THE HASELEYS

Dispatches from the Hedgerow



Issue 546
Nov 2026

Mushroom Risotto
(not these ones!)

Village Memories

Aunt Hedgerow

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Tues 24 Nov	- Reycling
Tues 1 Dec	- Rubbish
Tues 8 Dec	- Recycling
Tues 15 Dec	- Rubbish

Great Haseley Parish Council Contacts

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Message *From the* Editor

Apologies that this issue is reaching you a little late. It's unlikely you will have noticed the subtle changes in printing across this year's issues, but behind the scenes we've been trying out different printers and weighing up our options so we can continue to print *The Haseleys* in full colour without increasing costs. Different processes and lead times have caught us out this month, but I'm pleased to say that we've now found a long-term solution that lets us do just that.

If you have any submissions for the December issue, we can accept them up to 25 November. From then on, please send in any submissions **before the 20th of each month** for inclusion in the following month's issue. The magazine will be delivered during the first week of each month.

Speaking of submissions, we've very much enjoyed reading memories of the Haseleys from years gone by and would love to hear from others. Thank you to Simon Park for taking us back to the Haseley Hop. Fifty-odd years on, the details are a little hazy, although he's quite sure he was there.

The consultation on the Great Haseley Parish Neighbourhood Development Plan has been extended to 7 December. If you haven't had a chance to look at the plan or send in your comments, you'll find details in this issue. We also have the councils' update on the waste vehicle depot at Haseley Trading Estate, including what's still to be done and when they expect the work to finish.

You'll find details of the new booking system for Great Haseley Village Hall, harvest news from Little Milton Primary School, Richard Sheehan's look at what goes on beneath our feet and a mushroom risotto in Parish Pantry. If someone near you has taken to using a leaf blower before breakfast on a Sunday, Aunt Hedgerow has a suggestion.

I hope you enjoy the issue.

Chris Cassell





From the Parish Council

Parish Council Meeting Summary – 12 October 2026

Planning Matters

The Council considered one planning application and agreed to support it:

- P26/S3923/FUL – Lobb Farm, Tetsworth
  Change of use of former grain store to storage use or Class E or mixed use. Alterations to include providing main entry on western side, closing eastern large doors.

Councillor Representatives agreed as follows:

Planning – Cllr Blythe
Allotments – Cllr Bird
Environment – Cllr Buchanan
Playing Fields – Cllr Groves
Communication – Cllr Blythe
Footpaths – Cllr Spencer
Millennium Wood – Cllr Sheehan
Miss Cross Field – Cllr Groves
Village Hall – Cllr Woodrow
Neighbourhood Plan – Cllr Sheehan

Village Projects

Work continues on a number of village initiatives:

- Neighbourhood Plan (NP) – Statutory Pre-Submission Consultation commenced on 5 October 2026 and will run until 7 December 2026. An in-person consultation was held on 10 October 2026 in the Village Hall and was well attended. More posters to be put up around the village, and posts on social media. Information also on Parish Council website. Pre-Submission Consultation to be sent to parish councils who share a boundary with Great Haseley parish.

District Councillors' Report

District Councillor Georgina circulated her monthly report and added planning related issues had taken up a lot of her time over the last month. The District Council continue to wait for the draft traffic management plan for the waste vehicle site. Cllr Heritage has repeatedly asked for the plan and is completely frustrated at the length of time it is taking the contractor to submit it.

Looking Ahead

The next meeting will take place on 9 November 2026 in the Village Hall, commencing at 7.30pm.

Complete minutes of past Parish Council meetings can be found on the website: www.thehaseleys.co.uk

Andrea Oughton, Parish Clerk

Waste Vehicle Depot project update

South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils' new waste vehicle depot is currently under construction near Great Haseley.

The depot is being developed to provide a modern vehicle base for the councils' waste and recycling collection services.

Construction commenced earlier this year, and good progress continues to be made on site. Current works include completion of the main building structure, internal fit-out of office and workshop areas, installation of utilities and the construction of parking and operational areas.

While construction has taken longer than originally anticipated, the project is now actively progressing. We anticipate completion of the main construction works in early December 2026 with finishing/fit out works taking place up to February 2027.

We know many local people are keen to know what the site will look like once complete. At this stage, with the site still under construction the final landscaping and environmental elements have yet to be completed. The approved scheme includes boundary treatments, planting and other measures intended to help integrate the development into its surroundings. These elements will become more apparent as the project moves towards completion.

We recognise that construction activity may cause concern for nearby residents. We have reiterated their responsibilities to the contractors, and we continue to monitor and address any issues raised during the construction phase. If anyone has concerns, they can contact us on the following e-mail address HaseleyTradingEstate@southandvale.gov.uk .

