

NORTH ASTON

NEWS

March 2026

#425



NORTH ASTON NEWS

MARCH 2026, No:425

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Notes from the Chair

Anyone who's lived in North Aston for more than a couple of years will be amazed, incredulous even, at the news that this month may see the arrival of genuine traffic calming measures in the village. For decades it has been a perennial topic for discussion at Village Meetings, but nothing has ever happened. At last, sufficient funding has been secured to move the idea forwards, and a series of temporary "chicanes" will be installed. These will be in place for a trial period, while OCC assesses how effective they're going to be, and exactly where they should be sited. If everything goes to plan they will be replaced later by permanent "build-outs". OCC is looking forward to feedback from residents.

In the meantime, the potholes alongside the Green are also due to be repaired, and not before time. So far they've caused at least four punctures, but they're not unique. Our roads are riddled. A new initiative, spearheaded by Gareth Epps, our local OCC Councillor, will see a more determined effort to report potholes using FixMyStreet. More on that soon.

After one of the wettest Januaries on record, February showed signs of steady improvement, even some rare sunshine. As I write this, the Green is speckled with purple crocuses, primroses are peeking through the leaf-litter, and the daffodils are looking magnificent. Stephen predicts we're all set for a wet and dismal spring, but we can still hope.

You can phone Marcus on 340296
or email: chair@north-aston.co.uk

2026 NORTH ASTON FETE Saturday July 4th

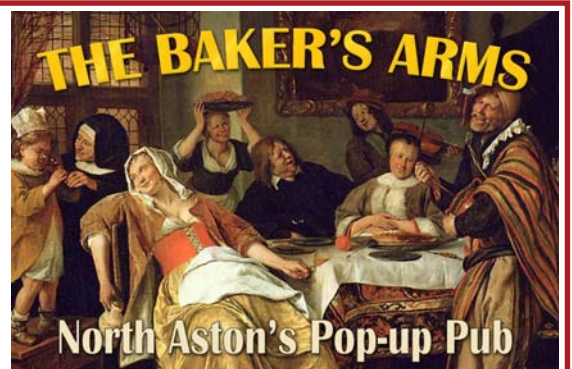
It's never too early to start preparing for the Village Fête! Please could you start thinking about setting aside the following items:

- Books and DVDs in good condition
- Top quality Bric-a-Brac
- Bottles & Cans for the Bottle Stall
- Plants for the Plant Stall

The committee will also be appealing for high-value prizes for the Raffle, ranging from personal donation to something special via your workplace or a local business. Please watch out for messages on the village WhatsApp group. Finally, for now, the **China Shy** is due to make a come-back. Please start collecting old or chipped china plates (especially) but also bowls, cups and even figurines. Two years ago this stall was the most popular at the Fête, so it would be good to do it again.

This month's "Baker's Arms" will take place on Friday 6th, from 7pm.

Bring your own drinks, a selection of your favourite nibbles, and enjoy a convivial evening of chat with neighbours and friends at The Old Bakery.



Cover: Spring flowers in a North Aston garden. MP.

Planning

There are no new applications relating to the village this month. To examine past applications in detail, or check for new ones, search for "North Aston" on the CDC Planning Register web page at www.planningregister.cherwell.gov.uk/

Rosemary Cottage, Somerton Rd, OX25 6HX. The decision relating to the application to install new underground broadband cabling should be published on 23rd March. Ref: 25 / 02926 / LB.

Brown Bins

A final reminder to renew your subscription for Brown Bin collection of **garden and green waste**. The annual fee is now £59 per wheelie bin. You can renew (or start a new subscription) online using the CDC website at <https://www.cherwell.gov.uk>. Enter "Garden Waste Service" in the Search box and follow the links. Technically, the renewal cut-off was the end of February, but we believe you may still subscribe after this, but could miss out on some collections until your subscription data is updated.

Since food waste collection became weekly, CDC is becoming more strict on reasons why a brown bin may not be emptied. If garden waste is contaminated, by food or plastic bags for example, it may be left. Failure to display a valid subscription label could mean it won't be emptied, although there is an in-cab system used by crews to cross-check. Overflow waste left beside the bin may be ignored, and a bin where the lid won't close may also not get emptied.

Traffic Update

After months ... years ... of discussion, debate and waiting, progress is finally coming on the thorny topic of Traffic Calming through North Aston.

