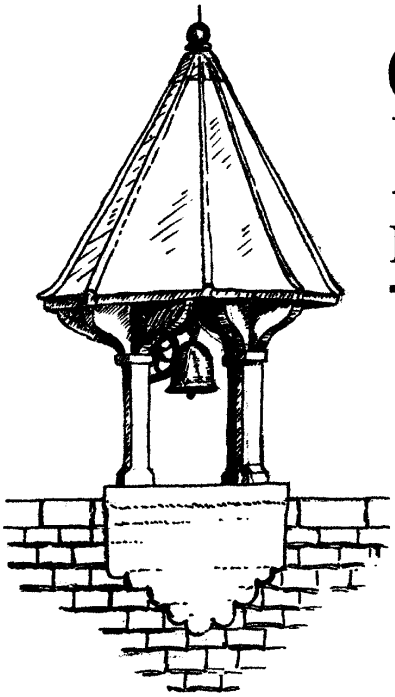


GORING HEATH NEWSLETTER

News, Information and Comment for Goring Heath, Whitchurch Hill and Crays Pond

October 2025
Issue 205

Visit us at:
goringheathparishcouncil.gov.uk
goringheathnewsletter@gmail.com

Dates for your Diary

Event	Date	Time
Woodcote Volunteers *Lets Go Digital Advice Session* (Prebooked slots — call 01491 877 749) Woodcote Community Centre	Saturday 4th October	14:00-16:00
Whitchurch WI Art Café The Old Stables Whitchurch on Thames	Saturday 11th October	From 10:30
Woodcote Volunteers *Lets Go Digital Advice Session* (Prebooked slots — call 01491 877 749) Woodcote Community Centre	Thursday 16th October	10:00 - 12:00
Friends of St Mary's and St John's Musical Evening St Mary's Church	Saturday 18th October	18:15 for 19:00
Act of Remembrance The War Memorial, Whitchurch Hill	Sunday 9th November	10:45-11:15
Whitchurch Art and Craft Exhibition Whitchurch on Thames Village Hall	28th February - 1st March 2026	

Publicise your event and increase attendance by giving us the dates.

We welcome event dates from all local charities and groups for FREE listing in the Newsletter.

Please send the details to the Editor at

goringheathnewsletter@gmail.com

Please allow sufficient time in advance for the publication of the appropriate newsletter. Contribution deadlines and publication dates are on the inside back cover.

Chair's Comments

The glorious summer is past its peak and we are sliding into Autumn with thoughts of bracing walks and warming fires.

The public footpaths in Goring Heath continue to be well used and, generally, well maintained. The network is extensive and, inevitably, some paths are used more than others. The well-used ones do not tend to get so overgrown as the brambles and nettles get pushed aside regularly.

This summer there has been some major clearance done on some of the popular routes in Whitchurch Hill, including the path from Copyhold known locally as Town Lane. This is walked frequently but had become very narrow and overgrown.

It is the responsibility of Oxfordshire County Council to keep the footpaths and bridleways in a good condition, but as with many public services, this department is under resourced and lacks the necessary manpower. In many cases it is the responsibility of the landowner to keep the path usable but this does not always happen. The County relies on volunteer groups to keep an eye on the path network and sort out many of the arising problems.

Goring Heath is part of the area covered by the 'The Chiltern Society' (a charity which aims to protect and enhance the Chiltern National Landscape). The society has a network of volunteers which check out the paths and do general maintenance.

Each parish within the Chiltern area has a footpath representative whose main role is to check the paths and report any problems to the area secretary who then decides whether the volunteer maintenance team (PMV) are able to deal with it or whether it is a matter for the County. There is usually a much quicker solution if the PMV team can deal with it! The area secretary has a good relationship with the major local landowners so can discuss any issues arising on their land.

I am the footpath representative for Goring Heath and I try to walk all the paths at least twice a year, report any problems and do some light trimming or replace broken waymark discs.

Of course, things like falling trees and surges in growth of brambles etc. will not necessarily happen to fit in with my inspection! In between visits I do rely on members of the public to report any problems they spot.

So, please contact me about any fallen trees, broken gates, missing signposts,

encroaching undergrowth and any other problems, and I will attempt to remedy the problem. My contact details are at the back of this magazine.

A reminder of the main date in the Goring Heath calendar for November: our Remembrance Service will take place this year at 11am on Sunday 9th November at the war memorial on the hill down to Whitchurch. It is a brief ceremony to honour those locally who gave their lives in both world wars. All are welcome so I hope to see you there.

Liz Collas
Chair of the Parish Council

GORING HEATH PARISH HALL

To hire our charming, picturesque and well equipped village hall for your next party, community event or society, please contact **bookings@goringheathparishhall.uk**

The hall over the last twenty years has undergone continuous sympathetic refurbishment and extensions and provides all you would expect of a modern venue to host your event or meeting, whilst retaining its charm and original character.

For full details please visit our website: **goringheathparishhall.uk** or contact **bookings@goringheathparishhall.uk** to discuss your requirements.

Vacancy:
Parish Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer

Goring Heath Parish Council is seeking a dedicated and organized individual to fill the role of Parish Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer. This is a part-time position requiring 5 hours per week.

Key Responsibilities:

- **Parish Clerk:** Manage the administration of the Parish Council, including preparing agendas, taking minutes, and handling correspondence.
- **Responsible Finance Officer:** Oversee the financial affairs of the Parish Council, including budgeting, financial reporting, and ensuring compliance with financial regulations.

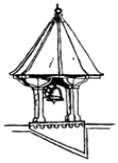
If you are interested in applying, please contact Liz Collas (Chair) for an application form:

Phone: 014910680466

Email: liz.collas@yahoo.co.uk

Join us in making a positive impact on our community!

Goring Heath Parish Hall:
Hall Cleaner Wanted



We are looking for a cleaner for our Parish Hall to help ensure that it is in a smart and clean condition for our hirers. We believe that the attractive building and well-kept state of our hall is a key factor in drawing people to use our hall. The cleaning role is considered vital in supporting this.

The cleaning duties are normally up to two hours per fortnight depending on the bookings and the hours can be flexible.

If you are interested or would like to know more please contact Chris Whatmore (Chairman) on 0118 9844022 or email **whatmore@talk21.com.**

District Councillor's Commentary

Although the bus service in Goring Heath has now dwindled to one return service a week to Reading, Tuesdays only, the bus service from Woodcote to Reading and Oxford has continued its steady improvement, and now runs every 20 minutes throughout the day, reducing to a less frequent service in the evenings with the last bus from Reading just after midnight.