Alongside the construction work, the main contractor, Beard, has delivered a number of additional activities that offer social value and local community benefits. This ranges from carbon offsetting (by planting new trees and vegetation), to offering work experience to support people into jobs in construction, back to work initiatives targeted to homeless people, homeless supporting projects to encourage more women into construction, as well as well-being initiatives and use of local supply chains within a 30-mile radius of the site where possible alongside waste recycling reporting. Early on in the year, they collaborated with surrounding primary schools to promote construction safety to pupils.

The councils remain committed to keeping the parish council informed as the project progresses and appreciate the patience of local residents while construction continues.

We will continue to update our project page at:
www.southandvale.gov.uk/haseley-trading-estate

Great Haseley Village Hall Bulletin

Subject: Exciting news! 🏛️ Say hello to our new online booking system for Great Haseley Village Hall!

Dear Village Hall Users,

We are so excited to introduce our brand-new online booking system, **Lemon Booking!** We know how important the hall is to our community, and this new system is designed to make requesting and managing your bookings quicker, clearer, and much easier.

Starting today, you can check live availability, book your favorite spaces, and even promote your regular clubs or classes—all directly through our website at **greathaseleyvillagehall.co.uk**.

How to Make a Booking

1. **Head to the Website:** Go to greathaseleyvillagehall.co.uk.
2. **Pick Your Space & Time:** Choose the hall or room you'd like to hire and take a look at the live calendar to find your preferred slots.
3. **Choose Your Booking Type:**
   - **Single Event:** Perfect for parties or one-off gatherings—just pick your date and times.
   - **Repeat / Recurring Booking:** If you run a weekly class, monthly meeting, or regular get-together, simply toggle the **Repeat Booking** option to schedule multiple sessions in one go (like every Tuesday evening or the first Monday of every month).
4. **Set Your Event Visibility:**
   - **Private Event:** Keeps your booking details private (ideal for private parties and family gatherings).
   - **Public Event:** Check **"Make Publicly Viewable"** if you're hosting a community activity, class, or open event! This adds your event to our public calendar so local residents can easily see what's on.
5. **Submit & Pay:** Enter your contact details and submit your request. Once our team approves it, you'll get a handy confirmation email with a secure link to view and pay your invoice online.

Why You'll Love It

- **No More Guessing:** Check open time slots in real time before you submit.
- **Hassle-Free Repeat Bookings:** Block out whole terms or multi-date series in just a few clicks.
- **Built-In Publicity:** Publicly listed bookings show up on the community calendar to help spread the word about your club or class.
- **Simple Online Payments:** Easily access and pay your invoices securely online.

If you have any questions at all, or if you'd like a little help getting to grips with the new system, please just reply to this email or reach out—we're always happy to help!

Warm regards,

The Great Haseley Village Hall Management Committee

www.greathaseleyvillagehall.co.uk

A word *from* Freddie Van Mierlo





September involved a quick two weeks of Parliament and then a return to recess for Conference season. MPs were chomping at the bit to ask questions of our new PM after a summer of announcements. I used the opportunity to follow up on many of my summer tour surgeries, asking Ministers to think again before ploughing ahead with 'Greater Oxford'. You may be aware, the Government announced a pause in plans in late September, because of this pause, we are now expecting to be holding local district elections next Spring, though at the time of writing we are still awaiting further information from the Government.

I also asked Government Ministers to consider the role of town and parish councils and local communities in preparedness for climate change, including wildfires. I learned from my summer tour that households in rural areas could take some simple steps, like clearing vegetation from directly around the house, to reduce risk to property and life. This was echoed in a meeting with Chris Wycherley of the Fire Brigades Union at Henley Fire Station where, alongside celebrating the saving of Henley Fire Station, we discussed how we can work together to improve working conditions for fire fighters and seek the investment needed for better equipment and increased capacity in order to improve fire resilience, particularly after our recent summer.

It was good to deliver on a promise I'd made to the partners and family members caring for people living with dementia who I met at the Thame Memory Cafe and Friendship Group by asking a question in the Commons highlighting their concerns about how the system ignores them and their fears for their loved one if they were to become ill themselves. Marking World Alzheimer's Day by joining others in Westminster to call upon the Government to act so the NHS is ready for the next generation of dementia tests and treatment felt all the more important and pressing.

I'm delighted a banking hub will soon this October in Henley. Thanks to the support of the County Council, its new temporary home will be Henley Library, while a permanent home is found. I'm also continuing conversations with Thame Town Council and LINK to try to secure one for Thame.