Howard Ionascu, who kindly acts as liaison between the village and the various official bodies, reports that the plan is for three temporary chicanes to be constructed along the Somerton Road. These 'build-outs' should be in place sometime this month, March, but may only be in place for a short time. However, it should be long enough for residents to see first-hand whether or not they will have an effect on traffic speeds. It should also be possible to move them to different locations, and judge how this impacts on their effectiveness.

OCC will need feedback from willing volunteers, prepared to watch traffic passing through the village and see how drivers respond to the chicanes. Anyone able to offer up an hour of their time, simply to observe, will be most welcome. Please drop an email to info@north-aston.co.uk, or speak with Howard. If this trial proves to be a success, then permanent chicanes can be constructed.

On a related subject – potholes – we've had an update from Gareth Epps, the local OCC Councillor, who advises that work to repair the potholes alongside the Green should be completed by 12th March, perhaps sooner if capacity allows.

Gareth is nearing completion of a training course that will elevate him to the status of a *FixMyStreet Super User*. This will allow him to report on potholes and other road condition issues and see repairs expedited. It is part of an OCC initiative intended to speed up the repair of damaged roads in our area. You can report potholes on www.fixmystreet.com or download the dedicated phone App.



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PCC Meeting

At their Meeting on 27th January, St Mary's PCC discussed, among other things:

Safeguarding: We had no issues to report.

Repairs: There's been a slippage of a section of tiles on the Vestry roof, and this is being repaired very shortly. There remain numbers of important works which will have to be attended to when funds permit.

Lychgate: This will be dismantled as soon as weather permits, and will be completely repaired and rebuilt.

Finances: Remain steady, with some money in hand in both the current and savings accounts.

Parish Share: This is the money that we pay to the Diocese, has risen by about 5% this year and is now £9,346.

The Goodbox: The terminal now appears to be stable and is accepting card payments. It sits on top of the font.

H&S: By an oversight, no light was provided at the Lychgate after the Carol Service on a very dark night. There will be this year. The Service was very beautiful again this Christmas and was attended by 90 people. Huge thank you to Miranda Doggett, the choir and all those who made it possible.

Las Posadas: The first year of this, in which simple sculptures of the Holy Family spend a day and a night with a different village family ending on Christmas Eve. Everyone enjoyed this, with the postings on the village WhatsApp group showing their adventures

Events: We're planning a few of these including:

A Folk Concert by *Jarisel*, the well-known Oxford group, on 20th June. Watch this space.

Another Fundraising tea on 7th June to help contribute towards the new village Gazebos. You will be most welcome.

Harvest afternoon tea to thank everyone who contributes to the life of the Church.

KBB

North Aston Nature Notes

With Stephen Rees

The snowdrops have been out for a while now, daffodils are in bloom, and the crocus flowers on the green are looking lovely. Is spring on the way, I wonder?

For a few weeks now I have been seeing little tiny rabbits on the side of the road. To me, this is a sign of bad weather to come. When we used to go ferreting, years ago, we would work them until March. If you went out today, you would more than likely spend the whole morning digging them out, because the adults would be laid up on a nest of young 'uns. Nature has a way of knowing what the weather is going to do, and rabbits will have their young early, to put on weight and get strong, if they think bad weather is coming.

In the same way seabirds will head inland, days before a storm comes, and trees will shed their leaves early, ahead of a wild and windy autumn. None of this is scientific fact, of course, but it's what country folk have noticed over years of watching and living with nature, and it's often right.

It is also a fact known to all good anglers that fish will feed well when its low pressure, before a storm brings rain and heavy cloud. If it's high pressure, they tend not to bite so well. I'm not making this up, honest! Our dad was the water bailiff here in the valley, and he told us when to go fishing, and he was almost always right — as is my eldest son, who watches the barometer avidly.

A red sky at night does mean high pressure and good weather on the way. Foxes know this, and will hunt all night, just as woodcock will fly for moths. When the pressure falls, you'll



Photo: Marcus Potts

be less likely to see the woodcock, as they'll not fly. It's the same with other birds that catch insects on the wing. When rain's coming and the pressure falls, the insects fly lower to the ground, and so the birds have to fly low to get them. All this sounds silly nowadays, I know, but I also know that, if my barometer tells me low pressure is coming, I should go fishing.