This is a very good service, and opens up new possibilities for travel. For example, if a trip to London is planned, using the bus to get to Reading Station is very much cheaper than the very expensive Reading Station Car Park. However taking the bus and train for a theatre trip to London and hoping to catch a bus back in the late evening could be something of a gamble. Apart from that, this is really an excellent service, and is a very attractive alternative for trips into Reading or Oxford. It's as frequent a service as could possibly be expected, and even if you miss one bus another should be along in no time. You can see where the buses are on their route by using a smart phone and the Thames Travel App. Our nearest stop is at the Woodcote Co-op

There is much excitement, among those who are excited about such issues, arising from the imminent congestion charges planned for Oxford. The scheme is designed to reduce congestion in Oxford, which currently makes difficulties for everyone, not least the bus operators. While the claims by objectors to the scheme are that the congestion charge is punitive and a huge attack on freedom, in reality it only applies to cars, so taxis, vans, etc are exempt, and community health and care workers, carers and blue badge holders get free passes. Residents of Oxford get passes for 100 days, and the residents in the rest of Oxfordshire get passes for 25 days. Even if you have to pay the charge, its £5 for a whole day. Now that might seem a lot, but nowadays it's less than the cost of a pint of beer at most pubs. There is, of course, always the alternative of taking the bus, either all the way or from the park and ride.

It is apparent that Oxford has a congestion problem, and it's not one that can be fixed by building more roads. It is now over 50 years ago that a road across Christchurch Meadows was planned , at the time claimed as the only solution to Oxford's congestion, but wiser heads prevailed and the scheme was abandoned. If built, it would have had only a short term solution.

Our own dear Reading had, of course, a similar scheme, the IDR. That was only partially built, with the proposed section through Forbury Gardens be-

ing abandoned like the Christchurch Meadows scheme in Oxford.

Reading is also getting up-to-date with a Singapore-style approach to litter; a private company has been engaged to patrol the streets and issue Fixed Penalty Notices or FPNs for littering or graffiti, with a maximum penalty charge of £500. I am sure no Goring Heath residents will be picked up for posting graffiti in Reading, but a discarded sweet wrapper or cigarette end could cost you the same. As I understand it, the company gets to keep the fines, so the Enforcement Officers will be very zealous, and no doubt the maximum charge will often the minimum charge.

Peter Dragonetti

SODC District Councillor for Kidmore End, Whitchurch, Goring Heath and Mapledurham Heath

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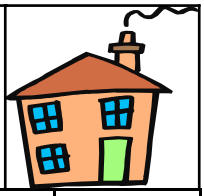
Planning Decisions

The following planning applications, submitted up to 9th September 2025, have been considered. Where a decision is not given, it means the Parish Council has not yet received written confirmation from SODC.



Premises and application details	Parish Council	Notes
P24/S3513/DA Butlers Farm Goring Heath Road Whitchurch Hill Without planning permission, and in relation to the building sited on the Land in the indicative position as shown edged orange on the Plan and inset map, the material change of use of that building from agriculture, to a mixed use of agriculture, general storage and residential dwelling. Without planning permission, the creation of hardstanding sited on the Land in the indicative position as shown hatched blue on the Plan and inset map, that facilitates the material change of use.	Objection to the appeal	
P25/S0357/FUL 1 Enigma Estate Cold Harbour Demolition of existing stables and construction of replacement stables for domestic use.	Objection	
P24/S2309/FUL Land to the north and west of Pangbourne Technology Centre Bozedown Drive Whitchurch Hill Installation of ground mounted photovoltaic solar panels and battery energy storage system to supply electrical power to Pangbourne Technology Centre; associated plant, plant enclosure and cabling; access driveway; landscaping; and ancillary works.	Objection	
P25/S1703/FUL Larch Cottage Hill Bottom Whitchurch Hill Full planning application for the construction of a detached dwelling and associated garage following the demolition of the existing dwelling and outbuilding.	No Strong Views	

Premises and application details	Parish Council	Notes
P25/S2273/LDE The Pothole Eastfield Lane Goring Heath Certificate of Lawfulness seeking confirmation that the operational development of Building A is lawful.	No Strong Views	
P25/S2281/FUL Green Broom Farm Goring Heath RG8 7FZ Extension of temporary planning permission P19/S2054/FUL and P21/S1044/FUL with addition of an improved farm shop and 2 extra polytunnels proposed. Sui Generis land use including horticulture, forestry and education with allowance for temporary accommodation to support this	No Strong Views	
P25/S2225/FUL Land south of Goring Heath Road Whitchurch Hill RG8 4PN Demolition of existing stables and redevelopment of small part of the paddocks to construct a detached self-build house with relocated access and associated landscaping. (Amended plans received 5 August 2025)	Objection	
P25/S1567/LB Bottom Farmhouse Blackbirds Bottom Goring Heath RG8 7SX To board over the existing external render finishes of the early 21st-century extension and the pebble dashed gable of the late-19th- / early 20th-century catslide lean-to. The proposed boarding is to be of natural timber that will be allowed to mellow to a natural silver-grey colour.	No Strong Views	
P25/S2648/FUL Woodcote Sawmill Pot Kiln Lane Goring Heath RG8 7SS Single storey barn / outbuilding extension.	Objection	

We would like to point out that No Strong Views is one of only three choices that SODC gives the parish council. It does not illustrate tacit approval of an application. Typically it is supplemented with specific comments from the parish council highlighting areas of concern.

The Friends of St Mary's and St John's

The Friends are an independent charity and welcome members from all faiths and none. We aim to bring together the local community in support of the preservation and improvement of our two churches and their churchyards.

Registered Charity no. 116833

The Luxury Lodge Draw

I am pleased to report that this popular fund-raiser was a sell out! The winning ticket was drawn at our successful Art Cafe session in The Old Stables on 2nd August. Thank you to everyone who supported The Friends by buying one of the 100 tickets and congratulations to the lucky winner!

****

A Musical Evening

Our final big fundraising and social event for 2025 is:

A Musical Evening at St Mary's Church on Saturday 18th October

The doors will open at 6.15pm for a 7pm start. Tickets will be sold on the door on the night, with a suggested donation pp of £10 which will include a free drink and nibbles. The performers will be the Pangbourne Band, David and Leslie Maynerd and Derry Pope – back by popular demand!