It was brilliant to join Thame WI and a big turnout of supporters again this year for the Clean Rivers for People and Wildlife campaign protest in Thame; the River Thame is so precious to the whole community, it's heartening to see people coming together to protect our waterways for generations to come

During the recess it's been great to be out and about. It was an honour to be invited to be a keynote speaker that Riverside Counselling's AGM, alongside rugby legend Josh Lewsey on board the New Orleans in Henley. I was also very happy too to be able to raise some money for the Sharing Life Trust in Thame with an evening talking about myself at the Thame Players Theatre. Local panto legend Tony Long very ably made that feel much less awkward than it sounds, and apparently, it was quite entertaining!

It was a busy three weeks of Recess; in Benson I met with the Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC) to learn more about their work. There are over 30 commemorations in Benson cemetery, part of 1.7 million that are looked after by the CWGC worldwide. In Nettlebed, I met with residents to discuss its historic brick kiln and explore options around Oxfordshire County Council's proposals to permanently remove its 'top hat'. Back down in Henley it was brilliant to join the Regatta for the Disabled for the third year in my role as a patron of the event (thanks go to all the local businesses and town council that provide financial support). Hot footing it back to Thame, I met with Lord Bill's Headteacher to discuss how I can continue to support the school and welcomed the construction of a perimeter fence to enhance student safety

I also continue to meet with Oxfordshire County Council and Councillor Georgina Heritage to discuss plans to address the ongoing traffic issues in Chinnor and have written to Thames Valley Police and Crime Commissioner Matthew Barbour to request greater police enforcement for speeding across Oxfordshire.

As always, I am here to help - don't hesitate to contact me at Freddie.vanmierlo.mp@parliament.uk should you have any concerns or issues you wish to raise

The Maple Tree

A great place to grow

Happy Christmas and New Year from The Maple Tree!

It is hard to believe that Christmas is almost upon us and what a great year we have had at The Maple Tree, full of fun, learning and making new friends!

A big thank you to all our wonderful staff, trustees and volunteers this Christmas, and to all the children, parents, grandparents and carers who join us each week and make The Maple Tree such a special place to be!

Mondays: Messy Monday at 10:00-11:30am and Twins' Club at 2:00-4:00pm

Tuesdays: Smart Start at 9:30-11:30am

Wednesdays: Maple Babies at 9:30am-12:00pm

Thursdays: Time to Rhyme at 9:30-11:30am

The Maple Tree at *Forest Hill Village Hall* from 10:30am-12:00pm

The Learning Leaf at 2:00-4:00pm at The Maple Tree

Fridays: Little Learners at 10:00-11:30am

Every third Saturday: Family Fun at 10:00-11:30am

Please refer to our website or social media for our Christmas schedule and be sure to book your place at our annual **Christmas Disco with DJ Darren**; an event not to be missed!

Dates for the diary;

Grand Draw Friday 18th December at noon

Christmas Disco Friday 18th December from 4:30-6:00pm

New Year: please contact us if you would like to join our lovely group of trustees or if you would like to help us deliver sessions to local families or maybe you are interested in raising valuable funds for The Maple Tree? We would love your help!

We are here to help if you need advice or support: 01865 236700.

Website: www.mapletree.org.uk

Email: info@mapletree.org.uk

Facebook: www.facebook.com/TheMapleTreeWheatley

Instagram: @themapletreecentre

Laura Spencer

The Maple Tree Centre Manager



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Children's Corner



A winter walk in the Haseleys

Winter word search

Find eight things you might see on a winter walk. The words go across, down or diagonally down to the right.

J	N	P	U	D	D	L	E	U	M
A	H	E	D	G	E	X	F	Q	T
L	M	M	D	U	X	R	S	V	B
P	R	I	U	T	E	O	S	E	E
F	M	U	D	E	M	B	R	E	R
S	R	N	Q	Y	F	I	S	N	R
L	L	O	S	Q	Q	N	H	H	Y
I	M	E	S	V	G	N	O	O	A
U	O	O	A	T	A	M	W	B	T
K	O	Q	Y	F	B	W	L	O	R

- ☐ BERRY
- ☐ FROST
- ☐ HEDGE
- ☐ LEAF
- ☐ MUD
- ☐ OWL
- ☐ PUDDLE
- ☐ ROBIN

Can you spot these outside?

☐ A bird in a hedge ☐ A footprint in mud ☐ Berries on a branch

Draw what you found

Pick one thing from your walk. Look closely, then sketch it here.

Ask a grown-up to send your drawing to editors.thehaseleys@gmail.com



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The Haseley Hop

(as sort-of remembered by a participant, 50 years on...)

Hang on...excuse me...er, the what? Ah yes! The Haseley Hop! A one-off cultural extravaganza which, whilst hardly on a par with Woodstock (a year or two earlier) or Live Aid (fifteen-odd years later), is nonetheless treasured in the memories of those of us who were there (or, to be honest, is but the vaguest of memories blurred by the mists of time, senility and excessive intake of alcohol...)

