

NORTH ASTON

News

November 2025

#421



NORTH ASTON NEWS

NOVEMBER 2025, No:421

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Notes from the Chair

I think this autumn has been one of the most spectacular and beautiful that I can remember. The range of colours is fabulous. Some plants are a bit confused however; one of our conker trees is flowering presumably thinking it is spring after the down-time of the drought. I expect it won't last.

Firework night is approaching and will probably end up being firework week. Let us know via the village WhatsApp or email if you are planning anything. Best wishes,

Christopher

You can phone Christopher on 340358

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

Next Village Meeting - December 2nd

There will be a Village Meeting early next month, on Tuesday 2nd December, in the Old Bakery. It will be an occasion to plan for events over the Christmas period, and to ruminate on progress with such issues as Traffic Calming and the MCNP. The provisional agenda will be published in next month's News, and posted on the noticeboard. Check the village WhatsApp group for updates nearer the time, and if you'd like a topic added to the Agenda, please notify Richard (details left) or email secretary@north-aston.co.uk.



October's winners were:

1st Prize (£25): Rachael Rees (#38)

2nd Prize (£5): Liz falconer (#30)

Congratulations! 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!



Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal

Unfortunately, Norman is unable to carry out his traditional collection for the Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal this year. If you'd like to donate and collect a poppy, there's a collection box in the Rosara shop at Nicholson's, and also at the Co-op in Deddington. Thank you.



Get that First Friday Feeling! North Aston's Pop-up Pub, the unofficial "Baker's Arms", reopens at 7 pm on Friday 7th November. Bring your own drinks, perhaps a few nibbles, and enjoy a convivial evening at The Old Bakery.

Cover: Images of Autumn and Remembrance. Top and bottom inset photos by Annie Savage.

MP

Planning

Just one new application this month, and an update. To examine any applications in detail, search for "North Aston" on the CDC Planning Register web page, which can be found at www.planningregister.cherwell.gov.uk/

3 Greenside Cottages, North Aston, OX25 6HU. The request to amend the details of the application relating to the fitting of replacement windows has been approved. Ref: 25 / 02156 / LB.

The Peach Barns, Somerton Road, OX25 6HX. An application has been made for a *Change of Use* from a "food training and development centre" to that of on-site Farm Shop. The unit has been vacant since December 2024. The date for comments has passed, and a decision is due imminently. Ref: 25 / 02431 / F.

Congestion Challenge

The Temporary Congestion Charge implemented for the City of Oxford is now being enforced, despite some issues with signage and a heated debate in the Council's own chambers.

Visitors to Oxford now face a £5 charge for access to certain roads and streets within the "ring road". Details were included in last month's issue, but essentially, drivers within the city have a day to pay the fee, online, or face a £70 penalty.

Those with need for regular access, such as those with jobs in Oxford, or who actually live there, can apply for a free permit, but they will need to register. In addition, there has been some clarification on exactly who will face the charge. It now appears that any vehicle *not a car*, such as a commercial van, is exempt, and the automatic number plate recognition (ANPR) cameras will check the vehicle type when it passes.

There are three types of permits: a *Central Permit* for city-centre residents, which offers unlimited access plus 50 visitor passes; an *Oxford Residents' Permit*, for those living outside the centre, and includes 100 free day passes for a year; and an *Oxfordshire Residents' Permit*. This is for anyone living nearby, within the county, and allows for 25 free day passes per year, up to three passes per household on three separate cars, but all registered at the same address.

North Aston residents needing regular access to Oxford, such as those with routine hospital appointments, can request one of these *Oxfordshire* permits. It might be worthwhile, even if you think your need may only be occasional. However, this can only be done online, and you'll have to register with OCC using a valid email address. Look for the link marked *Apply for residential Oxford congestion charge permit*. When the map appears, click "View Permits", and then click "Select" beside "Oxfordshire permit area resident". You'll also need an electronic copy of the vehicle's V5 and a recent utility bill or similar.

This Congestion Charge is in addition to the city centre's existing Zero Emission Zone, and is likely to remain in force at least until the reopening of Botley Road.

For clarification, please visit www.oxfordshire.gov.uk and search for "Congestion Charge" or "ZEZ", or both.

Oxford temporary congestion charge



The Duns Tew Drama Group presents

Aladdin

The pantomime

Friday 5th December
Saturday 6th December

Friday 12th December
Saturday 13th December

Door & bar
Open from 6:45pm

Tickets: £19.50
Includes 2 course meal

Duns Tew
Village Hall

Scan QR code for
box office

dunstewdg@yahoo.com

[duns_tew_drama_group](https://www.facebook.com/duns_tew_drama_group)

The annual Duns Tew Drama Group pantomime takes place next month, and if previous years are anything to go by, tickets will sell out quickly. By tradition, the event is totally hilarious and invariably entertaining, with actors from several of the neighbouring villages, including North Aston.

