

South Stoke Parish Newsletter

Issue 228 **Southstoke.org.uk** **July & August 2026**

Riverbank Troubles

Residents of Chapel Close, The Street and others have been concerned and annoyed by visitors to the Thames riverbank using the path between the Old Chapel and The Ryepeck. Cars have been left blocking driveways, the gate has been broken to allow scooters and e-bikes access, trees have been damaged, fires have been lit (in this weather!) and litter and broken glass has been left.

Youngsters have been to blame largely but a couple camped there for a few days and left rubbish including some discarded clothing.

If you know anyone involved please encourage them to respect our village. **Ed**

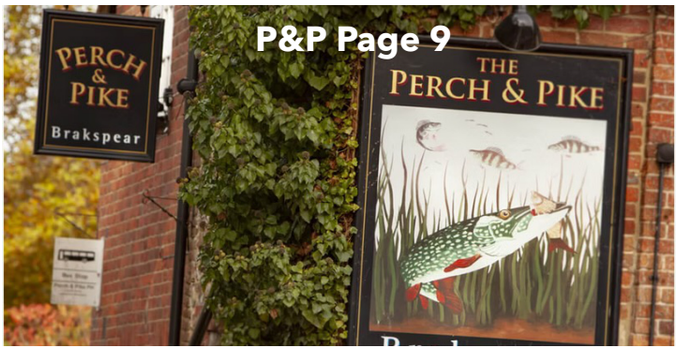


From Monday 29 June, we are making small changes to our waste and recycling rounds. This will help us keep our service running as efficiently and reliably as possible as our local communities grow.

Your collection day will stay exactly the same however, vehicles may arrive much earlier than usual. So, to avoid missing a collection, please ensure your bins are out by 6am on your scheduled collection day. If you can do so without blocking the pavement or footpath, we'd advise putting them out the evening before.

SODC Waste









400 Club

Prize pot payout pushes past the £40,000 point

The June draw of the 400 Club was held on Friday 19th in the Perch and Pike.

Before we get to the results it's worth recognising the landmark that, including this month's prize pot of £473, the total prize money paid out over the 158 draws now stands at an impressive £40,007. That also means of course that a similar (but larger thanks to Gift Aid) sum has been raised to support the management, maintenance and development of the Recreation Ground, of the Playground and of course of the Village Hall.



Thanks once again to Jacob (see pic) for teaming up with Nicola and drawing the balls from the bucket. The lucky winners were:

First Prize	£142	Tilly Booker
Second Prize	£118	Elisa Beamson
Third Prize	£ 95	Dirk Atkinson
Fourth Prize	£ 71	Brian Lambert
Fifth Prize	£ 47	George Druce

www.giveasyoulive.com/join/southstokehallandrec

Remember, just £2 per number per month is terrific value, given the size and distribution of the **five prizes** on offer. Information is available from the Perch & Pike, from the trustees at the email address below, or online by using the QR code:

Your £2 per number is split 50/50 between the prize pot and charity funds. If you haven't joined yet (or would like to add to the numbers you already hold), please do get in touch.

Special request to those supporters with one number

How about investing £4 per month instead of £2 and, for a very modest outlay, double your chances (almost) of winning one of five generous prizes?

Are you new to the village? Would you like to support the Amenities Charity's activities? Doing so is easy. Simply email the address below to register your interest and start the ball rolling.

Date for your diary: The July draw will be on Friday 17th at around 7.30pm as part of the 'Parklife' social event being hosted on the Park jointly by the Community Gardens Association and the Amenities Charity.

Hope to see you there!

Mark Taylor & Nicola Astles-Jones

400 Club Trustees 400Club@southstoke.org.uk

New Shop Update

At the time of writing we are eagerly awaiting erection of the four pre-constructed walls of the new shop. Following that we will be engaged in a fairly continuous building process until our new shop is ready to open.

At present, we are still clinging to the (slim) hope that we could be open in time for Open Gardens on the August bank holiday. More likely, it will be within the following couple of weeks.

Fingers crossed.

Mick Woodall



Shareholders' Annual General Meeting

Wednesday 22 July 2026 at 8.00pm

South Stoke Village Hall

We hope Shareholders will come along for this very important meeting and enjoy a glass of wine with us.

We will presenting our Annual Report, Financial Accounts and Premises Report with a progress update for our new Shop and Cafe.