These sayings haven't developed over hundreds of years for no reason. They've come about because proper country folk have watched and learned from nature. My granny used to say, "Oak before Ash, we're in for a splash. Ash before Oak, we're in for a soak!". I understood this to mean that if the oak buds first we will have a dry summer.

You're all thinking I'm sitting in my kitchen, making all this up. Well, to be honest, people have thought worse things of me, so I don't mind! I just know that, if I see young rabbits too early, it's not a good sign!

Steve & Wendy



Steeple Aston Spring Show

Sunday 22nd March
2:30 — 4:30
Village Hall
Fir Lane, OX25 4SF

Admission £1 Adults — U16s go free

Teas & Cakes
Plant stall Raffle Show exhibits
Family friendly activities!

Entries are welcome from all, no matter your age or skill level!
Copies of the schedule are available from the village shop,
or visit the website:
www.steepleaston.org.uk/clubs-societies/gardening/



Mary Hoare
1937 - 2026

We are saddened to report the passing on Saturday February 21st of Mary Hoare, née West.

Mary was born here in North Aston in 1937, the daughter of Frederick and Emma West (née Wyatt) and sister to Norman, Godfrey (Goff) and Harry. She married Frederick (Fred) Hoare from Wootton in 1960, and they had two daughters. For most of their married lives they lived at 1 Somerton Road, until Fred died in 2013. Mary continued living there until very recently.



Our sincere condolences to all the family, who have lost two key figures from their lives in the last few weeks.



There continues to be a steady uptake of the full-fibre network here in the village, and Gigaclear has extended its introductory offer to those who may already be tied in to an existing Broadband contract.

If you're one of those people, and you have a year or less still to run with your current provider, then it can still be beneficial to switch to Gigaclear. They promise free full-fibre connectivity for the first 12 months, or until your current contract expires. That means you'll continue to pay your regular monthly commitment to your existing supplier, but enjoy the benefits and reliability of a high-speed full-fibre connection.

- ◆ Free broadband until your current contract ends*
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It's not clear how long the offer remains open, but emails offering the deal were still being sent out at the end of February. Further details from the sales team by visiting the website at gigaclear.com or calling 0370 7740 509. Full terms and conditions are on the website.

Are you with Gigaclear already? Let us know about your experience, and whether you'd recommend it.



Dear Sir

Norman West

Does anyone have any more stories about Norman? One that was recounted recently came from Gwen Short, widow of Ted Short – Norman's contemporary and lifelong friend. It seems that Norman in his youth was nicknamed SHANT (rhymes with ant) because whenever an adult told him to do something, his normal response was "Shant!".
Yours KBB

Thank you!

On behalf of everyone at Crisis Skylight Oxford, I want to say a massive thank you to North Aston village for raising an incredible £500 from your carol singing.

As you may know, the current situation is extremely difficult, with escalating rents and a critical shortage of affordable housing. There are now just over 300,000 families and individuals facing homelessness.

Thanks to your generosity, we can provide vital services such as food, emotional support, healthcare advice, housing assistance, and employment guidance. With your help, we can support people in Oxfordshire with not just immediate relief but also a pathway to a more stable and hopeful future.

Thank you once again for your donation.

Kind regards, Emma Darlington

Crisis Skylight Oxford

Old Fire Station, 40 George Street, Oxford, OX1 2AQ

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Find out more at www.northastonfarms.co.uk

Spring Clean!

We used to carry out an organised clean-up in the village every spring, and some will recall with amusement the time when John Harvey-Lee found a £20 note along the Middle Aston Lane. In recent years we have just tended to ask dog walkers and local residents to be vigilant, and perhaps take a litter picker and binliner with them (from the bus shelter outside Nicholsons) on a walk in March, before the undergrowth gets too thick and the birds start nesting.

Jessica Bower of the charity *Wild Oxfordshire* has recently been in touch with news of The Great British Spring Clean, the UK's biggest mass-action environmental campaign which will run from 3rd to 29th March. She says: "Giving our shared spaces a little TLC helps wildlife, keeps our communities clean, and brings neighbours together. While it can be tempting to think "a little bit of rubbish won't hurt", small pieces quickly add up." She adds, "Litter can harm wild mammals and birds. An hour spent litter-picking makes an immediate and satisfying difference."

The advice is: Wear gloves and sturdy shoes. Use a picker if you have one. Avoid disturbing piles of leaves or logs, where animals may be hiding. Report instances of fly-tipping to OCC.