There will be more details next month, but if you can't wait to book a ticket, then head over to the website without delay. You can follow this link: <https://www.ticketebo.co.uk/duns-tew-drama-group>

A Message from Steve

A number of people in the village very kindly sent cards and contributed towards a collection for our former postman, Steve Seeney, who has been taken seriously ill. The cards and donations were passed on to him by our current postman, and we have since had a message from Steve's wife, Sharon.

This is a message from Steve the postman. He would love to give a big thankyou to all those who so kindly sent him cards and their generous donations. He had a few tears when he read all the cards, well, we all did. Again, many thanks from Steve and myself, Sharon, his wife xxx.

We wish Steve all the best.

There will be a Clothes Swap event on Sunday 23rd November from 2-5pm at the Cromwell Lodge Hotel in North Bar Street, Banbury. To take part, bring along five items of clothing to donate, pay £5, and pick from the selection to 'swap'. No shoes or underwear! Proceeds go to *Friends of the Earth*. Register at reception for free parking behind the hotel.



North Aston History Notes

With Stephen Rees

A lot of you will know Mary from No.1 Somerton Road, and a fair few will have stopped and had a chat with her as she sat in her porch in the afternoons, watching the world go by.

She doesn't live there any more, and the house stands empty and cold at the moment. Going there the other day to box in some pipes brought memories flooding back, as our family grew up there for a short while before moving to where Tony and Bev now have their home. Dad grew up in No.10, where Auntie Viv now lives, and went to school first in the village and later to Steeple Aston, where Mum also went to school. Her Dad had the butcher's shop in Great Tew.

Later they met at a dance in Deddington, where Mum actually had her eye on another lad – I'm not saying who! – but after a few dances and seeing Dad's motor bike, decided he would do, and they got married and moved into the first cottage on the right at Dane Hill.

After Mum came home from work one afternoon to find two burglars in the house, they never felt comfortable there again, so moved up into the village, into No.1, and started to have us lot. Val came first, then Tony and David (who was actually born in that house) and finally the runt of the litter, me. We moved out in 1971, to have more space to grow, but had great fun there in our younger years, with good neighbours and loads of other kids in the village to play with.

Next door to us was the Morley family, and next to them, the Shorts. I think the next one was one of the houses for farm workers, but I know Brian and Pat Palmer lived there for a while. Number 5 was the Dore, and No.6 was old Mrs Philips, who I can't remember, but Peter told me was a real character. She dressed all in black and kept her windows permanently blacked out. Number 7, where Hal is now, was where Bob Beesley lived, Dad's fishing mate, and then came Mrs Woodward, fondly known as Old Woody. She had a huge red parrot that she taught to bite and swear like a good'un. It kept us kids well entertained, living in the front window and swearing at us all as we went next door to the shop. In her time Old Woody was the cook at the Manor, and Mum in hers was Old Woody's house-keeper.

So that's how it went on for years. Nearly everyone worked here, in one form or another. Dad went to work at the Bake House with Charlie Wyatt, baking early-morning bread, and Pete Morley was the estate carpenter. Percy and Eric Short worked in the Manor kitchen gardens, and nearly everyone else worked on one of the farms or was in service at the Hall, the Manor or at Middle Aston House.

When we were little my gran still lived in Number 10, where Auntie Viv is now, and I can still see her now, holding a loaf of bread under her arm, buttering it with an inch thick of lard, cutting it, and passing one to each of us in turn. Curly Whitehead lived in No.11. He was Mrs Morley's Dad. He was almost 200 years old (well, really old anyway. He was born in 1886!) and bent double, but went up through the village every day carrying his shotgun behind his back to the pit to get a rabbit or a couple of rooks for his supper.

In those days people grew up here, stayed here, worked here and looked after their old family too. They did their shopping in the village or from the blokes who came round in vans. They made their own amusements, playing for the village cricket team or football team, fishing, playing cards and bingo



Mary and Joyce pictured outside No.1 in about 1998

in the old School House at nights, working here, and dying here. This isn't hundreds of Victorian years ago, but in my own short lifetime. How things have changed! For the better?

If I close my eyes I can smell the freshly-made, still-hot lardy cakes in the dusty old Bake House. I can taste the warm fatty milk from the dairy behind the Hall that they let us kids drink until we were sick. Mr Hazel's shop, with all the toys in the window and big china pots of paté and cheeses, sausages and whole sides of bacon. There were apple orchards to scrump, for fruit and also mushrooms to sell, fish to catch and birds' nests to find, especially the Moorhens, whose eggs were prized to eat. We had no phones or computers, televisions were black and white, and not everyone had a car. They didn't need them.

No one goes fishing much anymore, and there aren't many fish to catch anyway. I haven't seen kids playing footy on the Green in years, and going to supermarkets gives me anxiety before I even get through the door. When Wendy and I go for our walks, we both end up carrying a phone each, in case some one needs to talk to us. Is that really necessary? Oh, and don't get me started on delivery drivers! We are all to blame for that — it's just too easy to shop online.

When our generation has gone, I wonder what the village will be like? Will there be any fields left around us, or just more houses and cars? I'm glad I won't be around to see it.

