it, and I can remember like it was yesterday. He used to have a little rake to pull out the weeds to try to keep it pumping water.

That tank at Fox House fed water to the village at a very low rate, but it was running water and free, without any chlorine.

Which brings me back to the start, and what must be the driest summer on record. The trees are already dropping their leaves, trying to save themselves. There is almost no grass for the animals, and hay prices are going to go through the roof.

Now, as I'm writing this, we have been having a few days of heavy, almost torrential rain. I think too much in one go will just wash off the land, so let's hope for some gentle, slow rain over the coming days because, heaven knows, our gardens and our farmers need it.

Sorry if that was a bit drawn out and depressing! On a more cheerful note, we have been spotting owls fairly regularly in the evenings recently, and we know of a vixen nearby that is busy feeding a litter of cubs. We won't say where! We have also spotted fresh hedgehog poo in our garden, and there are rabbits everywhere, much to the annoyance of James!

I've not seen many bats of an evening this summer. Has anyone else noticed that, or am I just going to bed too early? Please let me know.

September will be a busy month for us. I have the Tidefest Angling Championship on the Thames in London to look forward to, and then we're off to the Orkney Islands for our holidays. That's the best bird-watching place we know, so I may have some tales to tell when we get back.

Steve & Wendy



Gigaclear's contractors have been busy again in the surrounding villages recently, but only occasional visitors here in North Aston. Most of the groundworks have been completed, with the new trenches and access covers installed, and these link in with the older infrastructure originally installed by BT.

There are no significant works scheduled for North Aston now until October, when the Somerton Road will be subject to occasional closures to through-traffic between the 13th and 24th. However, there may still be the occasional short-term or temporary closure at other times, and along other routes.

To be kept informed of progress, you can still register with Gigaclear: www.gigaclear.com/locations. If you have any specific concerns, you can contact Gigaclear's Customer Operations team by phone or email:

- Telephone: 0370 774 0537
- Email: networkbuildqueries@gigaclear.com

We're hoping to have a confirmed schedule soon for when individual properties will start being connected to the network. Some residents may already have had phone calls from Gigaclear to discuss this. If this hasn't happened to you yet, we hope to have information from Gigaclear soon to determine how home-owners go about this, how much it may cost, and what the long-term commitments will be. More next month.



The Gatehouse has been supporting Oxford's homeless community since 1988. The charity offers a wide range of free services and activities to adults who are homeless, vulnerably housed, on low or no income, or simply looking for company and community from its drop-in centre at St Giles Parish Rooms, 10 Woodstock Road in Oxford.

Recently, someone kindly left some clothing in the porch at St Mary's in North Aston, which was very gratefully collected by Jane Dowson. She is a regular member of the congregation here, as well as being a trustee and volunteer at The Gatehouse. The clothing left was mainly for women, but those seeking help from the community centre are mainly men. Consequently, the charity is in much need of good quality second-hand clothing suitable for men, especially items like men's socks, underpants, joggers, sweatshirts and hoodies, preferably in nearly new condition.

Next time you're thinking of donating clothing to a local charity, look closer to home, and leave it in the church, preferably late in the week, and shortly before a church service. Ideally, please email Jane first on janejana2016@gmail.com

The Gatehouse operates on an open-door basis, which means that everyone is welcome. There is no need for a visitor to the community centre to prove that they are homeless or have a local connection in order to receive the support they seek.



Our purpose is to connect people with climate and nature through meaningful experiences. We place people, principles and planet before profit.

We invite you to explore our carefully curated Plant Centre and Rosara retail space featuring locally-grown, fresh cut flowers courtesy of The Chipping Norton Flower Farm. Enjoy generous hospitality from our Michelin-recommended Yurt restaurant and brand new Tiny Café.

To spark your curiosity, Rosara at Nicholsons offers a varied events programme consisting of dining experiences, seasonal fairs, talks, demonstrations and workshops.

We hope to welcome you soon.

www.nicholsonsgb.com | 01869 340342 | The Park, North Aston, OX25 6HL



The Church MATTERS



Facing Change

The sun is shining, the cows are munching luscious green grass in the field next to our motor home, as we relax on holiday in France. Yesterday A-level exam results were announced, changing lives across the country.

Change is a part of life. Often it happens incrementally, in tiny steps and we adapt slowly with it. The days have been slowly shortening ever since the summer solstice at the end of June. Despite this change happening every year, come September the shorter cooler days seem to surprise us. To manage the changing seasons we have summer and winter duvets, which simply require swapping at the appropriate time.

Change can also happen suddenly and dramatically, such as with exam results, and leaving home for the first time.

Seeing the change approaching, enables us to begin to prepare for it. We can talk it through, put things in place, including beginning to prepare a 'bottom drawer' with extra bed linen, cutlery and crockery for when we leave home. We may also need to learn new things to help us adapt, like learning to cook.

Sometimes change comes out of the blue, and when it does it can take longer to adapt and cope with the change, especially if the change is unwelcome and difficult. Faith is what helps me in these situations, as I believe that God holds us even as we go through difficult times. I think of Peter, as he saw Jesus walking across the lake, after his resurrection. Faith enabled Peter to climb out of the boat when Jesus called him, and when Peter began to sink (having looked towards the storm and become scared) 'immediately Jesus reached out his hand and caught him' (Matthew 14:31).

As we face changes, be they big, small, welcome or unwelcome, we need to adapt, so that we can move forward living our best life. This will involve some level of letting go, and the more we cling to the past and resist the change



the harder accepting and adapting to the change is. Throughout this process we can lean into God, trusting him to hold us, knowing he loves us and wants the best for us.