If appropriate, sort and separate what you've collected for recycling, and tie up and dispose of bags appropriately. Oh, and don't forget to wash your hands after you've finished!

Thank you!



Photo: Stephen Powles

50 Objects

The Soldiers of Oxfordshire Museum is staging a new exhibition this month (from 21 March to 30 April) entitled *Oxfordshire's Military Heritage in 50 Objects*.

If you've never visited the museum before, it really is worth the trip, and offers a fascinating insight into Oxfordshire's military history. This particular exhibition combines key objects from the museum's permanent displays and archives, which extends to over 14,000 objects, with recently donated items on show for the first time.

The 50 objects tell the story of the county's military heritage, illustrating Oxfordshire stories from the Napoleonic Wars to WW2. They offer unique insights into wartime life and the history of the county's two principal regiments, The *Oxfordshire & Buckinghamshire Light Infantry* and *Queen's Own Oxfordshire Hussars*.

Museum Director, Ursula Corcoran, has said that the exhibition "brings many objects out of the archive and into the public gaze for the first time. We hope visitors will be inspired by the county's military heritage and even think of the family stories and treasures they hold themselves".

Opening Times: Tuesday - Saturday: 11am - 5pm, Sundays: 2pm - 5pm. Closed Mondays. Admission for Adults is £9.00, Concessions £8.00, Children (5-16yrs) £5.50, and Under 5s enter free. One ticket offers 12 months unlimited entry to all the museum's exhibitions.

Soldiers of Oxfordshire Museum

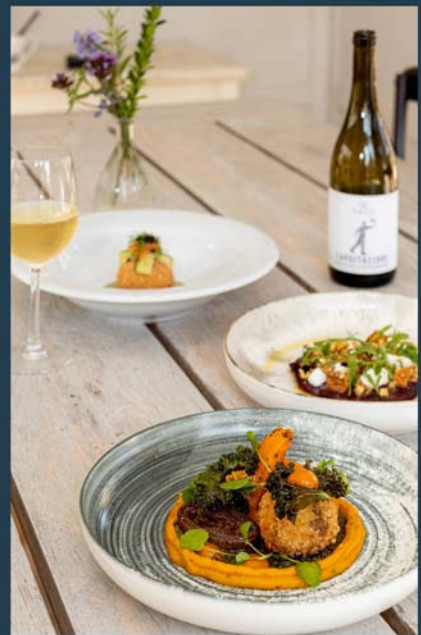
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North Aston Village Meeting

Tuesday 17th February 2026 ~ The Minutes

Officers present: Marcus Potts, Chair (MP), Bev Rees, Treasurer (BR), Annie Savage, Secretary (AS).

Those present: Councillor Gareth Epps (GE, OCC), Dave Hanna (DH), Franca Potts (FP), Sue Hatz (SH), James Taylor (JT), Stephen Walters (SW), Trudy Busby (TB), Clive Busby (CB), Tony Rees (TR), Jeremy Taylor (JTT), Mary Healey (MH), Mark Stay (MS), Les Parry (LP), Kildare Bourke-Borrowes (KBB), Jan Liberadski (JL).

1. Welcome. The Chair welcomed everyone to the Meeting, especially Councillor Epps, who was able to stay only for a short time, so was invited to speak first.

Councillor Gareth Epps proceeded to update the Meeting on various matters pertaining to NA including Council budgets, which were proving challenging.

i) **Fix My Street:** GE is training to become a *FixMyStreet Super User*. As North and Middle Aston are without representatives, he's happy to support both villages. He has been reviewing progress on potholes and damaged roads. As this year has been the worst for more than three decades, due to excessive rainfall, OCC has had to borrow money for road repair. GE admits things are far from perfect but new teams and equipment have been deployed to respond to the massive increase in reported damage. He encouraged NA residents to use www.FixMyStreet.com and confirmed that a lot of work has been done already and the backlog reduced.

ii) **Traffic Calming & s106 Funding:** Billy Evans from OCC has been in touch with Howard Ionascu regarding the temporary placement of chicanes, and confirmed this will in all likelihood be done in March. This is aimed at enabling the village to observe the impact on traffic speed through NA. The matter was discussed again later in the Meeting – see Item 6.