They do say that if you can remember the '60s, you weren't really there. Well, I suspect the HH actually took place in the very earliest of the '70s, and I know for sure that I was there. But I can't remember much...

One thing I am pretty sure about is that it was the brainchild not of a Haseley resident, but of one Tim Rice (he of 'Jesus Christ Superstar' fame, and many other subsequent barnstorming musical theatre productions) who, at the time, lived in – brace yourselves – Great Milton (grrr! yah-boo! etc). Tim then resided in the big house right opposite Ray Blanc's 'Le Manoir' (and perhaps still does?); but quite why he decided to instigate an event in the neighbouring village is a puzzle I have never solved – nor have ever tried to, truth be told.

The 'Hop' actually took place in the diminutive (and rather more exclusive) Little Haseley, in what I remember to be a barn of some sort, and Tim had certainly brought the villages together in a joyous celebration of bucolic rural life. He had also persuaded one half of the (at the time) renowned pop duo Peter & Gordon to come and do a turn. If my memory serves me correctly, it was Peter (Asher – brother of the scrumptious Jane, erstwhile consort of Beatle Paul), who did a solo rendition of their hit(s) ('World Without Love', etc– remember?) and we all duly went 'ooh, aah!' and wallowed in pride at having so luminous a celebrity grace our humble village 'do'.

Aside from that, er – well, we all got well and truly plastered, as you do. But sore heads the next morning were ameliorated by memories (still more or less intact at the time) of quite a special evening in the annals of a small and friendly south Oxfordshire village.

Simon Park

Bible Study Group

Raymond asked me to share this update from Sally Ann Dennis with readers of The Haseleys. *If you'd like to join the group, give Ian or Sally Ann a ring on the number in the notice to find out when and where they're next meeting.*
Chris, Editor

We are currently studying Isaiah… specifically the passages describing a future anointed king… Messiah and those describing the servant king… We meet on Tuesday evenings between seven and 8:30 and if you would be interested in joining us do telephone Ian or Sally Ann on (01844) 278029.

We are meeting on the **3rd, 10th and possibly 17th of November.**

S A Dennis

A Wonderful First Term at Little Milton Primary School!

What an amazing first term we have had at Little Milton as a new school family! Our youngest children have settled in well and are enjoying exploring their new surroundings as well as investigating the forest school area at the Nature Reserve.

Celebrating Harvest Together

Thank you to everyone who joined us for our Harvest celebration at St. James Church. It was lovely to see so many parents and grandparents, and the children were a credit to both you and the school. We are very proud of all of them, especially the Willow class as this was the first time being in church for some of them.



We celebrated Harvest in many different ways— singing songs (even one in French!) and sharing poems and prayers that were collaboratively written together in class.



We were also incredibly grateful for the immense generosity shown by our community. We are delighted to share that all of your wonderful food donations have been safely delivered to the local food bank in Thame.

Congratulations, Mr Brown!

A huge congratulations to Mr Brown, who took part in the Oxford Half Marathon. He finished in an incredible time of 1 hour, 30 minutes and 35 seconds, which is very impressive for his first one! What a fantastic role model for our children.

We look forward to sharing many more happy milestones with our wonderful village community!

Sue Green and the LM Team

decorative paint finishes

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by Lynda Woodrow

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Advertising in THE HASELEYS

Submitting Adverts

Please email a copy of your advert to the editor using the contact details above.

The deadline for inclusion in any issue is the 20th of the preceding month. If you are planning new content, early notice is appreciated so space can be reserved.

All advertisements must be paid for in accordance with the invoice issued.

Advertising Rates (per edition)

- £38 – Full page (colour)
- £22 – Half page (colour)
- £22 – Full page (black & white)
- £12 – Half page (black & white)
- £6 – Quarter page (black & white)

A full-year commitment includes one edition free of charge.

What's happening

THE PINE LODGE

Little Milton

It's **Fireworks** time – with musical accompaniment as usual. **Saturday 7th November** on the village Recreation ground. Doors open at 18:00. Bar, plus hot dogs and hot soup in the Hall. Tickets are available at the village Shop or on the door. Children under 12 are free as usual.

If you would be interested in joining the Village Hall Committee or have an idea for an event that residents might enjoy, please contact giles.pinelodge@gmail.com.

Please see below the schedule of activities and classes that you may wish to participate in at the village Hall this month.