It promises to be a very enjoyable and sociable evening so put the date in your diaries and come along to support us in the beautiful and historic building of St Mary's.

****

Work Parties

Our regular churchyard working parties at St John's take place on the last Wednesday of the month, starting at 10am. Work parties at St Mary's are on a more ad hoc basis as the churchyard is well tended at the moment. Thank you to all those that make a regular appearance as many hands really do make light work.

If you fancy joining one of these sessions, please get in touch with Sally Woolhouse **whitchurchfriends@gmail.com**. A welcome cup of coffee is always provided at half time.

Save our Spire!

The spire restoration at St Mary's is our current main future funding project and the Parochial Church Council has launched the fundraising Spire Appeal, Save our Spire. Approximately £200,000 is needed to

replace the cedar shingles, replace the decaying timbers and repair the leadwork, as well as other non-essential work.

The Friends have currently set £20,000 aside towards the project. If you are interested in finding out more, please contact graemekpearce@btinternet.com.

Membership

We are always keen to welcome new Friends. For more information on how to join please go to the Whitchurch on Thames village website at **https://whitchurchonthames.com** and follow the link for the Church, or ask me, or Sally Woolhouse.

Sarah Dragonetti, Chair of The Friends

whitchurchfriends@gmail.com

GORING REPAIR CAFÉ

Free repair service by skilled volunteers

Goring Village Hall

10:00am—12:30pm

1st Saturday of every even month

Next dates: 4th October, 6th December, 7th Feb

Full details on website

Voluntary donations are welcome cover expenses

www.goringrepaircafe.info

Repair - Recycle - Reduce consumption & carbon - Restore our Planet

Refreshments available in* Café *Bellême

Woodcote Volunteers

Digital Inclusion Project

The second of the two public meetings organised under our Digital Inclusion initiative was held on August 16th. The topic was *Staying Safe Online – Avoiding Scams, Fraud and Identity Theft* and covered a wide range of situations in an informal and interactive way. As an introduction, the audience were challenged to identify which of a series of emails were scams and which were *bona fide*. Thus, the tell-tale signs of a scam – misspellings, poor grammar, generic greetings, suspicious email addresses or internet links and offers that are too good to be true - were all highlighted very effectively.

One-to-one Digital Advice Sessions

The first of the free one-to-one advice sessions being offered to local residents was held in Woodcote Community Centre on 6th September and the second on Thursday 18th September. Those who attended were extremely appreciative of the clear and friendly help they received. These advice sessions will continue on the first Saturday and third Thursday of each month in the Community Centre. The next sessions, lasting up to 45 min per client, will be from **2-4 pm on Saturday 4th October** and **10 am – noon on Thursday 16th October.**

These advice sessions are for anyone who has any queries that arise from using the internet (whether they already have a device or not). To pre-book your slot, call 01491 877749 and leave a voicemail if necessary. (Please don't call our office number!) Someone will phone you back to take your details.

Clients' Tea Party

On the afternoon of September 3rd, our latest monthly tea party was again very well attended, and we were treated to a talk on decluttering our houses (and our minds) by Helena, our former Chair. Next month the tea party will be at **2.30 – 4.00 pm on Wednesday October 1st** in the **Woodcote Community Centre** and will include another of our popular Bingo sessions.

Drivers Needed!

We are always looking to recruit new volunteer drivers, who are vital for keeping our service running. We especially need drivers who could help clients get to and from our regular monthly tea parties (afternoons of the first Wednesday of each month). For more information about Woodcote Volunteers and being a volunteer driver please go to our website (details below) or contact our Volunteer Coordinator, Jane, by email at **info@woodcotevolunteers.org.uk**.

To Finish…

As usual, if you need a driver, please don't hesitate to give us a call on 01491 681171. We collect from Woodcote and the immediately surrounding villages. Please give us as much notice as possible before the date you need us. One of our friendly office volunteers will answer the phone between 9.30 and 11.00 am on weekdays (excluding public holidays) and at other times you can leave a message on the answerphone.

Find out more about us and how to volunteer with us by looking at our website: **https://woodcotevolunteers.org.uk** (or scan the QR code)

Or visit our Facebook page:

www.facebook.com/woodcotevolunteers.

Act of Remembrance
Sunday 9th November at 11am

Every year there is a Service of Remembrance at the War Memorial (B471 on the hill between Whitchurch and Whitchurch Hill)

It is an opportunity to remember the Armed Forces and their families from the UK and the Commonwealth, the vital role played by the emergency services and those who have lost their lives as a result of conflict or terrorism.

The road is closed between 10:45 and 11:15 to allow wreaths to be laid.

All are welcome at the service.

Burials at St John's Churchyard

In the course of talking with the Friends of St John's and the Parochial Church Council (PCC) I got to wondering on the 'rules and regs' surrounding burials in the Churchyard - who qualifies and what sort of ceremonies can and can't be held in the church or at the graveside were among the questions that arose.

So began an email conversation with Rev James Leach that has led to this piece. Firstly, I have to say thank you to James for his patience in giving such thoughtful replies to my incessant queries. The whole subject is quite complex, based as it is in both Ecclesiastical and Civil Law.

So, any person of any or no faith who resides in the ECCLESIASTICAL Parish (EccPar) of Whitchurch (or is on the Electoral Roll for said parish) has a right to be buried in the churchyard whilst there are vacant plots available. For GORING HEATH CIVIL PARISH (GHPC) residents this can be problematic since our Civil Parish was formed from parts of several surrounding EccPar's.

If you live in Coombe End, Coldharbour, north of Hill Bottom or in Collins End for example you do not have this right. So perhaps 35% of GHPC households don't qualify. (Many of these addresses fall within Goring-on-Thames EccPar and now qualify to be buried at Whitehill Cemetery at the top of Goring Hill).

However, at St John's here is a degree of discretion and the Incumbent and PCC may allow burials of deceased from outside the EccPar.

As regards the nature of a funeral/burial within the Churchyard and Church building, there again are rules.

Firstly, one cannot conduct a ceremony WITHIN the Church building that is NON Christian. There may be a Humanist celebrant for example but an Ordained person will be present to make a Christian input.

However, one can conduct a Secular/Humanist ceremony at the Graveside, BUT NOT a ceremony of any other faith (ie Muslim, Hindu, Baha'i etc). It is likely that a representative of the church will attend if only to ensure details of the burial are in order and compliant. So a ceremony could be held in the Parish Hall for example and then across the road to the Churchyard for the burial.