If you would like to become a Shareholder and vote at the AGM, please contact Sue Sarjent on 07850 060680 or email secretary@southstokeshop.co.uk A share will cost you just £10 – only one voting share per person.

Sue Sarjent

South Stoke Open Gardens

SOUTH STOKE OPEN GARDENS

MONDAY 31 AUGUST 2026 1 - 5pm

We've started planning for another successful Open Gardens event this year.

If you would like to open your garden or can volunteer to help in some way, please contact Sue Sarjent:
suesarjent@gmail.com

South Stoke WI

For our June Meeting we met in the Village Hall on Tuesday 9th.

Three members celebrated their birthday this month, Jenny Mansfield, Selina Bond and Sue Gill we wished them a very happy birthday. The President Rita Mann read a report from Katrina Cooper, the Cleeve by Goring President who had been our delegate at the Annual Meeting at the beginning of June. Both the resolutions, Access to Public Toilets and Women's Homelessness, (which is usually women and children homelessness), were passed. The first with 95% and the second with 92% of the votes. Further work will be done on these resolutions and we will be hearing more about them in the future. Katerina said it had been a very interesting meeting with several excellent speakers.

We then had a very interesting talk by Jen from the Pangbourne Cheese Shop.
Jen, who is the owner of the Pangbourne shop brought along samples of various cheeses and was a mine of information about cheese. We enjoyed trying the different cheese and although maybe a little more expensive than supermarket cheese it was certainly a case of you get what you pay for. The shop does a free delivery service to all in the RG8 post code. Just phone 0118 984 3323 to place an order.

We have a Group Lunch in the Hall on the 23rd June with members from Woodcote and South & North Moreton and our Summer Lunch on the 14th July.

Visitors are always welcome.

Rita Mann
President 01491 872208

New Event News

Come along and join us for an evening of drinks , food and music at "**South Stoke Parklife**" taking place from **5:30 pm on Friday, the 17th of July**! All your summer favourite drinks will be served ; Pimms , Spritz and Prosecco as well as beers and wines.

The July 400 club draw will also take place at the Event!

The event is presented jointly by the Community Garden Association and the Amenities Charity.

Location on the park and Community Gardens area adjacent to the Village Hall. Come and support the Village and help to raise funds for the Park , the Gardens , the Hall and the Rec!

Free entry.

David Lucas

New! Classified Ads

3.5 x 6cm just £5 per issue. Ideal for small local business ads or family announcements.

Take Two

Take a double for just £10. Use how you like. Run your ad for as many months as you like. Room enough for a small picture or logo.
Contact Neil Proctor on neil.proctor@southstoke.org.uk.

South Stoke Parish Council

Responding to Natural Calamities

After a prompt from OCC advising parishes in the County to consider appointing flood wardens, the matter was discussed at our last meeting.

The issue in the village is flooding from the Thames and also groundwater in prolonged periods of rain. Anyone curious as to the extent of the flood risk can get an idea from the EA flood site here https://check-long-term-flood-risk.service.gov.uk/risk. For an automated flood message service you can opt in here https://get-flood-warnings.service.gov.uk/sign-up/service-selection.

When flood risk is heightened we should look out for one another and that is the obvious role of a warden. We are looking for volunteers to assist in addressing these challenges. Those interested should contact the Clerk at her address clerk@southstoke.org.uk

On the wider issue of disaster recovery, in the event of severe snow, wind or other unforeseen conditions we used to have a list of villagers willing to help with tractors, chain saws, generators and 4x4 vehicles plus their contact details. If there are people willing to step up please also let the Clerk know outlining the scope of the assistance you can offer together with your details. Volunteers are always welcome. Personal information will of course be held in accordance with our GDPR policy.

John Verrill
Chairman South Stoke Parish Council

The Naming of Oxfordshire Pubs

I bet I've got your attention! Come and hear Andrew Long talking about this popular subject.

Monday 6th July at 7.30pm in the Village Hall is the time and venue.

All are welcome. Just £5 with coffee and chocolate biscuits included.What a bargain.



Linda Gatto

Village Barbecue

The ever popular Village BBQ takes place on Sunday 30th August on the Recreation Ground. The Bar will open from 12:30 and food will be available from 1:30. There will be a great raffle and the fantastic Auction of Promises will take place later in the afternoon.