I think that's enough of my reminiscing and ranting for one month!

Steve & Wendy

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Email: stephen.rees@north-aston.co.uk

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This is not a ticketed event, but to help the organisers anticipate numbers, those hoping to attend are asked to pre-register by visiting the Nicholson's website, where they'll also find more information: www.nicholsonsgb.com/events/

The run-up to Christmas is already looking busy in the Yurt. Anyone hoping to enjoy the special Festive Menu (introduced from 2nd December) is advised to book soon, whether that's for a get-together with friends or a family celebration. To reserve a table and peruse the menu, visit: www.nicholsonsgb.com/book-a-table/ or call 01869 340342.

Christmas Fair!

The traditional Nicholson's Christmas Fair takes place this month, on Saturday 22nd. Head for The Park here in North Aston where talented local craftspeople and artisans will display their innovative and tempting creations to inspire you with gift ideas and fuel your festive spirit.

Throughout the day, there will be seasonal talks and activities for all the family as well as warming treats to enjoy. Make the experience even more special by taking brunch or lunch in the Nursery's Michelin-recommended **Yurt** restaurant. The menu will feature a mouth-watering range of dishes inspired by the festive season.

The event will also be highlighting one of Nicholson's dedicated charities, *Women in the Wild*. This is a project that works with communities to support and encourage tree planting on farms and at schools. Find out more on the day.

Gates open at 10 am, and the event runs through to 4pm.

The Yurt

The woodburner will be ablaze and a warm reception is guaranteed in the **Yurt** this month, with a special *Wild Game Night & Wine Flight* on 14th November.

Things are also looking set for the Christmas period, with a special Festive Menu on offer from December 2nd. This includes such tantalising dishes as a *Three-Bird Ballotine Roast*, with carrot and swede, red cabbage, sprout tops, butter roast potato and sage, or *Winter Squash and Wild Mushroom Arancini*, with confit onion, kale, and romesco. Round that off with *Dark Chocolate Tart with Barley Ice Cream and Kirsch-Soaked Cherries*. Check the website for special dining events and to book — details left, or email theyurt@nicholsonsgb.com



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 Nicholson's 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

News from **NORTH ASTON FARM SHOP**

North Aston Farm Shop & Community Hub

Opening Soon!

We're thrilled to announce that North Aston Farm Shop & Community Hub will officially open on **Saturday 15th November** at 10am, with a very special guest coming to cut the ribbon!

The fit-out at Peach Barns is now well underway, thanks to a brilliant crew of volunteers - thank you to everyone who's lent a hand so far! Every counter, shelf and sign is being built from reclaimed materials, staying true to the same resourceful spirit that has made the Honesty Shop such a success.

While the to-do list keeps growing, we're lucky to have a wonderful team coming together. Lauren has recently come on board to help with the day-to-day running of the shop and to lead our events and community projects. She founded *The Campfire Experience* in 2024 after a career in communications, teaching and forest school leadership, and is passionate about making nature connection experiences accessible and inclusive for everyone.

Nick is managing the nuts and bolts of the Farm Shop business, Lauren is focusing on community outreach and events, and Pete will be running the Christmas Tree store (along with a few other projects). We've also welcomed our first employee, Julia, who'll help run the Honesty Shop, coordinate farmers' markets, and support the new Farm Shop once open. And we're also being helped by some familiar, friendly faces... members of the existing farm teams who many of you already know.

The new Farm Shop will initially open on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays 10am-6pm, offering a wide range of local and organic produce - including fresh beef and dairy from the farm; lamb, chicken, pork and venison; bread, cheese and charcuterie; fruit and veg from North Aston Organics; local beer, cider and wine; and plenty more good, honest food. If there's something you make that you'd like us to sell in the shop - even if it's not edible - please let Nick know ASAP.

There'll be self-service hot drinks, and upstairs, a community library and reading nook - the first part of a new shared space we're calling *The Peach*, where we'll host small events, workshops, and community gatherings. Our recent pilot *Acoustic Open Mic Night* was a great success, and we're planning another for the evening of **Thursday 20th November**, and on the third Thursday of every month going forward.



Nick and Ben setting up North Aston Farm Shop & Community Hub

The Peach is available to hire for yoga, book clubs, music rehearsals, and whatever else you can dream up. There's even a desk space set up for anyone wanting a peaceful place to work, with wholesome refreshments just downstairs.

North Aston Christmas Trees

We'll once again be selling the very best of British-grown, non-drop Christmas trees this year - in the pole barn beside the Farm Shop - every Friday, Saturday and Sunday, from **21st November** until Christmas. A selection of trees will also be available throughout the week at both the Honesty Shop and Nicholsons.

With an earlier start and lessons learned from last season, we're feeling much better prepared this time around. Having visited fields from Devon to the Scottish Borders, we've hand-picked some truly spectacular trees which we can't wait to share with you.

Our range includes 3ft-10ft Nordmann Firs, plus handmade wreaths, water-holding stands, lights, firewood, and of course, Pete's famous alpaca socks. We'll also be serving FREE mince pies and mulled apple juice, and there'll be a lucky dip for the kids.