This is a precis of the situation. Anyone requesting a burial in St John's Churchyard should contact Rev James Leach as early as possible

Phone: 01189 765905 **Email**: **jamesleach.whitchurch@gmail.com**

Martin Wise

Langtree Team Ministry

THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND

Tots on the Thames

The Old Rectory Stables
Whitchurch on Thames (RG8 7DF)
WEDNESDAYS 10.00 am – 11.30 am

Re-starting on 10th September

A stay-and-play Baby and Toddler group
Let them: play, create, sing, snack and make friends!
While you enjoy a hot cuppa and a biscuit! £3 per session
For more information email Debbie on *debs.leach@btinternet.com*

The Parish of St Mary the Virgin Whitchurch-on-Thames with St John the Baptist Whitchurch Hill
Vicar: Rev'd James Leach.
Email: jamesleach.whitchurch@gmail.com Tel: 0118 976 5905

Whitchurch Hill WI

In August we took a break from our normal routine of meeting activities and met on the village green with our own in-house entertainment. The weather was kind so chairs, flasks and blankets adorned the grass as we entertained ourselves as decades of others before us have done. Thanks to Tricia and our "honorary WI member" her husband Bob, for providing the entertainment, and to those who supplied the essential cake and bring and buy items. It went very well.

As the sun cools we return indoors for our monthly meetings and speakers. Visiting speakers educate and entertain through a wide variety of topics.

September's is a Stroll through Berkshire Graveyards whilst in October we will learn about the role of RAF Uxbridge during WW2. In November, as Christmas approaches, we will turn our attention to a mix of Christmas Stories - to get us into the festive swing. In December we don't meet other than to enjoy a festive meal together - always an enjoyable event.

A harvest meal is a regular annual event in our calendar, provided by our couple of our very own "master chefs". This will take place at the end of October, interspersed with visits to local restaurants to sample their changing menus. Someone has to do it!

Please be assured it is not all play and no work. We will run an Art Cafe on 11th October (fundraising) as well as produce our regular contributions of welcome bags for those suddenly admitted to the RBH without any personal washing items etc. Bags, blankets, - our knit and natter group keep themselves busy!

Newcomers are always welcome. If you would like to know more please ring Frances on 01189842162

Sally Bergmann

Party hire

Don't forget you can hire cutlery, glasses, plates, catering teapots, good folding chairs and tables from Goring Heath Parish Hall at competitive prices, and it's nice and local.

For information and booking:

bookings@goringheathparishhall.uk

THE SUN INN

WHITCHURCH HILL RG8 7PU

01189 843 909

Meet your CAMRA® award winning hosts; John & Lana!
We're stocking 2 local real ales and 2 alternating guest ales from carefully selected national breweries.
Serving simple, delicious lunches & fresh cobs midweek
(we recommend our signature Irish corned beef cob!)
Roasts with all the trimmings on Sundays from 12:30 - 3
(booking essential)

EXPERT REAL ALES

SUNDAY LUNCH

FRESH COBS

HUGE BEER GARDEN

REGULAR EVENTS

MON	12:00	20:00
*TUES	15:00	21:00
WED	12:00	21:00
THUR	12:00	21:00
FRI	12:00	23:00
SAT	12:00	22:00
SUN	12:00	20:00

*No food on Tuesdays

Follow our New Facebook page for updates!

facebook.com/TheSunRG8

ST MARY'S
YOUTH CLUB
FRIDAY NIGHTS
Re-starting 19th SEPTEMBER
THE OLD STABLES
YEARS 6 - 10
music, games, table tennis, tuck shop*
FRIDAYS 5.30pm – 6.30pm YEAR 6
FRIDAYS 6.45pm – 7.45pm YEAR 7 and 8
FRIDAYS 8.00pm – 9.00pm YEAR 9 and 10
angtree Team Ministry
The Parish of St Mary's Whitchurch-on-Thames
with St John's Whitchurch Hill
Email: jamesleach.whitchurch@gmail.co
Judi Green: green_judi@hotmail.com

Class of 2025 Exam Results

Langtree School is delighted to celebrate the excellent exam results achieved by their year 11 students in their GCSE and other public exams.

The class of 2025 have maintained Langtree's proud history of achieving outstanding outcomes for students of all abilities.

This cohort (and the next) are arguably the ones affected most by the pandemic as they missed out on the end of KS2 and much of the school's exceptional transition programme at the start of their secondary education. They also had their SATs exams cancelled, which makes progress metrics that are usually used to judge their achievements difficult.

However, the students have achieved an Attainment 8 score of 58.4 points (which would have put Langtree in the top 8% of schools nationally last year) and 81% achieved 5 or more level 2 passes including English and Maths. 38% of all the grades were grade 7 or above (equivalent to the old A grade).

It can be invidious to name students who did extremely well as so many of the students achieved, or even exceeded, the extremely high targets set for them. However, Hannah who got 11 grade 9s, Mia and Iris with 10 grade 9s and Melissa, Dylan, Dom and Matthew who all got more than 7 top grades, are among the highest achieving students.

Everyone is equally proud of the students who made great progress while at Langtree. Students such as Thomas, Briana, Sean, Jake and Jess all smashed the ambitious targets we set for them, beating these estimates by an average of at least 2 grades. This reflects their hard work and willingness to go above and beyond our expectations to achieve the very best results they are capable of.

Mr Bamford, Head Teacher at Langtree said "We are delighted that our students have exceeded even our high expectations of them. This is a great achievement for our young people, and the staff who worked so hard to support them. Some of our greatest successes are students who will not top any attainment lists, but battled incredibly hard to achieve very good outcomes and a number who overcame some significant personal challenges to achieve results that they should be very proud of."

The Whitchurch Art & Craft Exhibition 2026

The Whitchurch Society are very pleased to be holding this popular annual event again, in the Whitchurch Village Hall on Manor Road, on the weekend of **28th February & 1st March 2026**.

This is a 'live' format exhibition which is open for all current residents and ex-residents of Whitchurch-on-Thames, Whitchurch Hill and Goring Heath to enter. Plus children at local schools.

There are various categories – something for everyone! Our fabulous judges will be awarding cups for best exhibits in Art, in Craft, in Photography and for Film & Animation (New Media). There is also recognition for best first-time adult exhibitor and junior winners in four age groups too.

