



The Parish Council Welcomes You To South Stoke 2009

<http://www.southstoke.org.uk/>



Welcome

Firstly, a very warm welcome from the Parish Council as the newest resident/s of our parish. This document is intended to be a brief introduction to village life and to give you some basic information and dates to help make your first few weeks and months enjoyable.

If you have any questions after reading this pack please do not hesitate to contact any member of the Parish Council.

Once again, we hope you settle into your new home and enjoy village life in South Stoke



A Brief History

The village of South Stoke is unusual in that three highways, which have done much to influence its history and people, pass through it. The most obvious is the river Thames, the second is the Ridgeway path, while the third is the Great Western Railway built by Isambard Brunel.

These three routes converge as they cross the parish boundaries near Ye Olde Leatherne Bottle public house to the south and at the Moulsoford railway bridge, known locally as the Four Arches, to the north.

Clearly the oldest of these is the river Thames which borders South Stoke to the west. Before the 16th century the lower land in South Stoke was marshy but then the river provided fish and the adjacent land brushwood and willows.

Today from the footpath between South Stoke and Little Stoke one can still see remains of a series of fishponds which provided food for the medieval monks resident in the village at that time. These ponds were part of a much larger complex and were fed by drainage ditches connected to the river.

During the 16th century a series of weirs was constructed along the Thames to control the flow and to ease navigation for the increasing barge traffic. The barges were towed by horses, the towpath crossed the river at the village at a point opposite Moulsoford and the horses were transferred by ferry from one side of the bank to the other. As elsewhere river traffic declined with the advent of the railway and the ferry ceased activity in 1961/2. In 2004 donations from villagers allowed the slipway on the South Stoke bank to be refurbished and this is now available to the public for the launching and recovery of small craft.

The Ridgeway path is an ancient right of way which was part of a comprehensive communication system long before the Romans arrived. Evidence of ancient enclosures and burial pits has been found in South Stoke, together with Roman remains and coins. Before it passes through the village, the Ridgeway now crosses land still owned by Christ Church, Oxford .

When the railway came in 1838 it changed the character of the village dramatically. It is built on a wide embankment with three low bridges over the only roads into the village. There is a small culvert, known locally as the bogey hole, which was constructed for the footpath to Little Stoke. The Four Arches bridge which crosses the river and the Ridgeway path together is, itself, a listed building.

Manor Farm, was originally beside the church, and has always been the largest farm in South Stoke and is still thriving today just north of the main village. Parts of the original farmhouse date from the 16th century and it still has the original oak panelling, moulded beams and a fireplace from an even earlier date. Within the old brick and flint walls around the house are several old buildings and barns. These include a square four-gabled medieval brick dovecote, reputed to be one of the largest in the south of England, and a granary standing on staddle stones.

St Andrew's church incorporates several periods of architecture, with some of the arches on the north side suggesting Norman work. The font is Early English and a fragment of 14th century glass can be seen in the south-east window.

The chancel is dominated by a memorial commemorating Griffith Higgs. South Stoke's most famous son was born in 1589, was ordained as a priest and became chaplain to King Charles I. The King sent him to be chaplain to his sister, Princess Elizabeth, when she married and became Queen of Bohemia. Later Griffith Higgs became Dean of Lichfield but during the Civil War, like his sponsor, fell from grace. He saved his head but was stripped of all his titles and returned to South Stoke. He created many charities and, in particular, an educational charity which still benefits the children of South Stoke today.

During the early 19th century the parishioners of South Stoke became increasingly disenchanted with the church vestry's conduct of local affairs. Twenty four dissenters who worshipped in Goring built their own chapel in South Stoke in 1820. Like the Goring chapel it came under the auspices of the Countess of Huntingdon's Connection and flourished for over a century but this building has not been used for worship since 1976.

The river Thames remains the heart of the village and on summer days fishermen frequently line the banks, either in competition or just for pleasure. The public house, the Perch and Pike, still displays record catches of fish taken from the river in more recent times and large numbers of Ridgeway hikers stop here for refreshment. On their way they often meet tractors and combine harvesters, to say nothing of the Jersey cows from the two working farms. Some of the people living in the village work in it, others commute to work elsewhere. Thus the three highways are still very much a part of South Stoke's character.

South Stoke Primary School

Phone Number: 01491 872948

Contact: Miss A E Rogers

Website: www.south-stoke.oxon.sch.uk

Full details of the school can be found on the website and the Head Teacher Miss Rogers may be contacted by phone or the link from the website.



Parish Church of St Andrew



Main Sunday service 11 AM.

St Andrew's Church, South Stoke, was built in the early 1200s although it is believed there may have been an earlier church. It is one of the most beautiful churches in the district with a large and well-kept churchyard. The Parish of *South Stoke cum Woodcote* is believed to have been founded in Anglo-Saxon times, possibly by St. Birinus. In 1984 South Stoke became a separate parish in *The United Benefice of Goring with South Stoke*.