The following day - Monday 31st August - the Village will again play host to hundreds of visitors for its famous Open Gardens Event. More details in this Newsletter.

These events support the Shop and the Amenities Charity!



Dave Lucas

South Stoke Wildlife and Conservation Group

Butterflies at Lardon Chase – By John Lindley

The weather could hardly have been better for our Lardon Chase butterfly walk on Saturday 23 May, with bright sunshine, a light breeze and temperatures starting in the low 20s. A group of 10 enthusiasts gathered in the car park, where, before we had even set off, we were treated to the sight of a female Brimstone butterfly laying eggs.

Once out onto the Chase, butterflies quickly began to appear. Several Common Blues were seen almost immediately, along with a single Small Copper. As we continued, we started to encounter Adonis Blues, which soon became the most abundant species of the morning, dazzling in the sunshine with their vivid blue colouring.

Other highlights included several Dingy Skippers and a single Grizzled Skipper. The scrubby central area of the Chase has previously supported a colony of Small Blues, but unfortunately none were seen on this occasion. This may have been due to the rising temperatures, although it is also possible that the habitat is becoming less suitable and may benefit from some clearance work.

By around 11am, temperatures had climbed into the mid-20s and butterfly activity began to slow, as many species stop flying in the hottest part of the day. We therefore decided to head back towards the car park. Along the return route we spotted a Burnet Companion moth – plentiful last year but scarce this time – as well as a Small Heath butterfly.

Overall, it was an enjoyable and rewarding walk, with a good variety of species recorded in excellent weather conditions.

Species recorded:

- Dingy Skipper - several
- Grizzled Skipper - 1
- Brimstone - 1
- Green-veined White - 1
- Small White - several
- Small Copper - 1
- Common Blue - several
- Adonis Blue - at least 20 See pic
- Painted Lady - 2
- Speckled Wood - 1
- Small Heath - 1
- Burnet Companion moth - 1
- Grass Veneer moths (various species) - at least 50



South Stoke School

After a comprehensive review of the schools' strategic direction, with a view to ensuring the continued success of the school and the highest quality education for our children, the South Stoke School governing board has announced a new collaboration between South Stoke School and the federation of Goring and Stoke Row.

Angela Wheatcroft, Executive Headteacher of the Goring and Stoke Row federation, has been successfully supporting Miss Townsend in her role as interim headteacher since December 2025 and as part of the new collaboration, Mrs Wheatcroft will become Executive Headteacher of South Stoke School in September, with Nicola Townsend as Head of School at South Stoke.

The existing federation of Goring and Stoke Row has seen both schools continue to thrive, benefiting from shared expertise, strengthened leadership and increased opportunities for collaboration, whilst importantly retaining their own unique character, ethos and identity.

The priority of South Stoke School and its governing board is always the wellbeing, happiness and achievement of the children and they firmly believe that this collaboration will strengthen all three schools and help secure an excellent future for village education within our local community.

School library

At South Stoke School we are dedicated to developing a love of reading amongst our children. Over the past few months we have been working hard to build a new library within our school and the children have been taking photos of themselves reading books in unusual places. We are very grateful to our school Parents Association, who have generously offered to allow every child in the school to select a book from the Wallingford Bookshop to include in the school library. We are also delighted to be working with the Wallingford Bookshop on a new "sponsor a book" scheme. The bookshop will have a page on the website dedicated to South Stoke where you can log on and buy a book for the school. The page will go live at the end of term so please keep checking the website for more details: www.wallingfordbookshop.co.uk

Wallingford Carnival

On Saturday 20th June South Stoke School took part in Wallingford Carnival, which this year had the theme "Wallingford Rocks!". The children and adults all enjoyed dressing up in their rock star costumes and there was even a guest appearance from Olaf! The children painted "South Stoke rocks" to hand out to everyone and the organisers were so impressed that they awarded South Stoke 2nd prize.

Naomi Broadfoot

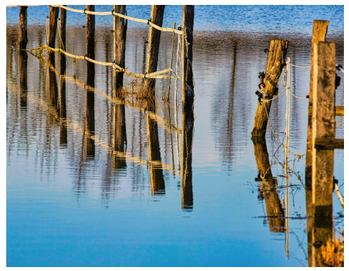






Flood Wardens Wanted

Oxfordshire County Council is expanding its Flood Warden Scheme countywide and is looking for volunteers to help communities better understand and manage local flood risks.