Details about this year's theme for the Joyce Voysey prize, the categories and how to enter the exhibition will be available in the coming weeks on our website at **www.wotarts.co.uk** and on our Facebook page.

In the meantime, save the dates in your diaries and get busy with your... brushes, paints, camera, needles, glue, varnish, stamps, inks, wool, chisels, pliers, cottons, clay, pens, paper and lovely ideas.

We very much look forward to seeing your creations this coming Spring!

Sally Woolhouse

sally@wotarts.co.uk

Brownies in Goring Heath

Are you looking for fun, friendship, and adventure? Do you want to try new things, make lasting memories, and grow in confidence? If so, Brownies could be just the place for you — and we're looking for more girls to join our pack!

Brownies are part of Girlguiding, a worldwide movement that helps girls discover their potential and find their voice. Being a Brownie isn't just about wearing a uniform — it's about building skills for life while having a lot of fun along the way.

Our Brownie unit is growing, and we'd love more girls to join the adventure. Whether you're shy or outgoing, creative or curious, sporty or thoughtful — there's a place for everyone in Brownies. So if you're ready to laugh, learn, and make some of the best memories of your life, come and join us!

Please contact our leader, Badger at **goringheathguiding@gmail.com**

Whitchurch & Goring Heath History Society

We're continuing to meet in the afternoons during the darker months, so it will be 2.30pm when our speaker, Stephen Goss, begins his talk on Thursday 16th October at Goring Heath Parish Hall. His topic is "Caversham Park, from the Domesday Book to listening for Doomsday." The estate has been at the centre of historical events for nearly a thousand years.

In the news recently were the plans to develop the site to include retirement properties and social housing. The present neo classical mansion dates from the mid nineteenth century, but previous buildings at Caversham Park saw royal visits and the imprisonment of Charles 1st. It was from there that he was escorted to Collins End to play bowls. In 1923 the mansion was bought by the Oratory School and in 1943 it became the BBC Monitoring station.

On 20th November, same time and place, Bill King will tell us about "Industrial Archaeology in your garage, shed and attic"

All are welcome at our meetings. Visitors pay £3 to include tea and biscuits.

Contact: Vicky Jordan
vickyjordan5@hotmail.com 0118 984 3260

Kitchen Upgrade at Goring Heath Parish Hall!

The Hall has been awarded a grant to update the catering facilities in kitchen of the hall, some of which are appliances donated when the hall was refurbished 25 years ago.

The cooker is to be replaced by a six ring catering oven, and the dishwasher by a much faster commercial machine.

In addition, a mobile storage cupboard will be used for the crockery to facilitate both storage and laying up, and a warming oven will be acquired to make the serving of hot food easier.

The cost of this equipment has been met from a grant administered by South Oxfordshire District Council, and we hope the cost of the alterations in the kitchen will be met by the Parish Council. These changes should help to make the hall even more attractive for users and hirers.

The Trustees, Goring Heath Parish Charity

County Councillor's Report

Highlights from July and August

Oxfordshire County Council Announces Circular Economy Plan

Oxfordshire County Council is taking steps to embed circular economy principles into its procurement processes. The plan will focus on three principles:

- Designing out waste and pollution
- Keeping materials and products in use for longer
- Regenerating natural systems

The council hopes this transition will drive more sustainable economic practices across the region and help achieve its goal of reaching a 70% recycling rate by 2030.

Need care or support?

Oxfordshire's Adult Social Care Information and Advice Hub provides access to information and online forms like the self-assessment and financial assessment - all in one place.

https://mycitizenportal.oxfordshire.gov.uk/web/portal/pages/home

Local Grant For Energy-Efficiency Housing Improvements

Welcome the Warmth offers qualifying homes of Oxfordshire County fully-funded energy-efficiency improvements to homes such as low carbon heating. Check your eligibility and apply online at :

https://www.welcomethewarmth.org.uk

New Electric Vehicle Scheme for Residents Without Driveways

A new kerbside charging scheme is now live, offering 500 Oxfordshire residents without off-street parking the opportunity to charge an electric vehicle (EV) directly outside their own home.

To apply, please go to:

https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/environment-and-planning/energy-and-climate-change/electric-vehicles/ev-cable-channel

Positive Developments in Oxfordshire's Innovation and Economic Growth

Oxfordshire continues to strengthen its reputation as a national and international leader in innovation, with progress seen across academia, business, and public services. Key updates include:

Innovation Ecosystem Growth: Oxfordshire's network of world-class universities, science parks (Harwell, Milton Park, Culham), and market towns is driving a vibrant mix of R&D, tech development, and entrepreneurial activity.

Council-led Connectivity and Inclusion: The County Council is investing in physical and digital infrastructure to connect innovation hubs and ensure communities across the county benefit from emerging opportunities in areas such as:

- Green technology
- Artificial intelligence
- Quantum computing
- Advanced manufacturing

Innovate Oxfordshire Project: The council's flagship in-house innovation programme continues to support local government transformation and industry collaboration, with recent projects including:

- 5G testing and rollout
- Autonomous vehicle trials
- Robotics in health and social care
- Development of zero-emission mobility solutions

Inclusive Economic Participation: Apprenticeships and supported internships are being used to widen access to career opportunities, from entry-level roles to PhD-level work in emerging technology sectors.

National Innovation Leadership: Oxfordshire leads the country in pending patent applications and the financial value of university spinouts, even surpassing Cambridge.

Regional Collaboration and Ambition: To unify innovation assets and boost regional leadership, the Council is exploring the formation of a mayoral combined authority across the Thames Valley, aiming to position Oxfordshire at the heart of a European Silicon Valley.

Cllr Maggie Filipova-Rivers

Maggie.Filipova-Rivers@Oxfordshire.gov.uk 07850141623

Checkendon Church of England (A) Primary School

Our View of Checkendon School – by children in year 5 and 6

We would like to welcome you to our view of Checkendon School! Our school offers lots of different subjects and activities. We have one main teacher who teaches us most lessons. But for some lessons we have specialists – these are people who are experts in their subject, like Mrs Lovegrove, the artist; Mr Hutton the judo teacher and Mrs Davies our music teacher.

At Checkendon, our teachers believe learning should be fun. Lessons are well planned, take us a step further, and encourage us to enjoy every moment. Alongside maths, English and science, we also love design technology, science, judo or geography, but a big favourite is definitely Forest School. One of the highlights of the week is going to the woods. We get outside in nature, build fires, play games with friends, and at the end sit on logs for a story and a biscuit.