The money available is linked to Section 106 funding, which Dorchester Homes is obliged to pay as a result of the Heyford Park development. There is a complex calculation based around how many houses have been built and the work is unlikely to be completed for some time.

iii) The road down to Somerton is due to be top dressed soon. Clarification was requested that the potholes and the edge of the road would be fixed prior to resurfacing.

iv) TR expressed frustration at the general condition of road surfaces around NA. He suggested that Dragon equipment is inadequate and achieves poor results. GE cited locations of recent repairs and confirmed that contractors must provide a 12 month warranty, and if the repair is inadequate, must return.

CB asked about the situation around cut and fix, citing the better quality of repair between Duns Tew and Ledwell. GE explained that deeper resurfacing is rarely affordable. KBB and others reinforced how appalling the Middle Aston road is and SW mentioned its use by buses and the recent construction of new waterworks near Grange Farm as being the cause of much additional damage. GE thought this would be repaired in March. The matter of hedge cutting was raised by MP and JT explained there had been a deadline for completion ahead of the bird nesting season, and the heavy rain had created a problem with achieving this.

v) In response to a question from TR regarding additional damage to roads caused by roadwork diversions, GE advised the Meeting that the delays through Deddington caused by Thames Water will continue until June.

vi) LP raised the matter of the number of local planning applications, and was interested in OCC Highways' response to the inevitable increase in traffic. GE said he was uncertain as it predated his involvement but so many applications are being submitted that there was need for vigilance and rapid response. At this point GE left. MP offered thanks for his attendance.

Formal Business

2. Approval of Minutes

The Minutes of the last Meeting (09.12.25) were published in the January 2026 *NA News*. Only one amendment to the minutes was put forward. MS explained that in relation to the item regarding the Coalition of Parishes, he would like it noted that he had asked for further debate. MP confirmed that the electronic copy of the Minutes would be amended. MP proposed acceptance, and DH seconded. Passed unanimously.

3. Treasurer's Report (update on Accounts and Banking)

BR reported on the Income/Expenditure of the Village Meeting and Village Fund accounts. The current bank balances stand at £6372.43 and £5405.46 respectively.

The Village Fund had suffered a loss of £100 in respect of a scam. Although an original payment was made for £1,400, due to the efforts of SW the bank had refunded £1,300. BR repeated how important it was to be aware of such scams. Procedures for all future payments have now been tightened and will only be made on approval of two Officers and upon production of an original invoice.

SW advised that a refund was due from our insurance brokers. AS asked where the policy was. SW was not aware, so BR will ask NN.

Fête income. Clarification was sought on the contribution from the 2025 Fête proceeds, which it had been agreed would be shared equally with the Church. MP confirmed this was 50% of the net takings, and a cheque for £1747.73 will be issued shortly. MP noted that whilst the date for this year's Fête has been set, no decision on how the proceeds should be split had yet been reached.

CB informed the meeting there was a contribution due to the Village Fund for the new gazebos from Tea & Cakes at the church which will be passed over shortly.

4. Parish Expenses

This relates to the costs of carrying out mowing to the Green and the production of the *North Aston News*. MP declared an interest and asked BR to address this topic. BR asked the meeting if there were any objections to the continuation of the payments to CB for the mowing and MP for writing and editing the *News*. SH checked that both were happy at the current level of £250 for the mowing, annually, and £350 for the *News*. The proposal to continue was unanimously supported by the Meeting. The payment of fees to CB, proposed by KBB, seconded by TR. Fees for MP proposed by JT and seconded by DH.

A discussion was then held on the bills for water supply to the Fountain, as TR believed they are too high. MP observed that the self-closing tap on the Fountain often doesn't, and has to be manually shut off. There was debate on whether the tap should be replaced with a regular tap or serviced. The Meeting agreed that TR should examine the tap, see if it could be serviced, and report back.

5. Village Constitution

AS proposed that this agenda item should be delayed until the next meeting, as there were still legal matters that needed to be considered. In brief, AS explained that the current Village Constitution had been created in response to a funding application for the defibrillator in 2019. The powers of a Parish Meeting are very limited and were detailed in the Village Document but now require review. It is essential that on handover between Officers there is a full understanding of the rules governing the conduct of business to avoid misunderstandings. The current committee will carry out a full review of the arrangements and consult the village prior to ratifying the revised policies.

6. Coalition of Parishes.

MP said he wished to make a statement to the Meeting, which he read in full. In summary, this related to comments made following the last Meeting. He wished to make it absolutely clear that he has never been paid retainers by either the Puy du Fou, or Nicholsons, in relation to the planning application for the Puy du Fou.