Flood wardens act as the “eyes and ears” of their communities, reporting blocked drains and ditches, helping develop local flood plans, and raising awareness to reduce flood risk. No specialist knowledge or previous flood experience is required and full training and support are provided. The role is very flexible, with no requirement to commit to a minimum number of hours

If you’re interested in becoming a Flood Warden in South Stoke, please follow the link below
https://www.oxfordshirefloodtoolkit.com/flood-wardens/

Ditton Cottage Open Garden

At the first, somewhat experimental, opening of the Ditton Cottage Garden in aid of Thames Valley Air Ambulance we are pleased to report entry fees of £140 plus & £50 on teas. The total £190 is to be matched by us and rounded up to a total donation of £400. We would like to thank Anne Powell and Janet Jones for running the Clockroom Cafe together with their baking and Rita Mann for her delicious chocolate cake. Fortunately the weather was kind to us albeit the roses would have shown better in May. Maybe next year.

Reno and Linda Gatto

Gap Festival Winner!

Simon Booker judged a Photgraphic Competition as part of his presentation at the Gap Festival. He reported that Zalika won the 8-13 section of the Childrens Photography competition.

Zalika said "I was really excited as I didn't expect to win, I was just taking pictures for fun. To see the photo printed was amazing!"

Simon Booker & Tats Hawker



The Perch & Pike

The Perch & Pike with a Food-Led Vision for South Stoke, six months in!

The Perch & Pike has proudly reopened its doors in South Stoke under the stewardship of Richard Keep, bringing renewed energy and a clear culinary vision to this much-loved 17th-century village pub.

The transformation has been warmly received by the local community. Great care has been taken to preserve the character and charm of the historic building while introducing a more refined and welcoming interior, creating a space equally suited to relaxed drinks or destination dining.



Richard brings more than 30 years of hospitality experience to the Perch & Pike. Born into a publican family and having managed 15 venues over the course of his career, he became a pub owner at just 19 years of age. A chef by trade, his career has also taken him to North America where he worked in restaurants and hotels across British Columbia, developing a strong passion for high-quality ingredients, bold flavours and precise cooking.

Today, the Perch & Pike is firmly positioned as a food-led village pub, with an emphasis on seasonal ingredients, classical technique and carefully sourced produce. Menus will evolve throughout the year to reflect the best available ingredients, allowing the kitchen to focus on balanced dishes that draw inspiration from both traditional British pub cooking and modern culinary influences. The ambition is to establish the Perch & Pike as one of the region’s standout gastropubs while remaining rooted in its village setting.

Supporting this vision is a strong management team: Front of House Manager Jacob brings extensive experience in hospitality operations, cocktails and cellar management, helping ensure service standards match the quality coming from the kitchen. Restaurant Manager Hugo joins with a background in fine dining, having worked within Michelin-starred environments and luxury five-star hotels. His focus lies in delivering a polished dining experience, alongside thoughtful wine knowledge and attentive service.

The Perch & Pike aims to combine the warmth and character of a traditional village pub with the standards, consistency and culinary ambition associated with the UK’s leading food-led pubs – creating a place where exceptional food and genuine hospitality meet.

For bookings and enquiries visit perchandpike.co.uk

Chat and Share

We meet on the first Tuesday of the month. 10.00 to 12.00. We have 30 minutes of chair Pilates followed by a craft and tea/ coffee and biscuits. We have approx 15 members so far and are a very friendly, chatty group! Come and join us.



Julie McKay

07850937520

Our Churchyard

This special sacred space belongs to everyone, including the creatures whose home it is….





Churchyards have a unique chance to be places where lichen, insects and flowers have their peace as well as our beloved departed. St Andrew's churchyard is a place of reflection and belonging with all. For this reason, while we each have strong feelings of what we want for our loved ones, we have to be mindful of being part of a bigger picture and family.

Therefore there are inevitably some rules and regulations to keep us all together.



We are working to have a better mowing policy to try to balance all those needs. This year we have found some orchids that have managed to grow among the grass.

We also ask everyone to leave no plastic please, whether flowers or packaging or in wreaths, as this degrades into micro-plastics, nor anything beyond the Oxford Diocesan Churchyard Regulations that provide a list of what is and is not permitted in the Churchyard (please see inside church for a copy) as we aim to make it a place for all, and we ask you to be sensitive to these Regulations.