There are plenty of extra-curricular opportunities too: Lego, music, art and sports clubs, as well as coding club at lunchtime. Our after-school and before -school clubs are great for making friends, trying new activities, and having fun.

At Checkendon, we also develop a growth mindset. We believe mistakes help us grow. We keep trying, stay positive and celebrate effort as well as success. In our school, we don't just celebrate test results, we recognise lots of different "smarts," like picture smart, computing, music, nature, body, people, and more. We also celebrate children's achievements outside of school during our celebration worship which the children run.

Our school grounds are very special. We have a climbing tower, a track around the field, trees to climb, and even a holly bush hideout! Nature thrives here, we often spot a fox in the field. There's a summer house for colouring, basketball hoops and plenty of play equipment to climb and enjoy. Our school building dates back to 1840, so it holds lots of history.

Most importantly, Checkendon is a friendly place. Teachers recognise each child's strengths and weaknesses, encouraging everyone to do their best. We think it's a lovely school.

A note from Mrs Hillier, "I couldn't have said it better myself! The parents

report their children here are happy, thriving, and benefiting from strong teaching, leadership, and a rich curriculum. We are proud of our inclusive ethos and the way our school community works together, and we are always looking ahead to see how we can be even better."

Contact the school by emailing office.3801@checkendon.oxon.sch.uk

New Financial Trustees required for Langtree School

Langtree's recent exam results have maintained our school's proud tradition of achieving outstanding outcomes for students of all abilities, and we warmly congratulate all our Class of 25!

Looking ahead, the Langtree Academy Trust is now looking for one or two new trustees to join the Finance Committee and our dedicated and enthusiastic Board of Governance. Potential trustees should have financial experience and be willing to play an active role in overseeing school-budget expenditure and contributing to major spending decisions.

Langtree School firmly believes that all students deserve every possible opportunity and the support required to achieve their full potential, and we aim to provide not just a fantastic academic, social and cultural education, but also abundant pastoral support for our whole Langtree community.

New trustees are offered online training, not only in the first few months following appointment to help them better understand and fulfil their governance role, but also to support them going forward. We encourage all trustees to become involved with the educational aims and priorities of this small but highly popular local secondary school, and expect them to attend as many of the regular committee and board meetings as possible, either in person or remotely (there is usually a total of 12 meetings held over each academic year).

The Trust Board would be glad to hear from any interested parties, including parents - and in particular from members of the wider community. Anyone who is interested in learning more about this great opportunity to make a very real difference at a local level should please contact me at:

adunstan@langtreeschool.com.

Thank you!

Alan Dunstan,
Chair of Trustees, Langtree School.

Pangbourne Bowls Club

As sure as the seasons change so comes the end of another bowling season.

2025 has been a successful year for Pangbourne Club. We've enjoyed a varied mix of matches - leagues, friendlies, roll ups and internal competitions.

The men were Division Two league winners in the Kennet League - giving them promotion to Division One for next year. Congratulations to them.

The ladies enjoyed running two Art Cafes in the Old Stables in Whitchurch and had a full-on day at Pangbourne Fete in June. The monies raised have helped pay towards the cost of maintaining the green on which we play.

Every year there are always those who hang up the their bowling bags - and to those who will not be returning next year we say thanks for the games and your company.

New members have come along during the year too - helping us to continue playing and enjoying the exercise and friendships this brings. Games are played evenings and weekends, so there's opportunity for workers and retirees alike to join in. Our new season will start in April 2026. Maybe see you then?

Sally Bergmann

Chess Group - The Red Lion

An informal chess group has been meeting at the Sun Pub for a few years but has now relocated to the Red Lion in Woodcote.

They still meet every Wednesday at 12 noon for a couple of hours. Boards are provided and of course refreshments are available from the pub itself.

If you would like to know more please ring me on 07876531881. Failing that please feel free to turn up on a Wednesday - you will be warmly welcomed. ***Chris Bergmann***

RG8 Badminton

We are a small, friendly and sociable club.

We play regularly during the badminton season and our club members range in different levels and abilities. We welcome new adult members but are currently unable to take any new youth members (14 years plus in full time education) but please register an interest and we will be in touch when capacity allows. Unfortunately we are unable to accommodate beginners.

We meet on Thursday evenings in the Community Sports Hall at Langtree School (term time only) 7.30pm to 9.00pm.

Subscriptions are paid on a seasonal basis (Sept - May). It equates to approx. £3 - £4 per session for adults and £2 for youth members. An introductory session is provided free of charge.

If you want to know more and would welcome some fitness, fun and friendship then visit our website **www.rg8badminton.co.uk** or ring **Julie on 07980 413026.**

Purley Barn Bridge Club

The friendly club for folk from round and about the Purley, Pangbourne, Tilehurst and Goring areas!

We meet at the historic Barn, Goosecroft Lane, Purley, RG8 8DR every Friday morning at 9.40am for a morning of friendly bridge with friendly people with a break for a chat, coffee, tea and biscuits.

Basically, Purley Barn is a social club whose members play bridge.

No previous experience is necessary and free coaching is available if required. Playing bridge at the Barn is an ideal way to meet people who don't take the game too seriously and who are always welcoming of new members – just turn up before play starts on a Friday and we'll fit you in.

We also play online on Tuesday evenings – so why not give that a try as well. Play your cards right and ring **Martin on 07746 680183** or visit our website at: **https://www.bridgewebs.com**

WHITCHURCH PRE-SCHOOL

Whitchurch Pre-School
A great start for your child

For children aged 2 - 5 years

Government funding for 15 and 30 hours

Flexible sessions, term time

Cooked lunch option

Learning through play approach

Rural setting, new eco building, large outside play area and dedicated allotment space

Ofsted GRADED GOOD

SENCO, Forest school, Health Smiles and Hygge accredited.

Find out more at www.whitchurchpreschool.org or ring 0118 984 4516

Calling all students!

The Secretary of Whitchurch United Charities would like to remind all families that the Charity has funds available to help meet the costs associated with educational needs such as books, equipment or educational trips.

Eligible students are young people between the primary school age and 25 years and whose permanent residence is within the parish of Whitchurch.

Applications are processed twice a year, with the closing dates being 31st March and 30th September. However, late applications are considered if the available funds for the previous 6 month period have not been fully allocated.

All applications and decisions are treated in strict confidence by the Trustees.