The church is built of local flint rubble with stone dressings and comprises a nave, north and south aisles, south porch, vestry and a western tower. It occupies a prominent position in the village of about 450 residents. The two lancet windows in the north wall and south aisle are from the earliest period. Since the church's foundation there have been many alterations and restorations. The east window was installed in 1875 and depicts the patron saint, St. Andrew, standing to the right of Our Lord with his brother, St. Peter, standing to the left. The church contains some interesting memorials. On the north wall of the chancel there is a fine 17th century memorial in Latin for Dr. Griffiths Higgs formerly Chaplain to Queen Elizabeth of Bohemia and Dean of Lichfield. He founded a charity which continues today. The war memorial was erected in 1920. The clock was also installed in that year. The lych-gate was built in 1937. Both the clock and lych-gate are in memory of previous incumbents of the parish. Floodlighting was installed in 1999 in order to herald the new millennium.

Up to the mid-20th century South Stoke was an agricultural village. In 1366 there were 32 tenant landholders. In Victorian times there were 11 farms. Today, while the village retains its agricultural connections, it is largely a dormitory village for people working in the surrounding districts and London, and for the retired.

“St Andrew’s Church dates from the early 1200s and we can only wonder at the number of villagers and visitors who have worshipped in it over the last 800 years. St Andrew’s is still very much a place of worship today and you are warmly welcomed as a resident of the Parish to join us.

“St Andrew’s forms part of the United Benefice of Goring and Streatley with South Stoke. This newly created group of three Churches: St Thomas’, St Mary’s and St Andrew’s respectively, gives us the opportunity to offer a wide variety of activities organised by the three Churches both individually and together. Activities include bell-ringing, choir membership, craft-making and there are also opportunities for children to join in various activities and we enjoy a close relationship with the school. Once a month there is a film-show and lunch called “Pick-a-flick” which allows those who are maybe on their own to enjoy each other’s company.

“We do hope that you will be very happy living in the beautiful village of South Stoke and look forward to meeting you. If there is anything that we can help you with, do please call one of the ministry team whose details are listed below:-

Rev Mark Blamey (Vicar) 01491 872196
Rev Christobel Hargraves (Curate) 01491 871970
Rev Liz Dowding (Associate Priest) 01491 873140
Mr Ian Wallace (Licensed Lay Minister) 01491 871459

We invite you to any or all of our weekly Services at St Andrew’s Church

Sundays

<u>BCP Communion Service</u>	1 st Sunday of the month at 11am
<u>Morning Prayer (Matins)</u>	2 nd Sunday of the month at 11am
<u>Good News (Worship Service)</u>	3 rd Sunday of the month at 11am
<u>Common Worship Communion Service</u>	4 th Sunday of the month at 11am



Any alterations to this schedule will be listed in the Monthly Parish Magazine and on the Church Noticeboard.

Weekly United Benefice Services and Groups

Wednesdays



'Pebbles' (for the Under 5s)
1pm every week during term-time in the Scout Hut,
Icknield Rd., Goring

Thursdays



9.15am Morning Prayer
at St Mary's Church, Streatley



7.15pm Holy Communion at St Mary's Church,
Streatley on the 1st Thursday of the month.

Fridays



10.00am BCP Holy Communion
at St Mary's Church, Goring

Sunday afternoons

'Discoverers' for 10-15 year olds.
5pm fortnightly during term-time

South Stoke Players

Contact: Vanessa Guiver

Tel: 01491 871872

The Old Post Office
The Street
South Stoke
Reading
RG8 0JS

The South Stoke Players are a group of local people who come together to produce an annual village pantomime.

Casting starts in September with rehearsals in October and the performance in January.

If you don't fancy the acting we are always looking for help backstage with scenery, props, costumes, make-up, music and dance.



South Stoke Women's Institute

Contact: Rita Mann or Janet Steel
Tel: 01491 872208 01491 873918

Springfield House
Townsend Road
Streatley
Berks
RG8 9LH

South Stoke WI was formed in 1918, so in 2008 we will be celebrating our 90th birthday. South Stoke WI is one of the oldest institutes in Oxfordshire.

Guests are always welcomed by this friendly group of ladies, at any of our meetings. We have speakers on a variety of subjects including travel and gardening.

Previous talks have included how to get a book published by a local author, a Wimbledon Umpire and a wine tasting evening by Waitrose.

We enjoy the occasional outing and pub lunch together, and we also help with refreshments for various village activities.

Our WI meet on the 2nd Tuesday of the month at 2.15 pm in the Village Hall



Photo taken at a recent coffee morning in a member's garden.

Neighbourhood Watch

South Stoke Neighbourhood Watch is run by [Keith Ashworth \(keith1939@tiscali.co.uk\)](mailto:keith1939@tiscali.co.uk).

South Stoke has a Neighbourhood Watch team. The purpose of the team is to provide an extension of the eyes and ears of the police. It is NOT a substitute for the police, who should always be contacted on the 999 service for any emergency calls. The members of the Watch provide a channel through which messages to and from the police can be passed. The police distribute notices about thefts in the area, distraction burglaries, and other criminal activities through Ringmaster system of e-mails. These are presently posted on the village notice board at the gate of the Old Vicarage. This practice will continue, but in addition appropriate information will be included in messages on this web site. Please report any news about break-ins, suspicious events etc. to one of the Neighbourhood Watch contacts.