Regular activities in the Hall include:

Monday	5:00 pm	Kids Karate with Mat Hills	matt.hills85@gmail.com
Tuesday	9:30 am	Keep Fit with Alyce	alycefwf@gmail.com
Tuesday	12:00 am	Yoga with Emily	emilylouisayoga@gmail.com
Tuesday / Saturday	6:00 pm / 10:00–12:00	Dance School	megan_ah@hotmail.com
Wednesday	9:30 am	Advanced Textile Workshop with Amargeet	amarjeetnandhra@virginmedia.com
Thursday	10:30 am	Fitness with Focus (mobility and stretching) with Alyce	alycefwf@gmail.com
Thursday	6:00 pm	Keep Fit with Alyce	alycefwf@gmail.com
Friday	9:30 am	Fitness with Focus (mobility and stretching) with Alyce	alycefwf@gmail.com

Regular monthly groups:

WI	2nd Thursday of each month at 7:30 pm	Contact Kath Stacy	kathstacey@yahoo.co.uk
Crafts	4th Monday of the month at 7:00 pm	Contact Kath Stacy	kathstacey@yahoo.co.uk
Parish Council	2nd Wednesday at 7:30 pm	For further details contact	clerk@littlemilton.org.uk

For details of Hall events, activities, information, or **to book the Hall** please follow the link to our online calendar on the Pine Lodge webpage at https://lmvh.org.uk/, or contact **Linda Lovegrove** at linda.pinelodge@yahoo.com.

The *Office of* Aunt Hedgerow

L.N.C.S



Life in the Parish is rarely short of opinion, but occasionally short of answers.

This column exists to address that imbalance. I , Ms Hedgerow, offer a space for questions that don't quite fit elsewhere, and responses given in good faith, though always within the spirit of absurdity. I am able to help because I generally know everything, and because the letters after my name lend a reassuring air of officialdom.

Q *Dear Aunt Hedgerow,*

At eight last Sunday my neighbour got his leaf blower out. He spent forty minutes blowing the leaves to one end of his garden. By lunch they were back. Can I ask him to start later?

Harassed, Little Haseley

Dear Harassed,

You may certainly ask him to wait until ten. Before that hour, a leaf may be moved by hand, by rake, or by a brief word of encouragement.

I would also suggest he count the leaves before and after. If the number is broadly the same, he can achieve the same result next Sunday by staying in bed. Do let him discover this for himself. Men are understandably proud of a labour-saving idea when it is their own.

Aunt Hedgerow

Q *Dear Aunt Hedgerow,*

My husband says a blast of heating in the morning and another in the evening is quite sufficient. He is out all day. I work from home and yesterday wore my dressing gown over my clothes to chair a meeting. How long am I allowed to keep the heating on?

Underheated of Great Haseley

Dear Underheated,

A morning blast can be expected to last until roughly the moment your husband shuts the front door. After that, his findings are based largely on the temperature of his car.

If he wishes to pursue the matter, invite him to a meeting at your desk at half past two. Allow twenty minutes for discussion and offer him a cup of tea in the mug you normally use to warm your hands. If he puts his coat back on before the tea is cool enough to drink, the motion is carried.

Aunt Hedgerow

Do you have a problem? Aunt Hedgerow can help!

Simply email editors.thehaseleys@gmail.com with your troubles or frustrations and we'll feature the response in the magazine.

Do note that I'm afraid anything serious will have to be ignored by Ms Hedgerow... it is simply not in her ability to actually help.

Church Events

Benefice of St Mary's Great Milton and St James' Little Milton with St Peter's Great Haseley

NOVEMBER SERVICES

DATE	TIME	SERVICE	PARISH
22nd Nov	9am	Book of Common Prayer Communion	Little Milton
	10.30am	Benefice Morning Worship	Great Milton
29th Nov	10:30am	Benefice Holy Communion	Great Haseley
DECEMBER			
6th Dec	9am	Holy Communion	Little Milton
	10:30am	Family Worship	Great Haseley

News from St Peter's

November 2026 –

The Rector's Piece

With half-term and Halloween hurrying towards us, and the clocks going back, November will soon be here. November, the Month of Remembrance, the month of the red poppy. But it is also the Month of Remembering: the month that looks back as the year fades towards its end.

Snowdrops in February, pushing through the cold ground as if to prove winter cannot last. Daffodils and violets in March. May brings the scent of new-mown grass, and later months, the warm, baked-grass smell of high summer. The harvest moon in September, huge and amber over the stubble. Each captured our attention, and each slipped quietly away.

November is when we gather what remains of the year, and it is a good month to visit our churchyards.

The light is low and golden in the afternoons. Early mornings bring grass silvered with frost, and the last leaves drift down between the stones. The yews stand dark and patient. Lichen has turned the old headstones shades of grey, green, and mustard, as though they are slowly becoming part of the landscape. Read the names as you walk and you will find the village laid out before you: the same family names that appear in our school registers, village magazines, and cricket team sheets.