If you would like to know more, please do contact Sarah Dixon (our Grant Application Secretary).

Contact details:
Telephone: 0118 984 4262,
Address: Flint House, Hardwick Road, Whitchurch on Thames, RG8 7HH
e-mail – whitchurchunitedcharities@gmail.com

St. Bartholomew's C of E Chapel
The Allnutt & Baker Almshouses
Goring Heath, RG8 7RS

Open to the Public - All welcome

Alternating weekly services Matins & Holy Communion starting on 21st September with Holy Communion.

All Services are taken from the book of Common Prayer

Chaplain: Vacant
Contact: 01491 681699

What's happening at Checkendon Pre-School:

Look what we have been doing….

We are delighted to be back after the summer holidays and are looking forward to a fun packed term full of enthusiasm, creativity, and learning. Checkendon Pre-School have had a wonderful start to the new term, settling in to our new routines, exploring, learning, having fun as well as meeting new friends and reuniting with old ones. We would like to welcome our new children Florence, Nicholas, Finn and Ethan to Checkendon Pre-School.

Singing and Dancing

This term we will be focusing on children's "interests", as well as our book of the term 'Stick Man' which we hope will inspire and engage children's learning through play. Focusing on children's interests is an excellent way for the children to get to know each other and encourage a variety of different activities and learning.

Harvest Counting

Checkendon Pre-School will be encouraging the children to be independent, helping, and encouraging them to learn skills through their everyday routines such as making decisions and taking on responsibility.

Playing and Exploring

We are also celebrating Harvest, baking bread, reading the Little Red Hen and talking about how crops grow. We are looking forward to celebrating upcoming seasonal celebrations such as Halloween, Rosh Hashanah and Bonfire night.

To find out more about Checkendon Pre-School, do visit our website **www.checkendonpreschool.co.uk,** call us on 01491 682589, e-mail preschoolcheckendon@gmail.com or just pop in – we always look forward to welcoming you to Checkendon Pre-School.

Ways you can support Checkendon Pre-School Sign up to raise funds for the Pre-School at- **https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/checkendonpreschool/**

Checkendon Pre School CIO. Registered as a Charity No 1156803

Project New Ngoma

BUILDING HOMES FOR TEACHERS IN ZAMBIA

BIG BASH QUIZ OFF

An exciting night of quizzes, games, and challenges - where brains meet brawn, creativity collides with chaos, and teams battle it out in the ultimate mash-up of fun and friendly competition!

WHEN? Friday 21 Nov 2025. Doors Open 6.45pm (for 7.00pm start)
WHERE? Pangbourne Village Hall

Tickets MUST be booked in advance via www.ProjectNewNgoma.org website (News Tab) OR scan the QR code here

£15 per person
Mid quiz pizza supper with dessert auction and raffle
BYO drinks & glasses (No bar)

Going Forward Buses

Goodbye to the old, Hello to the new!

Yes, we are bidding a sad farewell to our 134 Goring to Wallingford service. After over eight years of fun running it, it's time to step aside... and handover to Thames Travel wo will be running the service from 1st September 2025. In fact, it's really a case of '*going back to their routes*' (pun intended) as route 134 was where it all started for Thames Travel a few years back. Since then their network in South Oxfordshire has expanded significantly and we are pleased that the 134 route will now be integrated into that network.

But Concession Pass holders please be aware that Thames Travel will require you to present your concessionary pass on every journey you make. Also, the new service does not run via Lidl in Wallingford.

Thank you for all your support over the last eight years – we've enjoyed having you on board, Please support your new Thames Travel service!

Mike Ward

email: littlebluebus@yahoo.com website: goingforwardbuses.com

Bus Service for Goring Heath on Tuesdays: Timetable

The service running from Goring Station to Reading via Whitchurch Hill is operated by Oxfordshire County Council. Here's the current timetable.