He went on to say that, at the last meeting, the Coalition was discussed at length and it was felt that, although NA Village Meeting has had to withdraw from the Coalition, we should be permitted to hear from the organisation. Consequently, MP has invited Richard Allen, Chair of the Coalition, to speak to residents of North Aston, but he has declined.

MS pointed out that there is considerable development proposed in our area, which could have an impact on the village. If the Village is not represented in any way, how can a collective voice be heard? It was suggested that the MCNP Forum already achieves this.

While it may be unconstitutional for the Parish Meeting to speak on our behalf, it was agreed that the Village Forum could become an effective vehicle. However, the resolution surrounding involvement in planning matters needs clarification, and this can be addressed as part of the process in establishing new Constitutions for both Meeting and Forum.

7. Mid-Cherwell Neighbourhood Plan

JT reported on his attendance at the January MCNP Forum meeting. He read the Chair's statement from the AGM. In light of the discussion around the Coalition of Parishes, the Rousham group, NORA and possibly others who will be affected by all the proposed local developments, there is a sense that there may be fragmentation and it would be more effective to speak as one voice, so there are proposals to bring cohesion.

JT requested that other NA residents attend the MCNP meetings as he is concerned he is the only NA representative. MS and MP confirmed willingness. The fee for the coming year is £169 and is based on the number of residents.

8. Traffic Calming

MP referred to the earlier discussion when GE had been present, but explained that Howard Ionascu had kindly prepared a brief statement, which MP read out.

This acknowledged that Cllr Epps has been very helpful in keeping the pressure on OCC. Currently, the plan is for three temporary chicanes to be installed so that the village can see first-hand whether they have an effect in calming traffic speeds. It would also be possible to move the temporary chicanes to see if a different position has greater or less effect. OCC will need detailed feedback from some willing volunteers to observe traffic.

There were further details from OCC in respect of the Section 106 funding which mirrored the details provided by Councillor Epps: In terms of definitive figures for the s106, the County Council holds £24,800 of s106 to be spent at North Aston. A further £71,300 has been secured but not yet received, since the trigger to release the contribution has not been reached. It is understood that this relates to the number of houses completed in Heyford Park.

There is also a contribution originally earmarked for the junction on the A4260 at The Fox, but that was specifically linked to the Bus Gate proposal at Middleton Stoney. That clearly is not favoured and is unlikely to go ahead, so the funding will not be forthcoming. As mentioned previously, there is some additional funding available from the County Council to help with any design work required for village mitigation measures. This will enable the s106 to be spent on construction and delivery on the ground.

When the trial with the chicanes begins, we will require volunteers to observe how the traffic is behaving with the temporary calming. LP affirmed the hours of 8-9 am are critical. SH asked that the trial doesn't take place whilst Somerton Road is being fixed. MP confirmed he will liaise with GE. He also confirmed he would discuss with Howard the likely costs of specific calming measures.

JTT asked if there was any possibility of speed checks through the village, and questioned the function of the existing safety camera on the A4260. MP pointed out that GE had tried repeatedly to have the camera reinstated, but that Oxfordshire is understood to have only six camera units, so it is unlikely it will happen soon. New solar-powered flashing signs warning of the approach to a dangerous junction are planned for installation on the main road soon. The formal business ended.

Informal Business

9. Christmas Events

The Wassail was a very enjoyable event and positive feedback was received. Carols on the Green was also a success and the meeting offered thanks to Robert Hite for building the bonfire. MP did a rough headcount and estimated around 200 attendees. The mulled wine ran out so we should consider increasing the amount in future.

The Wassail and Carols raised a total of £500 in donations which was sent to Crisis Oxford, who wrote a very grateful email thanking the village, and this will be published in the March NA News

10. Easter

The plan is to hold the customary Easter Egg Hunt on Easter Monday, 6th April, and Ginny Stay has kindly offered to organise Coffee & Cakes.

11. Mikron Theatre

The travelling theatre company will be returning to North Aston on Thursday June 18th with a play about Mobile Libraries in East Yorkshire entitled *Top of the Wold*.

12. Village Fête

This will take place on Saturday 4th July. A committee will be formed to organise. MP asked for volunteers to renovate John Harvey-Lee's games, and also asked for china for the China Shy. A brief discussion was held about the precise location but no decision was made.