As you walk, you will come across our war memorials, soon to be wreathed in poppies once more. Our three villages keep faith with their fallen in three different ways.

In one, the memorial stands close to the church. The young men carved on it lie, in a sense, among their own people, beneath the same trees and sky, with the village where they grew up all around them.

In another, the memorial is inside the church. There, it is hushed and still, sheltered from the weather. Come in on a quiet afternoon, when the light falls through the windows across the names, and you will find it hard to hurry by.

In the third, the main memorial stands on the road below the church, on its own patch of ground, where passers-by cannot help but notice it. It reminds everyone, whether or not they enter the church, of what was given.

Three places, but one purpose. Behind every name was a young man who knew these lanes, these church towers, these views. We remember them, and we are right to.

But remembering is not only sorrow. It is gratitude, too: the quiet understanding that we stand on the work and love of those who came before us and those who journey ahead of us, with the promise that we will be reunited, "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes." (Revelation 21:4) And the churchyards keep their own promise. Beneath the trees, the first green shoots of next year's snowdrops are already waiting underground. The year turns, as it always does.

On 1st November at 4pm at St Mary's, Great Milton, there will be a service for the feast of All Souls, a Commemoration and Thanksgiving for the Departed. We will come together to remember those who have gone before us, those we love but no longer see. During the service, I will read out all the names given to me, and we will light candles in their memory.

This November, take a walk and visit your village churchyard and memorial. Stop at the gate, step inside, and read a few names aloud. It is a small act, but it serves as a greeting across the threshold of eternity. It reminds the living that death does not sever relationships or community, and that love persists beyond the grave. It is a true way to keep our faith and hope alive during this darker season.

(You can find further details of the All Souls service - a Commemoration and Thanksgiving for the Departed – on 1st November in this magazine)

How to Spot, Help, and Record Insects over Winter



7 spot ladybird in black knapweed seed head, Imogen Parker

Wild Oxfordshire

Wild Oxfordshire is a charity seeking to create a more natural, resilient, and biodiverse Oxfordshire for the benefit of all.

Winter Wildlife

When the weather turns cold, it might seem as though most wildlife has disappeared until spring. But if you take a closer look, you'll find that plenty of insects and other creepy crawlies are still around.

Ladybirds often spend the winter sheltering together in places such as conifers, old seedheads, and hollow plant stems, clustering together to stay warm. Various species can also be found on ivy, such as the 7-spot, 22-spot, and harlequin ladybird.

Bees have different ways of getting through the colder season. On milder days, you might spot buff-tailed bumblebees out and about, as this species is being seen flying more often during the winter months, and bumblebee queens may emerge from hibernation during these mild spells, while solitary bees leave their nests when they are ready to mate. For any bee active in winter, finding nectar is vital, as there is a real risk of starvation if food is scarce.

One of the simplest ways to help winter pollinators and other insects is by growing plants that flower during the colder months. Single-flowered hellebores are particularly useful because their open blooms make pollen and nectar easy to reach. Crocuses are another good choice, especially when planted in a sunny position where the flowers can fully open. Snowdrops and aconites also provide valuable food, while ivy offers both shelter and a late nectar source.

You don't need to be a keen gardener to make a difference. Leaving fallen leaves where they land or creating small piles of twigs and leaves can provide important habitats for insects. And if you come across a queen bee that appears to be struggling, you can gently move her to nearby flowers or offer a 1:1 sugar and water solution.



Snowdrops, Drew Rawcliffe

To find out more, visit Wild Oxfordshire's website at https://www.wildoxfordshire.org.uk/guidance/helping-nature-on-your-patch for guidance on helping pollinators on your patch.

Go a step further and record what you see!

Everyone can play a part in submitting wildlife observations to local Environmental Records Centres. They then appear on the "official record" that is consulted by planning authorities and used by other parties to track changes in distribution and abundance. Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre (TVERC) are always looking for people to submit the wildlife they see to add to their database.

Sharing single sightings

To submit details about a single or one-off sighting: use TVERC's reporting form found on their website, or their recording app, iRecord.
You can also report one-off sightings via email: tverc@oxfordshire.gov.uk.

Multiple sightings

For multiple sightings, either use iRecord, another recording app and then email TVERC your results, or fill in their Excel template, found on their website.

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Mushroom risotto



Serves 4 • About 45 minutes

By November, the kitchen windows are dark long before supper. A pan of mushroom risotto is good company on evenings like these. Chestnut mushrooms take on a nutty flavour in a hot pan, and a small handful of dried porcini gives the rice a deeper, woodier taste.