Friends of North Aston Community Club

From launch, every North Aston Parish resident will automatically receive a free year's membership, with others able to join for £60 per year. Membership includes:

- ★ Discounts on selected products and events
- ★ Priority event access
- ★ Reduced room hire for The Peach
- ★ Early news and updates
- ★ Plus a few surprises along the way!

Our hope is that the Club will become a simple but meaningful way to connect - helping fund small improvements, build community spirit, and give everyone a real sense of ownership in what we're creating together.

How You Can Help

We're still seeking a few bits & pieces before opening - notably baskets and hampers, a pool table, tablecloths and tea towels, cushion covers, and books on food, farming and nature for our library. See the full *Wishlist* on the **Support Us** page of our website. If you've got something tucked away in a shed that deserves a second life, we'd love to hear from you.

Volunteers are also welcome to join our weekend work parties throughout early November, or help out during the week as we complete the final touches. Every bit of help makes a difference!

Thank you all for your continued encouragement and support. It's been amazing to see the whole community help bring this project to life - and we can't wait to welcome you to a space that feels warm, local, and rooted in North Aston community spirit.

Keep up to date at northastonfarmshop.co.uk or follow us on Facebook, Instagram and YouTube @northastonfarmshop. See you soon at the shop!

Nick & the North Aston Farm Shop team
nick@northastonfarmshop.co.uk

PCC Meeting

At the Meeting on 30th September, the PCC discussed among other things:

Safeguarding. Both Churchwardens and all members of the PCC are now up to date with their Safeguarding training, and there were no issues to report. Both Churchwardens are also completing an *Awareness of Domestic Violence* course. We have also approved a *Recruitment of Ex-Offenders* policy.

Accounts. The balances on the three Bank Accounts are very similar to what they were at this time last year. The architects report has however highlighted some quite serious issues, see below.

Roof Lead. Anxiety about theft remains high. We don't think we can afford a roof alarm or a CCTV installation. So we are applying various areas of the lead with Smart Water, a forensic liquid which makes any stolen lead traceable.

Card Payments. We had a card terminal taking donations in the Church for about three months on loan. The resulting 23 donations, totalling £190, were, as perhaps was expected, underwhelming. Although we decided we can't afford an online one we think that we must have one in the Church, and so will likely go with an off-line machine which is cheaper. The payments collected are then downloaded when it's connected to Wi-Fi.

Lych Gate: Clarity on the funding of repairs to this is still awaited. In the meantime it was agreed that the roof be supported by acrow props, and this has subsequently been done.

Fund-Raising. We have done two fund-raising teas, which were quite well attended, and the £234 raised is being donated to the Village to go towards the cost of the new marquees. We'll continue having them, as, apart from the money, they are nice very friendly gatherings.

Quinquennial Report. This is the mandatory report that has to be made concerning all aspects of the Church fabric by an architect every five years. We have just received the latest one. There is a long list of jobs that need to be done, some of them quite expensive. Fund-raising and/or grants will be needed. There are four urgent jobs that need to be done now, and they are being addressed.

The Bakers Arms. This is our pop-up Pub held from time to time in the Old Bakery, which we'll start again soon, probably in November. It's actually BYOB (Bring your own Beverages) but really nice and friendly. No charge of course.

Upcoming Events

Sunday November 9th: Remembrance Sunday. 9.30 am.

Sunday 21st December. Carol Service. 3.30 pm. With the wonderful North Aston Choir.

Wednesday December 24th. Carols on The Green. 6 pm

Christmas Day. Christmas Communion. 9.00 am.

[As recorded on Page 11, The members of the PCC are: Rev Harriet Orridge (*Rector*), Clive Busby and Richard Bailey (*Churchwardens*), Tony Godwin (*Treasurer*), Vicky Taylor (*Secretary*), Annabel Bevan, Ginny Stay, Jeremy Taylor, Kildare B Borrowes, Sarah Godwin (*co-opted*)]. KBB

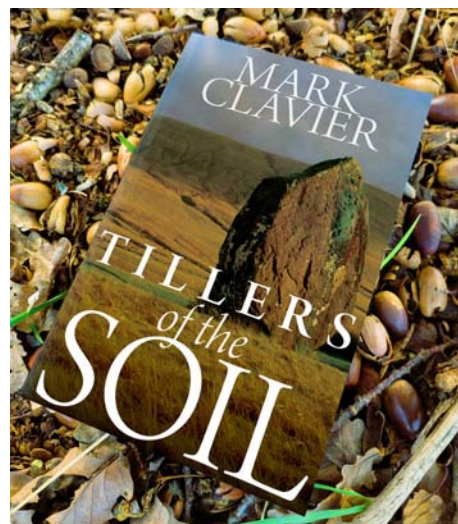
The North Aston defibrillator is located in the porch at 4 Somerton Road. CPR & Defibrillator training sessions are arranged from time to time. For more information or to book a session, please contact Mark Stay: 347806



Tillers of the Soil

You may have spotted mention of the Reverend Dr Mark Clavier, a former vicar here in North Aston, in previous issues.