MS asked about the purchase of two additional gazebos, and TR confirmed they would replace another of the old canvas marquees, which could then be sold. JL asked if it would be cheaper to hire but it was felt the cost of owning would be more economic. A proposal to purchase two more gazebos was put to the meeting. Proposed by FP and seconded by KBB, and unanimously approved.

TR reminded the meeting that care should be taken when putting the gazebos away.

13. Any Other Business

Gigaclear: CB asked when they will be coming to replace the granite setts they dislocated. MP agreed to contact them.

Spring Clean: MP asked everyone to be aware of litter and pick it up. Bags and grabbers are in the bus shelter. AS thanked Jeremy for his continued clearing of litter.

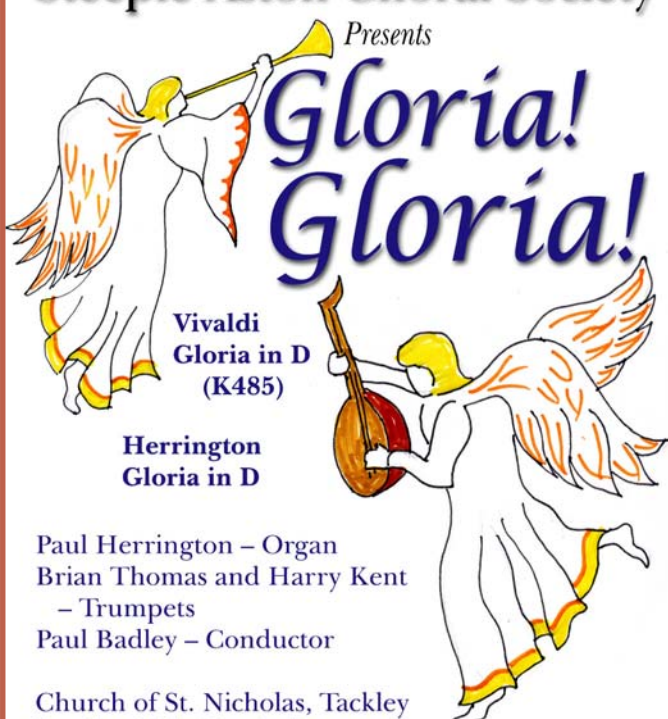
Bus Stop: A brief discussion was held around the relocation of the bus shelter outside Park Farm, which is in poor condition and blocks the view of oncoming traffic. MP will follow up.

14. Date of Next Meeting

MP explained that we are required by law to stage an Annual Parish Meeting between March and June, and also carry out elections of Officers in May, so a combined Meeting on Tuesday 12th May at 7pm was agreed.

Steeple Aston Choral Society
Presents

**Gloria!
Gloria!**



**Vivaldi
Gloria in D
(K485)**

**Herrington
Gloria in D**

Paul Herrington – Organ
Brian Thomas and Harry Kent
– Trumpets
Paul Badley – Conductor

Church of St. Nicholas, Tackley
Sunday 29th March, 7 pm

Tickets £12 (Under 16s free) from SACS members,
SA Village Shop or from Margaret Bullyment
(01869 347346) or email mtheb749@gmail.com



The Church MATTERS



Lent

As March begins we are now roughly a third of the way through Lent and I wonder if you chose to give something up for Lent and if so how it is going?



Traditionally people gave up meat, eggs, wine, oil, butter and other dairy products. Back in the 1500's people were fined for eating meat during Lent. This Lenten discipline gives us the fun of pancakes on Shrove Tuesday, as people used up their eggs and milk before Lent started. I wonder what do you put on your pancakes? Do you go for the old favourite of lemon and sugar or what I think of as a more modern - classic chocolate spread and bananas?

The practice of giving something up for Lent has declined over my lifetime. As a child I can remember it being regularly talked about, but it is now hardly mentioned. Apparently in UK (2024) just 11% of Christians and 5% of the population gave something up for Lent. The most popular things were sweets and chocolates.

Being able to give food up for Lent is of course a luxury in itself. There are millions of people around the world, including in this country, who don't have enough food to eat. There are a myriad of reasons for this from poverty to failed crops caused by changes in climate (including droughts and floods), and wars (forcing people to flee their homes). This was a focus of the community prayer/reflection space when we recently took BeSpace into Dr Radcliffe's School. In the "Empty Plate" space children were invited to think about their favourite foods, with various responses from Chocolate through to Octopus. They were then invited to think about others who didn't have enough and the reasons why, before responding on a paper plate by giving thanks by drawing their favourite foods, or by expressing their wishes for those who don't have enough food.