This autumn as the seasons turn and change, I invite you to think about what changes are happening for you, and how are you growing and adapting to them. Are there changes you are resisting, are there things you need to let go of? Can you give these to God, lean into him, trust him and step out of the boat into your future?

God, You know which direction my life is headed. Guide my path and heart as I continue to trust You through this change in my life. Help me depend on You as I navigate this change. Amen.

God bless, Harriet

Please note – my usual day off is a Monday.

Church Services in September 2025

NORTH ASTON

S.ASTON

TACKLEY

Sunday September 7th

9:30 am Holy Communion Book of Common Prayer	11:00 am Holy Communion Book of Common Prayer	5:30 pm Family Service & Baptism
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Sunday September 14th

9:30 am Morning Prayer	11:00 am Family Worship	5:30 pm Holy Communion
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Sunday September 21st

9:30 am Holy Communion	11:00 am Holy Communion	5:30 pm Evensong
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Sunday September 28th

10:30 am Harvest Festival	5:30 pm Harvest Festival & Supper	9:30 am Family Communion
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Sunday October 5th

9:30 am Holy Communion Book of Common Prayer	11:00 am Holy Communion Book of Common Prayer	5:30 pm Evensong
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This schedule is reproduced in good faith. The Editor cannot be held responsible for any errors or changes. To be sure of all this month's services, please visit: www.sntchurch.com

The Reverend Harriet Orridge is Rector of the Parishes of Steeple Aston, North Aston and Tackley.

You can contact the Rector by phone on **01869 932224** or by email: harriet.sntchurch@gmail.com

You may also reach out to members of the North Aston PCC: Church Wardens: Clive Busby, (casb@north-aston.com, Tel: 340470) and Richard Bailey, Tony Godwin (Treasurer), Vicky Taylor (Secretary), Annabel Bevan, Ginny Stay, Jane Jana, Jeremy Taylor, Kildare B Borrowes, Sarah Godwin co-opted.

Announcements

Deddington Farmers' Market

The Farmers' Market this month will take place on Saturday 27th September, between 9 am and 12:20 pm.

Dog Walking Service

Evelyn's Dog Walking Service is still available evenings and weekends @ £5 / hr. Message or call Lucinda on 07869 282227.

It's going on charge ...

Those who commute from Heyford Station need to be aware that, as of 1st September, there will be charges for car parking. The daily tariff is £2.00 per day at weekends (Saturday/Sunday, and off-peak after 12:00pm) and £3 daily during the week. There are season tickets available on a monthly (£45) quarterly (£125) and annual (£360) basis.

Parking is managed by Apcoa, and can be paid for using the App. Please check the details on www.gwr.com or www.apcoa.co.uk.

Pork Pie Person?

Calling all pie aficionados! The next meeting of the Deddington Pork Pie Appreciation Society will be held at the Deddington Arms on Sunday 12th October from 4.00pm. New bakers, seasoned makers and all appreciators are welcome. This could be the perfect way to spend an autumn Sunday afternoon, sampling pies and enjoying a drink with like-minded pie lovers. There will be a discretionary collection in aid of The Holly Tree Club, promoting welfare for the aged and disabled in the community.

Fancy a Coffee!

The Duns Tew Drama Group will be hosting a Coffee Morning in Duns Tew Village Hall, Sat 6th September, 10:30 - 12:30

September Birthdays

Thea Busby
Florence Busby
Thomas Cunningham
Camilla Durnin
Karen Hack (née Brown)
Bea Hathaway
Sam Hatzigeorgiou



Many Happy Returns to all the North Aston residents who celebrate birthdays this month. If you're not listed, or know someone who should be, please let us know.



Aunt Sally on Wednesdays!

Regular meetings on the Green will continue until the evenings become too dark. September dates will be confirmed through the WhatsApp group. No experience necessary, but a glass of beer or wine may help ...

On the Buses

From the end of August the number of X4 bus services between Banbury Bus Station and Oxford Railway Station increased from two to four per day. The north-bound service will now pause at Aston Turn (The Fox) at 09:38, 12:33, 14:33 and 18:05. The south-bound service, heading towards Oxford, will stop there at 07:50, 10:51, 12:51 and 16:05.

The S4 (between Banbury Bus Station and Magdalen Street in central Oxford) is more frequent. The north-bound bus visits the Fox at 08:04, 09:16, 10:14, 11:14, 12:14, 13:14, 14:14, 15:14, 16:30, 17:38, 18:41, 19:39, 20:31, 21:19, 22:19, 23:46. The south-bound stops at 06:14, 07:15, 08:25, 09:25, 10:25, 11:25, 12:25, 13:25, 14:25, 15:25, 16:39, 17:48, 18:44, 19:32, 20:32, 22:11. You can find out more online at <https://bustimes.org>

Looking for Support Staff

Steeple Aston Preschool is seeking additional part-time 1:1 Support Staff during term time, starting this month. Salary is dependant on experience and qualifications. If you're tempted, please email your CV with a short covering letter to angelasteeplestonpreschool@gmail.com

North Aston News

The *North Aston News* is edited by Marcus Potts and designed and produced by CMC Graphics. It is printed by Nicholsons of North Aston, and distributed monthly, free of charge, to all the residents of the Parish of North Aston. A full-colour electronic edition is also sent out to an extensive emailing list every month. To be included in that list, please contact the *News*, stating your wish to be added to the mailing list. Contributions are welcome, which need to be in an electronic format (except Classifieds and Announcements, which may be hand written). To submit an item please email: info@north-aston.co.uk. All images should be at the highest possible resolution. The Editor strives to adhere to the Editors' Code of Practice, and reserves the right to amend or modify content, where appropriate, and to express editorial control. All content is copyright the original author and/or CMC Graphics. © 2024.

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