Ingredients

- 20g dried porcini
- 400g chestnut mushrooms, sliced
- 1 litre vegetable stock
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 40g unsalted butter
- 1 small onion, finely chopped
- 2 garlic cloves, finely chopped
- 300g Arborio or Carnaroli rice
- 100ml dry white wine
- 60g Parmesan, finely grated
- Sea salt and black pepper

Method

1. **Soak** Cover the porcini with 200ml boiling water and leave for 15 minutes. Lift them out and chop. Strain the soaking liquid through a fine sieve lined with kitchen paper, then add it to the stock and keep it hot.
2. **Brown** Fry the chestnut mushrooms in the oil over a high heat, in batches if needed, until golden. Season and set aside.
3. **Stir** Soften the onion in half the butter for 5 minutes. Add the garlic and rice and stir for 1 minute. Pour in the wine and let it bubble away. Add the hot stock a ladle at a time, stirring often and letting each addition absorb before the next. After 16–20 minutes the rice should be tender with a slight bite.
4. **Finish** Stir in the porcini and most of the fried mushrooms. Off the heat, beat in the remaining butter and the Parmesan. Add a splash of stock if it needs loosening, season to taste and spoon into warm bowls. Top with the remaining mushrooms.

Wine pairing

A lightly oaked Pinot Noir has the earthy notes to sit happily alongside the mushrooms and enough freshness for the butter and Parmesan.

TONS TOGETHER (LITTLE MILTON) WI

the WI INSPIRING WOMEN

In October, we had a fun evening learning about what colours to wear with Colour me beautiful. Thank you to the colour volunteers, Helen & Jane for the yummy teas and Louise for the beautiful birthday dahlia posy.

COMING UP...

In November, we have a Remembrance themed talk on the **Commonwealth War Graves** with Sue Wright on **Thursday 12 November** at 7.30pm. Everyone welcome.



Visitors £6, or join up - £27 for 2026/27.

Do you live in Little Milton, Great Milton, The Haseleys, Stadhampton or surrounding villages, new to the area, want to meet new people, make new friends? Then join Tons Together WI and meet like-minded, local women of all ages in an informal, friendly group.

We meet every 2nd Thursday of the month in the Pine Lodge OX44 7PZ at 7.30pm.

Too shy to come by yourself or need a lift? Contact us & we'll find you a WI buddy.

Like us at **www.facebook.com/lmpinelodge**

Pine Lodge website: **www.lmvh.org.uk**

CONTACT:

Kath Stacey
01844-279438

tonstogetherwi@oxfordshirewi.co.uk

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The turning worm



Autumn is now well and truly underway; the days are darker, the leaves are blowing off the trees and there is the unmistakable scent in the air of damp and decaying vegetation. It's the time of year when keen gardeners will be out digging their vegetable or flower beds (apart from those of us who have gone no-dig) or, on a larger scale, when the fields are cultivated in preparation for next years' crop. Just as a robin always seems to shadow the digging gardener, flocks of marauding birds - rooks, jackdaws, kites and gulls – can often be seen following the tractor, and all are after one thing; worms.

There are 25 British species of earthworm, the most important being the Lumbricidae family. This includes the familiar red-coloured Brandling (*Eisenia foetida*), beloved by fisherman and found in manure and compost heaps, and the common earthworm (*Lumbricus terrestris*). The common earthworm is the most abundant British species and also the largest, reaching up to 14 inches (35cm) in length. They live in tunnels, that can extend as much as 6ft (1.8m) below ground, rising to the surface to collect the rotting leaves and vegetation that form a major part of their diet (along with organic matter already in the soil). In this way they provide and invaluable service, maintaining soil fertility by aerating it, recycling minerals to the surface and by increasing its organic matter (humus) content. Darwin, among others, calculated that up to 100 tonnes of soil per hectare are moved by the earthworm population in the course of a single year! As to how they make more worms, like most animals they cross-fertilize with each other but they do have a unique feature - they are hermaphrodite, each individual functioning as both male and female.

The name 'worm' is Old English and has been widely used over the centuries to describe any creature with worm-like characteristics - caterpillars, snakes...even dragons. Apart from being fed to birds and fish they have acquired relatively few uses. That said, as with most animals, over the years some inventive souls have tried to use them medicinally; it was once thought that boiled worms were a remedy for stomach disorders, whilst others carried earthworms in their mouth as a remedy for toothache (a slightly conflicting remedy as it was also once widely believed that toothache was caused by an earthworm in the tooth). Whilst no longer used to promote human health, worms have now been recognised as excellent indicators of soil health, and with that the health of the environment the soil supports.

Though often overlooked, worms form a fascinating part of our village natural history and are vital to our wellbeing; they promote the healthy soils that keep us fed, help break down our waste and act as a vital food source for much of our valued wildlife. They will not, however, cure your toothache - get a good dentist.