He has now written a new historical novel, *Tillers of the Soil*, published by Sacristy Press.



The story is set in the last days of Roman Britain, and follows a family in the Brecon Beacons as they struggle to hold fast to their land, their faith, and one another, while their world collapses. It's a moving tale of endurance, belonging, and the love of the land.

Mark now lives, and works, not far from Brecon, just outside the little Welsh village of Llanfrynach. He explains what inspired him to write the book:

"From an old farm near here you can follow a footpath across the fields and through a wood that hugs a mountain stream. I've often followed it up into the Beacons. Years ago, I noticed on an old map that near the start of the footpath there once stood a Roman bathhouse. I wondered what it was doing there, on what must have been the edge of nowhere in Roman times. Later, I found an account in Theophilus Jones's late 18th-century *History of the County of Brecknock* of the workmen who stumbled upon the bathhouse and excavated it. That old volume included a sketch of what they found ... and then promptly destroyed.

"This was at about the time of the American Revolutionary War. No one has excavated it since. One theory is that the bathhouse was used by the commandants of an old cavalry fort a few miles up the River Usk. But why not build it closer to the fort and on the same side of the river? Another theory is that it belonged to a tax collector. But these are only guesses. We also don't know if there were any other buildings adjoining the bathhouse. All we do know is that it must have been ornate and that, as far as anyone can tell, nothing else like it could be found in this ancient landscape.

"That was more than enough to pique my curiosity. Each time I returned to walk the footpath, my imagination began to conjure a story. Soon, personalities began to greet my arrival. When, one frosty morning, I suddenly heard the voice of Armoricus and Corotica, the *paterfamilias* and *materfamilias*, I knew I had to tell their story. Others later joined them and, before I knew it, I had my Roman villa, struggling to survive as Rome retreated, Irish raiders drew near, and their world began to tilt towards a darker age."

The book was released on November 1st, and you can find out more, read an excerpt, and order a copy by visiting Mark's website: www.markclavier.com/tillers-of-the-soil. A Kindle version is also available through Amazon.





October was another busy month on the Gigaclear front, with the Somerton Road closed through the middle of the village for the best part of a week. Some residents were inconvenienced a little, but others welcomed the absence of traffic. Then the council closed it again for pothole patching, and finally, there were roadworks in Somerton.

The new groundworks mean that nearly all properties within the village are now within striking distance of a 'node', and can be connected to the Full Fibre network. Indeed, several already have been, including Jonathan at School End, who shares his experience ...

"In September my current broadband internet contract with Talk Talk was due to expire. Since moving to North Aston in 2016, this was the only provider I have been with, and has been fairly reliable most of the time – although it has had its problems! At points, very slow and sluggish and sometimes completely cutting out for hours at a time.

"I decided to see if Gigaclear full-fibre would be available, since they had provided the basic infrastructure in the village over the Summer. To my delight, after registering an interest on their website, I received a call the next day. I booked myself in there and then to have the first phase of my connection installed. This required a couple of chaps installing an overhead cable from a telegraph pole where my current phone line attaches to my house. This was done with no fuss at all and I awaited my next visit which was around two weeks later.

"The next stage required drilling a hole through the external wall of the property so that the fibre cable could be brought through. This runs to a 'node' attached to the wall inside the house which is also where the router is placed. The 'node' is basically a small box that screws to the wall that looks a bit like a router. This requires mains power, so a double electrical socket is needed fairly close to where the cable comes through the wall - one to power the 'node' and the other for the small router. This will probably determine where the cable needs to be brought into the property - for me this is on the first floor at the top of my stairs. This too was done with no drama or fuss and, within two hours, I had full-fibre broadband!

"Gigaclear fibre broadband is super easy to connect, fast and reliable upload and download speeds and the best thing of all, a monthly cost of only £19! A considerable saving compared to my Talk Talk service for broadband internet which was almost £30 a month. Deciding to change to Gigaclear is probably one of the best things I have done in recent months and is very easy and fuss-free. I highly recommend giving Gigaclear a call or enquire on their website if you would like internet speeds at over 10 times your regular broadband speed at a fraction of the cost."

We have checked again with Michelle Tanfield, the Community Engagement Manager for our area, and she explains a little ore about the cost and installation process:

"There is no difference in the cost of the install, whether the property has a new overhead cable, or accesses the full fibre via one of the inset nodes set into the ground nearby. Whichever way is used, 95% of installations are free of charge. (In most cases where an overhead cable is currently used for

the regular phone and broadband line, then the new cabling will follow the same route). Costs would only be incurred if the node is a significant distance from the property, such as where a long driveway is involved, or the house is very large. Work would never be done without the resident's full knowledge of any costs."

This picture shows how how a typical installation from a node may be completed.



If you would like to investigate the possibility of full-fibre broadband to your property, register your interest at 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

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Your Views Matter!