Police non-emergency 08458 505505

Crime stoppers 0800 555 111

Train Timetable

The trains from Goring go to Reading and there is a fast link to London Paddington from Didcot Parkway and Reading (30 mins).

A copy of the Goring timetable is enclosed for your reference

Attach copy here

Walks In and Around South Stoke

Introduction

All the walks begin at St Andrew's church South Stoke. They vary in length but in the main are circular (ring) walks. No special equipment is required, but stout walking shoes are recommended as well as liquid refreshment.

Please remember to keep to the footpaths and shut gates behind you and remember that dogs should be kept on leads in woodlands likely to be used for rearing game, in the vicinity of farm animals and near farm buildings and not allowed to stray in growing crops.

Safety

Some of the walks are in part on roads, all minor, and two cross an 'A' road. Always take great care on these roads and obey the Highway Code.

Walks

[Walk 1 - Little Stoke Ring - 2¾ miles](#)

This is a pleasant, gentle walk and riverside following the Ridgeway Path for about half of the walk and Swans Way on the return leg. There are two stiles to contend with but apart from these, the going is relatively easy.

[Walk 2 - Postman's Path Ring - 4½ miles](#)

This is a nice walk, a bit hilly in parts, but not arduous, with some great views from the top of Postman's path. It can be muddy in wet weather. The last third of the walk is mainly river side following the Ridgeway Path. It crosses the B4009 twice, so take care.

[Walk 3 - Grove Farm Ring - 4 miles](#)

This is an easy road walk and can be taken in any weather conditions. The roads are in the main single track and quiet, but take care on the B4009.

[Walk 4 - North Stoke Ring - 4½ miles](#)

This walk like the Little Stoke Ring is a pleasant and gentle walk and again follows the Ridgeway Path and Swans Way. There are two stiles to contend with and the walk passes through the villages of North Stoke and Little Stoke.

Walk 5 - Cameron's Copse and back - 3 miles

This is a nice walk a bit hilly in parts, but not arduous, with some great views from the top of Postman's path. It can be muddy in wet weather. Camerons Copse was planted in memory of a local well-respected veterinary surgeon. The walk crosses the B4009 twice, so take care.

Walk 6 - South Stoke to Hailey (King William PH) - 3½ miles

This walk is recommended as a one-way walk, taken in the morning with lunch at the King William PH as a reward. So arrange a lift back. Alternatively for the more energetic walk off the lunch and retrace your steps back to South Stoke. This walk is fairly easy (a bit hilly) and pleasant and passes through the village of Ipsden and terminates at the village of Hailey. Take care when crossing the A4074.

Walk 7 - Goring Ring - 4½ miles

This walk is a combination of bridleway, road and woodlands and although a bit longer the combination makes this an interesting and varied walk. There are some great views of the North Downs and the Chilterns from the edge of Wroxhill Woods. The walk crosses the B4009 twice, so take care. No stiles.

Walk 8 - Four Arches and back - 1¾ miles

This riverside walk is more of a stroll than a walk but very pleasant all the same. The walk follows the Ridgeway Path. No stiles

Walk 9 - Grand Ring - 6½ miles

This walk is for the more ambitious and takes in the Ridgeway Path and the Icknield Way as it passes through the villages of Ipsden, North Stoke and South Stoke. It is part path, bridleway, road and riverside. The roads in the main are single track and quiet, but care should be taken crossing the A4074 and B4009.

Details of all these walks can be found on the village web site
<http://www.southstoke.org.uk/walk.htm>

Local Service Providers

Service	Telephone
Newspaper Delivery	01491 872619
Window Cleaning	01491 651320
Doorstep Milk Delivery	0118 9590286
Odd Job Person	01235 521822
Plumber	01491 873740
Goring Hardware	01491 872420
Perch and Pike Public House	01491 873740
SODC Offices	01491 823000
Dry Cleaning	01491 871187
Post Office Goring	01491 875029
Doctors Surgery Goring	01491872372
Doctors Surgery Woodcote	01491 680686
Dentist Goring	01491 872394
Indian Restaurant Goring	01491 872243
Chinese Restaurant Goring	01491 872485
The Springs Golf Course	01491 836687
Goring and Streatley Golf Club	01491 873229
The Wave Leisure Pool	01235 819888
High Tone Keep Fit Wallingford	01491 826682
Horse Riding Lessons	01189 426938

Parish Council Members

Geoff Ward

Chairman, Administration, Parish Plan & Communications

01491 873342

E-mail geoff.ward@greycells.co.uk

TBA

Slipway, Amenities, Health Matters & Housing

David Allen

Education, Church Liaison, & Waste Management

07979 517394

E-mail mda56dad@hotmail.com

Keith Ashworth

Deputy Chairman, Highways, Policing, Grass Cutting

01491 873494

E-mail keith1939@tiscali.co.uk

Rod Payne

Planning

01491 873841

E-mail rod.payne@tesco.net

Roy McMillan

Transport, Footpaths, Risk Register

01491 873202

E-mail roy@rmcmillan.com

Janet Jones

Parish Clerk

01491 873488

E-mail clerk@southstoke.org.uk