As I look around the wonderful world that God has given us, I'm aware that there is plenty for everyone if we could learn to share the resources better. This is the topic that we are discussing in our Lent group on Wednesdays over in the Methodist chapel in Tackley 1:30-3pm (please see SNTChurch website for further details).

As the discipline of giving something up for Lent has declined, it has been replaced by the challenge of taking something up. This year I invite you to think about sharing our food with others by giving to the local foodbank. There is a box at the back of SS Peter and Paul Church in Steeple Aston and donations are taken every Tuesday morning to the foodbank in Banbury for distribution.

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.

Church Services in March 2026

NORTH ASTON	S.ASTON	TACKLEY
Sunday March 1st		
9:30 am Holy Communion Book of Common Prayer	11:00 am Holy Communion Book of Common Prayer	5:30 pm Evensong
Sunday March 8th		
9:30 am Morning Prayer	11:00 am Family Service	5:30 pm Holy Communion
Sunday March 15th		
9:30 am Morning Prayer	11:00 am Holy Communion	9:30 am Family Service
Sunday March 22nd		
9:30 am Morning Prayer	11:00 am Thanksgiving Service	5:30 pm Passion Organ Meditation
Sunday March 29th - Palm Sunday		
9:15 am Holy Communion Meet at St Mary's Walk	11:00 am Holy Communion	10:30 am Methodist Church
April 2nd - Maundy Thursday / April 3rd - Good Friday		
6:00 pm on the 2nd Holy Communion with Choir	2:00 pm An Hour at The Cross	No events Planned
Sunday April 5th		
9:30 am Holy Communion Book of Common Prayer	1:00 am Holy Communion Book of Common Prayer	9:30 am Holy Communion

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

Announcements

Deddington Farmers' Market

The Farmers' Market this month will be on Saturday 28th March from 9 am to 12:30 pm. **Road Works!** The ongoing roadworks are causing some difficulty with access and parking. If visiting from the south, head for Hopcraft Lane OX15 OTD and park behind Orchard House (W3W ///: guests.gliding.astounded).

Dog Walking Service

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

Pop-up Pub

The North Aston Pop-up Pub will meet in the Old Bakery on Friday 6th March this month, from 7pm. See Page 2 for more details.

Bicester Green

The next Bicester Green Repair Café will take place on Saturday 21st March in the shop on Sheep Street, 10am - 2pm.

OCC's X-it

Like many official bodies (and none too few charities, companies, celebrities and individuals) Oxfordshire County Council is closing its account on X, formerly Twitter. If you want to keep up to date with OCC's social media, find @oxfordshirecc.bsky.social on Blue Sky or seek out their WhatsApp channel here: <https://www.whatsapp.com/channel>

Steeple Aston - Blooming Lovely

Steeple Aston Spring Show is on Sunday 22nd March from 2:30 pm to 4:30 pm in the Village Hall. Flowers, crafts, children's classes, plant stall, seed swap, raffle, refreshments, Tea & Cakes. Admission £1 adults, under 16s go free. See advert on Page 4.

Trouble at Mill

There was an attempted burglary at North Aston Mill on Saturday 21st February. There was damage to the property and TVP are asking local residents to let them know if they saw any suspicious activity near the Mill between 19:00 and 20:00. If you can help, please contact TVP on 07814 485127, quoting ref 43260088300.



February's winners were:

1st Prize (£25): Josh Potts (#10)

2nd Prize (£5): Stephen Rees (#60)

Congratulations! Every month, two lucky winners get drawn out of the hat. If you'd like to learn more about the 100 Club, please contact Sue: Telephone 347727 or email info@north-aston.co.uk.

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



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



March Birthdays

Jos Busby
Arthur Hathaway
Niel Nicholson
Stephen Rees
Wendy Rees
Joseph Stay



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.

Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal

Tariq Ozaibi, Head of Supporter Services at the Royal British Legion, has written to North Aston PCC to express the RBL's thanks for the donation of £130, received from the villagers of North Aston last November. If you know a member of the Armed Forces community who who might benefit from support from the RBL, you can contact their Advice & Information Line on 0808 802 8080, 8 am to 8 pm daily.



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North Aston News

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

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