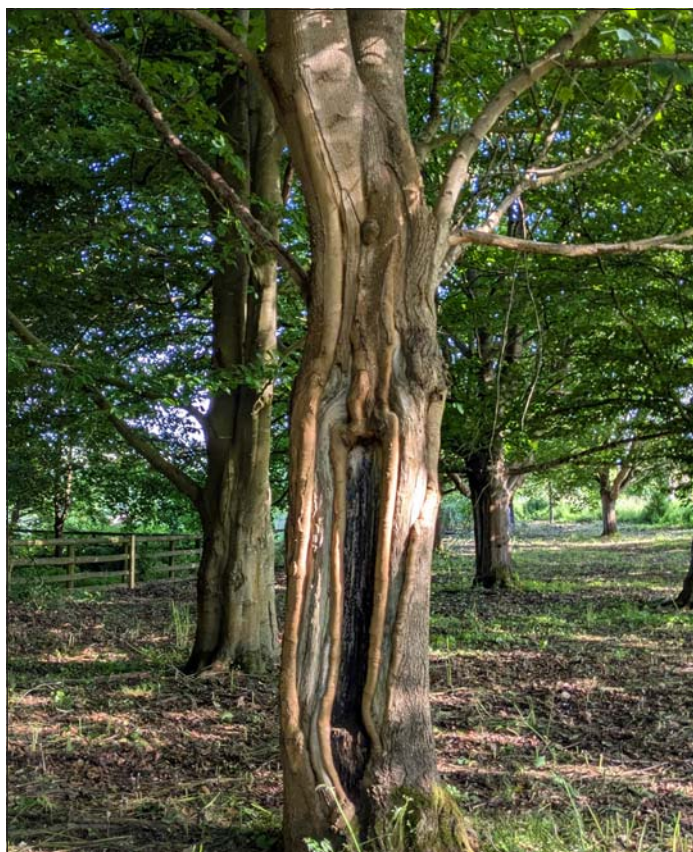
As if October's edition was not enough, there are yet more planning and development issues to consider. In many and diverse ways, we are enormously fortunate to live in this rural corner of North Oxfordshire, surrounded by green fields and countryside. However, one downside is that many other people would like to live here too. Not only are there thousands of new homes being proposed, but our location at the centre of the country also means that this area is a prime target for industrial, commercial and infrastructure development as well.

The deadlines for submitting comments on two of the most significant developments have now officially passed. The closure date for comments on the *Statutory Public Consultation* relating to the Strategic Rail Freight Interchange proposed for Ardley was 4th November, while that for Heyford Park's 9,000 new homes was in mid-October. Despite this, it is still possible to express your thoughts and opinions by emailing the planning department directly using Planning@Cherwell-DC.gov.uk or by contacting local MP, Calum Miller (calum.miller.mp@parliament.uk). By these means, it may still be possible to bring influence to bear for another month or so.

Why might you want to do that?

Some residents may already have received a leaflet through their letterbox concerning the Heyford Park application. It's a red and black A5 flyer with bold words about "Urbanisation", "Congestion" and "Environmental Vandalism". Behind the emotive language it attempts to convey a valid concern about the future of small villages like ours that are near-neighbours to Heyford Park "New Town".

While the idea of Heyford Park growing like Topsy may not be a popular one, it also poses the question; if the houses don't go there, where else might they go?



Trees in autumn. Annie Savage

Steeple Aston Choral Society
Presents

A Joyful
Evening With Rossini
Petite Messe Solennelle

Come and enjoy a performance of Rossini's wonderful operatic-style work with Steeple Aston Choral Society and an illustrious group of soloists.

Paul Badley – Conductor
Susie Allan – Piano
Paul Herrington – 'Harmonium'
Elizabeth Roberts – Soprano
Clary Amelia Taylor – Mezzo-Soprano
James Atherton – Tenor
Christopher Foster – Bass

Steeple Aston Village Hall
Sunday, 23rd November 2025 at 7pm

Tickets £12.00 - Children under 16 free
from Steeple Aston Village Shop
or direct from Margaret Bulleyment
01869 347346 or
www.mthet749@gmail.com.

Under the Housing & Growth Deal of 2018, Oxfordshire was committed to delivering 100,000 new homes by 2031. It always looked set to fall short of that obligation, but no matter, the Deal has now been set aside as local government prepares for major restructuring and the possible creation of a new unitary council. However, a replacement Local Plan seems likely, and a development such as Heyford Park will still be seen as one way of getting closer to meeting the need for more homes. The recent designation of Heyford Park as one of the government's flagship New Towns also seems likely to focus development on the former air base, and will certainly ease the plan's progress through the planning process.

Nearby villages like North Aston are currently offered some degree of protection from development by the Mid-Cherwell Neighbourhood Plan. If the Heyford Park plans are rejected, there would be pressure for those homes to go somewhere else. Would the MCNP be enough to prevent them being foisted onto the smaller communities of North Oxfordshire?