Richard Sheehan





Morland House Surgery, Morland Close, Wheatley OX33 1DP
The usual surgery opening hours are Monday to Friday 8am to 6.30pm
Saturday mornings (excluding Bank Holiday weekends) 8am to 10.30am, for pre-booked consultations only
Enhanced access hours are offered outside these times, please speak to one of the care navigators in reception on 01865 872448 for more information.
When the surgery is closed, please contact the Out of Hours service by phoning 111

Visit Morland House Surgery Website for a wealth of information and guidance on managing a vast number of health conditions, symptoms, and treatment: www.morland-house.co.uk For example:

A Guide to Keeping Well in Winter.
The NHS App, which is free and secure, and has recently been updated making it simpler and easier to manage your healthcare.
Meningitis and septicaemia – symptoms and protection; eligibility of young people and students for a free Meningitis B vaccine
Are you a Carer? – find help and support
Your Medical Records and Test Results - guidance on how to access this information.

- Pharmacy First Service (PFS), whereby pharmacies can treat directly seven common health conditions.
- The Direct Route – services you can access without seeing a GP
- Faster Access to Help for Joint and Back Pain
- Group Consultation Clinics – successful group clinics for menopause and hypertension

The Chair of the Patient Participant Group (PPG) has contacted local parish councils regarding raising funds to improve the state of the MHS car park.
Ordering Repeat Prescriptions: Please use the NHS App or log into your account on the NHS website for the most secure and efficient way of ordering your medication. For more information on ordering, please visit the 'prescriptions' page on our website.
Medicine waste costs the NHS around £300 million/year. Only order the medicines you need. Once medicine leaves a pharmacy it can no longer be re-used even if unopened.

Useful Contacts

• **Bell Ringing**: John Hughes-D'Aeth, 01844 279965, john.hd@btinternet.com

• **Childline**: 0800 1111

• **St Peter's Church**, Great Haseley: Rev'd Lucie Spiers, 01865 689103, rector.miltonsandgreathaseley@gmail.com

• **Great Milton Methodist Church**: The Reverend Stephen Spain; Stephen.Spain@Methodist.org.uk; 01865 763676

• **Doctors**: Morland House Surgery, London Road, Wheatley, tel. 01865 872448. For out-of-hours service call 0845 345 8995. To arrange transport to the doctor or Thame hospital contact Jane Jefferis on 278743 or Wendy Richardson on 278479

• **Education Centres**: Wheatley The Lodge, Wheatley Park School, Holton: 01865 872664. Thame, Towersey Road, Thame: 213400/213114

• **Elder Abuse**: Silver Line 0800 4 70 80 90

• **Flooding: Environment Agency** Incident Hotline: 0800 807060.

• **Great Haseley Village Hall**: Bookings: gill.seymourtaylor@gmail.com

Committee Chairman: Paul Woodrow: 07778 311045

• **Great Haseley & District Horticultural Society**: Membership Secretary: Carys Lindsay, 07984250752, caryslindsay@gmail.com

• **Libraries**: Wheatley: 01865 875267, Thame: 212288

• **Little Milton WI**: Kath Stacey 279438, kathstacey@yahoo.co.uk

• **Thame Market**, Upper High Street, Tuesdays 8.30-4.30, Farmers Market 2nd week of month

• **Organic farmers' market**, Sandy Lane Farm, Milton Common, Thursdays & Fridays 2.30-6 pm, Saturdays 10am – 2pm

• **Member of Parliament**: Freddie.vanmierlo.mp@parliament.uk

• **Neighbours Club**: For information contact Janet Earl on 279432

• **Playing fields** and/or pavilion hire: Margaret or Mike Howlett 279409, howlett690@btinternet.com

• **Parish Clerk**: Andrea Oughton: 875635, 30 Rectory Meadow, Chinnor OX39 4PJ, email clerk@thehaseleys.co.uk

• **Post Office**:: Little Milton Post Office & Shop: 279001

• **Pubs**:

Le Secret Garden at the Plough, Great Haseley: 279283,

The Bull, Great Milton: 279726,

The Lamb, Little Milton: 279527

• **Refuge**: 0808 2000 247, nationaldahelpline.org.uk. Refuse Collection: Tuesdays except after bank holidays

• **Samaritans**: 116 123, email jo@samaritans.org.

• **Swimming Baths**: Thame Sports and Arts Centre: 215607

• **Tennis** at the Recreation Ground: Lucy Foster 01844 278466 / 07887 678938.

• **Thames Water**: To report leaks call 0800 3169800

• **Widow Tree Support Group** - contact@widowtree.co.uk

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