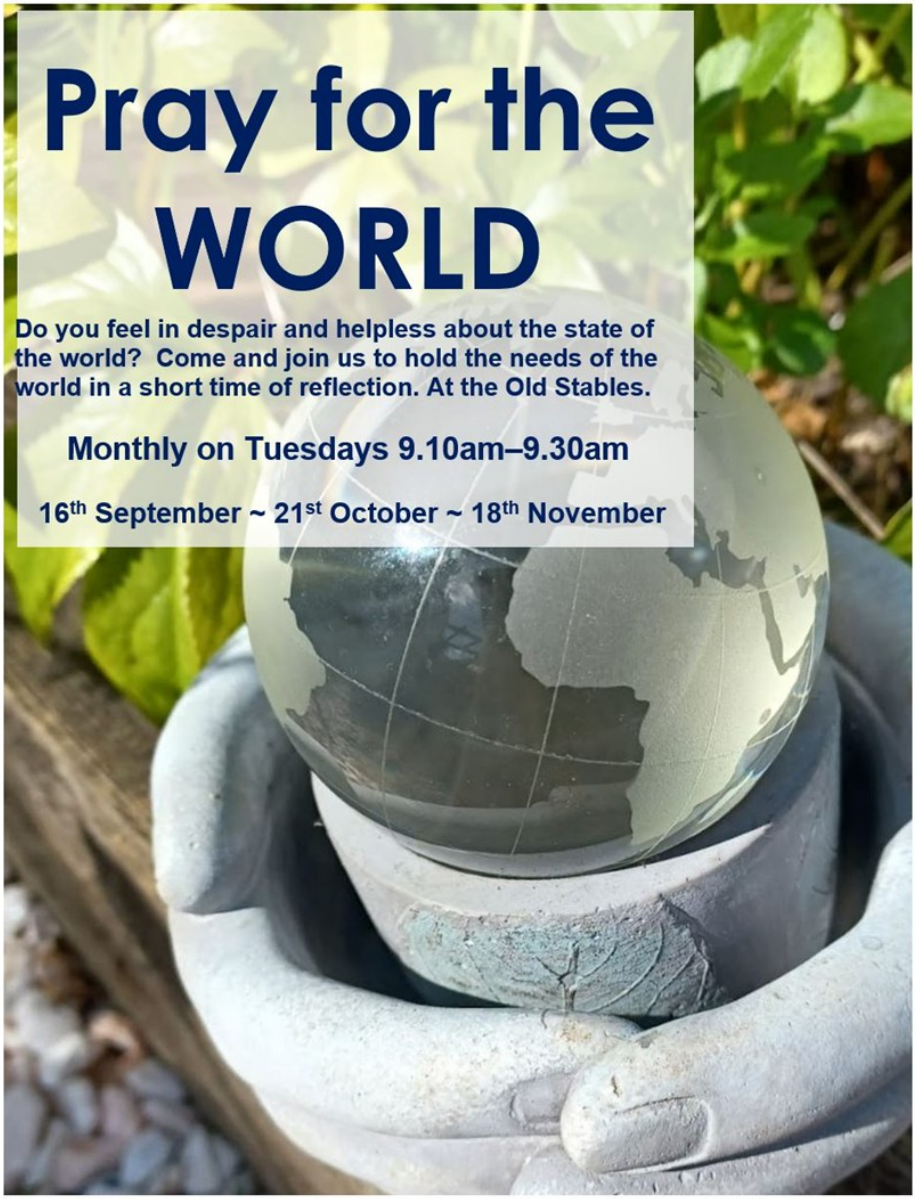
Goring to Reading

	Tue
GORING, Railway Station	**10:15**
Streatley, The Bull	10:17
Lower Basildon, Park Wall Lane	10:21
Basildon Park, Entrance	10:23
Beale Park, Entrance	10:25
PANGBOURNE, The George	**10:28**
Whitchurch-on-Thames, Greyhound	10:31
Whitchurch Hill, The Sun	10:36
Crays Pond, Beechwood Close	10:40
Goring Heath, Almshouses	10:42
Cane End	10:46
Upper Woodcote Road, Shepherds Lane	10:50
Highmoor Road, Methodist Church	10:53
Caversham, Library	10:57
READING, Blagrave Street EO/EP	**11:02**
READING, Friar Street FC	**11:05**
READING, Tesco Kings Meadow	**11:10**

Reading to Goring

	Tue
READING, Tesco Kings Meadow	**12:55**
READING, Blagrave Street EO/EP	**12:59**
READING, Friar Street FC	**13:00**
Caversham, Library	13:05
Highmoor Road, Methodist Church	13:07
Upper Woodcote Road, Shepherds Lane	13:09
Cane End	13:15
Goring Heath, Almshouses	13:19R
Crays Pond, Beechwood Close	13:20
Whitchurch Hill, The Sun	13:23
Whitchurch-on-Thames, Greyhound	13:27
PANGBOURNE, The George	**13:29**
Beale Park, Entrance	13:31
Basildon Park, Entrance	13:32
Lower Basildon, Park Wall Lane	13:33
Streatley, The Bull	13:38R
GORING, Railway Station	**13:40R**

The Parish of St Mary's Whitchurch-on-Thames with St John's Whitchurch Hill
Vicar: Rev'd James Leach
Email: jamesleach.whitchurch@gmail.com Tel: 0118 976 5905



COUNTY and DISTRICT COUNCIL INFORMATION

SOUTH OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCILLOR
Peter Dragonetti Covert Cottage, Hill Bottom, Whitchurch Hill, RG8 7PT
07866 202908, 0118 9844711
peter.dragonetti@southoxon.gov.uk

Council Offices: Abbey House, Abbey Close, Abingdon OX14 3JE
See below for dept. phone contacts www.southoxon.gov.uk

OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCILLOR
Maggie Filipova-Rivers 07850141623
Maggie.Filipova-Rivers@Oxfordshire.gov.uk

Council Offices: County Hall, Oxford, OX1 1ND
01865 792422 www.oxfordshire.gov.uk

POLICE	Thames Valley Police	0845-8505505
POLICE	PEC – Non-Emergency Calls	101
POTHOLES	-	0345-3101111

South Oxfordshire District Council New Department Numbers

Main Customer Service Number: 01235 422422

- **Planning** 01235 422600
- **Building control** 01235 422700
- **Environmental health, food and safety** 01235 422403
- **Licensing** 01235 422556
- **Elections** 01235 422407
- **Car parks** 01235 470118
- **Community safety** 01235 422590
- **Street naming and numbering** 01235 422344

EMAIL ADDRESS FOR NEWSLETTER

You can get in touch with the Goring Heath Newsletter by emailing:
goringheathnewsletter@gmail.com

This is for any queries, correspondence, feedback and copy submissions.

The Goring Heath Newsletter is published by the Parish Council six times a year and is delivered free to every household in the Parish.

To contributors to the Newsletter:-
It would be most helpful if copy could be submitted to the editor as a document attachment to email and sent to **goringheathnewsletter@gmail.com**

The views and opinions expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily those of the Parish Council.

Deadline for contributions	Publication month
14th November 2025	December 2025
16th January 2026	February 2026
13th March 2026	April 2026

LOCAL GROUPS—CONTACT DETAILS

Chiltern Society Footpath Representative	Liz Collas	01491680466
Chiltern Society Path Maintenance Volunteers	Howard Dell	01494764149
Goring Heath Parish Charity	Chris Whatmore	01189844022
Goring Heath Scouts, Brownies and Guides	Doreen Pechey	01491681236
	Andrea Bain	
	goringheathguiding@gmail.com	
Goring Thames Sailing Club	www.goringthamessc.com	
Pangbourne Bowls Club	Sally Bergmann	07585195669
Pangbourne Tennis Club	info@pangbournetennis.org	
RG8 Badminton Club	Julie Drury	07980413026
South Oxfordshire Archaeology Group (SOAG)	Nancy Nichols	01189787829
Tai Chi and Qigong	Karen Pounds	07867954786
Tots on the Thames, Baby and Toddler Group	Debbie Leach	
	debs.leach@btinternet.com	
Whitchurch Hill Camera Club	www.whitchurchhillcameraclub.com	
Whitchurch and Goring Heath History Society	Vicky Jordan	01189843260
	vickyjordan5@hotmail.com	
Whitchurch and Goring Heath Twinning	Wendy Ferguson	01189841262
	wendyefergie@gmail.com	
Whitchurch Hill WI	Frances Strange	01189842162
Woodcote Volunteers	Office	01491 681171

Goring Heath Parish Hall: Bookings and Enquiries: Chris Whatmore 07850691920
Email: bookings@goringheathparishhall.uk

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Contact the Editor to discuss your requirements:
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Advertising in the Newsletter

The Newsletter is issued every two months and covers Goring Heath, Cray's Pond and Whitchurch Hill. The rates for advertising are £15 for half a page and £25 for a full page advert. To find out more, please contact us at **goringheathnewsletter@gmail.com**