In truth, there seems little or no chance that any amount of objecting will actually stop the development from going ahead. However, that doesn't mean that local residents can't apply pressure to influence the detail of how it is implemented.

For example, the plans include several high-rise buildings that will change the Heyford skyline for ever. Targeted objection could prevent these being included. Similarly, there will be three equally intrusive wind turbines, each 100 metres tall. Is it the right place for them? The construction of 9,000 new homes could mean 15,000 more cars and up to 20,000 additional residents. The current infrastructure would struggle to cope, so the council could be persuaded to insist that the roads servicing Heyford Park should be upgraded first, before

any new buildings are introduced. Similarly, Ardley Station could be reopened to passengers, in anticipation of the future needs of commuters. The traffic calming measures earmarked for the surrounding villages could also be implemented now, and pressure could be brought to increase Section 106 Funding sufficient to cover all the costs.

Essentially, the infrastructure needs to be sorted before the houses are built. If objections focused on the detail, something might be achieved, even if it's unlikely to stop it happening.

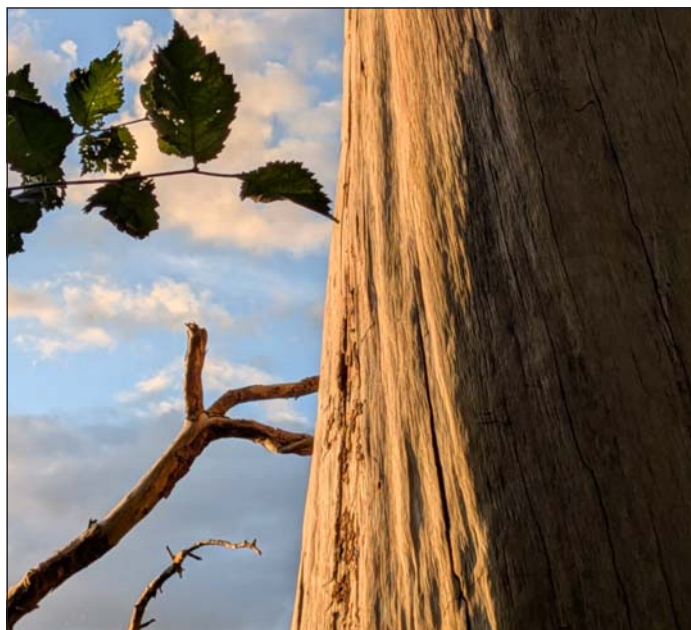
The same is true of the Strategic Rail Freight Interchange at Ardley. As covered last month, it is deemed a project of national significance, with full government backing, and there's almost zero chance of objections stopping it. It will take thousands of HGVs off the roads of Kent and the South-East ... and draw them all here to North Oxfordshire instead. That sounds frightening, although most will head out of the SRFI and almost immediately join the M40, to begin their nationwide distribution. Again, the priority has to be that the road infrastructure is addressed first, before a single sod is cut.

To that end, a joint initiative between OCC and CDC was launched at the end of October called the **Movement and Place Plan for Bicester and Mid-Cherwell**. This is another public consultation process where the powers-that-be are seeking our views on their plans for our future. The details can be reviewed here: <https://letstalk.oxfordshire.gov.uk/bicester-and-mid-cherwell-map>. The various documents set out the transport investment priorities for each area and form a key part of OCC's Local Transport and Connectivity Plan.

Your input is welcomed, and could help to shape the future of transport and connectivity in this area, and how it will impact our communities.

There will be an opportunity to examine the proposals, and discuss them with Council representatives, at a public consultation event to be staged at the Friday Market on Sheep Street in Bicester on **14th November**, from 9 am to 4 pm. You have until Monday 1st December to submit comments to the website.

That's enough for this issue. Next month, the plans for local government reorganisation and new unitary authorities for Oxford and the Shires? It might be interesting. *MP*



Light, Shade and Contrast. Annie Savage

SATURDAY
15TH NOVEMBER
AT 7.30 PM

IN AID OF
DUNS TEW
CHURCH

Live MUSIC

PERFORMED BY THE AMAZING
GOSPEL BELL

IN DUNS TEW VILLAGE HALL
TICKETS £12 under 16s free
CONTACT: Clare Burgess
07909 881596
dunstewpcc@gmail.com
BAR AVAILABLE

Sue King - Local Artist

Sue King from Steeple Aston, a regular Oxfordshire Artweeks exhibitor, will be displaying her artwork for the first time at Nicholson's Christmas Fair on 22nd November.



Her original artwork will be depicted on cards, calendars and gifts, such as mugs and cushions. Local village scenes will be available on postcards. Discover more of her work on Instagram: [sueking4207](https://www.instagram.com/sueking4207)



The Church MATTERS



Remembrance and Peace

To help commemorate and celebrate the 80th Anniversary of VE Day the idea to create a poppy cascade to hang outside SS Peter and Paul Church in Steeple Aston was born. Throughout the spring and early summer people from across the whole community have been busily knitting and crocheting, whilst during various meetings there would be someone sitting there quietly, studiously cutting out red felt ready for younger members of our community to make into poppies. These thousands of flowers have been carefully sewn onto netting to create the wonderful visual Poppy Cascade hanging outside SS Peter and Paul church.

Thinking about the community effort to create this stunning display, reminds me of the community effort of the World Wars. Local people came together, working side by side for the good of the wider community. People in the countryside took young children evacuees in to keep them safe from the bombing of the cities, parks were turned into allotments as food was grown in the 'Dig for Victory' campaign due to the difficulties of importing food. Young ladies, like Joyce Bedding, moved from cities out to the countryside to help farmers in the Land Army. Others volunteered to fight, soldiers, sailors and airmen, as well as all those working behind the lines to keep them supplied with fuel, ammunition and food. Winning the World Wars took a community effort, a community effort spanning the entire globe.

As I write this, after two years of fighting there is again a ceasefire in Gaza. Whilst President Donald Trump is being heralded as securing the peace breakthrough, many nations including several in the Middle East eg. Egypt and Qatar, have worked behind the scenes, talking to Hamas. Equally important has been the international recognition of a Palestine state by various European nations. To secure the ceasefire agreement has taken an international community effort. The wider international community has already been working together to get aid, food, water and medical supplies into Gaza, and will need to continue over the longer term to help rebuild Gaza.

To continue to live in peace, we need to continue to work together in communities, across the generations at local, national and international levels. Sadly, the other week there was an horrific attack on a synagogue, when two worshippers were



Church Services in November 2025

NORTH ASTON	S.ASTON	TACKLEY
Sunday November 2nd		
9:30 am Holy Communion Book of Common Prayer	11:00 am Holy Communion Book of Common Prayer	5:30 pm All Souls Service
Sunday November 9th		
9:30 am Remembrance	10:50 am Remembrance	5:30 pm Remembrance
Tuesday November 11th		
10:50 am Act of Remembrance		
Sunday November 16th		
9:30 am Holy Communion	11:00 am Holy Communion	5:30 pm Evensong
Sunday November 23rd		
9:30 am Morning Prayer	11:00 am Morning Prayer	9:30 am Family Communion
Sunday November 30th		
No Service	10:30 am United Benefice Holy Communion	5:30 pm Advent Organ Meditation

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

killed. In this season of Remembrance, Bishop Gavin's prayer following that attack is particularly appropriate:

Dear Lord, we thank you for placing us in relationship with those around us. We pray for our communities at local and national level:

As we give thanks for the glorious diversity of humanity reflected in our nation, we acknowledge with lament that for some that diversity can become a source of division and fear.

We ask that you would help us to build relationships of honour and respect.

Be with those who mourn and those who are fearful, bringing comfort, peace and strength. And help us to be a nation where we value and love our neighbours as ourselves.

Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

God bless, Harriet

Please note – my usual day off is a Monday.

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 contact 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, Jeremy Taylor, Kildare Bourke Borrowes, and Sarah Godwin (co-opted).

Announcements

Deddington Farmers' Market

This month's Farmers' Market will take place on Saturday 22nd November, 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.

Somerton Christmas Market

This year's Christmas Market will take place in St James' Church, Somerton on Saturday 29th November, from 11 am to 2 pm, with local businesses and craftspeople offering a wide array of Christmas gifts and offerings. There will also be a tombola, cakes and refreshments, with all profits donated to church funds. Please support our neighbours!

Pop-up Pub

Last winter's popular Pop-up Pub will return to North Aston this month as a regular First Friday event. Gather in the Old Bakery from 7pm, starting Friday 7th November, and again on Friday 5th December. See Page 2 for more details.

Gospel Bell

This highly talented band specialising in gospel will be performing a toe-tapping blend of music, singing and story-telling in Duns Tew Village Hall on November 15th. See Page 10.



Bonfire Night!

Bonfire Night falls on a Wednesday this year. Please remember that it is illegal to let off fireworks after 11:00pm on any other day except the 5th (midnight). If you're planning on having a fireworks party on any other evening, then please advise your neighbours so that pets can be kept safely indoors. Call Eileen on 347210 and email info@north-aston.co.uk with details.

North Aston Choir

Calling all singers, young, old and in between! North Aston Choir welcomes everyone, without audition, to prepare some lovely Christmas music for the St Mary's Church Carol Service on Sunday 21st December. Rehearsals will be on Monday evenings from 10th November at 6pm at The Old Vicarage on The Green. Contact Miranda Doggett on 340625 or 07834768015 for more details.

Service of 9 Lessons & Carols

Sunday 21st December

November Birthdays

Rebecca Brown
Anna Clara Liberadzki
Liz Nicholson
Pat Parry
Billy Rees
Archie Stay
James Taylor
Magdalena Waszynska-Tejza



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.

NORTH ASTON ORGANICS Vegetable Stall

Open Mon-Sat from 9.00am

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

North Aston News

The *North Aston News* is edited by Marcus Potts and designed and produced by CMC Graphics. It is printed by Nicholson's 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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