… and if you have any questions or would like to help us look after this precious piece of God's world, please do be in touch; vicarofgsandss@yahoo.com. See boards at front of churchyard for more contact details.

Thank You very much.

Ben Phillips, Vicar

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St Andrew's Church, South Stoke

Services, July and August 2026

All are welcome to St Andrew's. The church is open every day, 9am till 5pm.

A place to draw breath and touch base with all that is bigger than us and all that has gone before us and all that will come after…

We welcome everyone to our services. Coffee and biscuits are served afterwards.

5th July, Sunday, 11.15am, Family service

12th July, Sunday, 11.15am, BCP Holy Communion service

19th July, Sunday, 11.15am, Morning service

22nd July, Wednesday, 10.30am, Coffee morning in St Andrew's

26th July, Sunday, 11.15am, Holy Communion service

2nd August, Sunday, 11.15am, Family Communion service

9th August, Sunday, 11.15am, BCP Holy Communion service

16th August, Sunday, 11.15am, Morning service

23rd August, Sunday, 11.15am, Holy Communion service

26th August, Wednesday, 10.30am, Coffee morning in St Andrew's

30th August, Sunday, 10.30am, Benefice Songs of Praise service



Songs of Praise service

Singing is good for the body, mind and spirit. Please come and join in and put your requests and reasons in so we can plan and be ready for this special occasion. All welcome!

Requests to vicarofgsandss@yahoo.com 01491 875651

Mid-week Holy Communion is on Wednesdays at 10.30am in St Thomas'.

The Benefice Office or the Vicar, Ben can be contacted, Monday to Thursday mornings, until noon, on (01491) 875651.

The website: www.ThomAndMary.org.uk Email: vicarofgsandss@yahoo.com

Ben Phillips, Vicar

Melrose Cottage B & B



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Goring Jazz

Friday 9th July at Goring Jazz we have a very exciting line-up; jazz singer Aret Komlosy and saxophonist Brandon Allen plus Hugh Turner on guitar, Keith Fairbairn on drums and Howard King on Bass..



Please join us in Goring Village Hall and buy drink or two from our bar, with all proceeds going to The Goring & Streatley Young Musicians Trust.

Book tickets at ticketsource.com

Want to see more live jazz?

There's lots of great live jazz around. Do check out our friendly neighbouring jazz clubs and let's help to keep music live!

Crowmarsh Jazz
Pangbourne Jazz Club
Jazz at Bishops Court Farm
Progress Jazz, Reading
Little Live Music Company
Marlow Jazz Club

Howard King

Dates for your Diary

Monday 6th July Historical Society Village Hall

Tuesday 7th July 10:00 Chat & Share Village Hall

Friday 9th July 8pm Goring Jazz

Tuesday 14th July WI Summer lunch

Friday 17th July from 17:30 Park Life Recreation Ground & Community Gardens

Friday 17th July 400 Club Draw at Park Life

Wednesday 22nd July at 8.00pm Shop AGM Village Hall

Tuesday 4th August 10:00 Chat & Share Village Hall

Saturday 8th August 10:00 Woodcote Volunteers Open Meeting

Sunday 30th August 12:30 Village BBQ Recreation Ground

Monday 31st August 1-5pm Open Gardens

Woodcote Volunteers Open Morning

We are having a special coffee morning on Saturday, August 8th at 10.00 – 12.30. As well as the usual coffee and delicious cakes on offer at the Community Centre, we also invite anyone who might be considering the idea of volunteering with us to come along for a coffee (on us!) and an informal chat. So, if you want to find out more about what is involved in being a volunteer driver, or any of the other volunteer roles, this is the ideal opportunity to find out more, without any commitment. We look forward to welcoming you! If volunteering is not for you, please come along anyway, to support our local work.

The Next Issue

All contributions welcome. Email editor@southstoke.org.uk or submit in writing to South Stoke Community Shop. Please include a telephone number and an email address if possible. Photos are welcome and encouraged.

Deadline for the September issue is Friday 21st August for publication in early September.

Every effort is made to ensure that any information provided is correct. The South Stoke Newsletter, Editor and South Stoke Parish Council do not accept any responsibility for the accuracy of content or the consequences of relying on it. Any views expressed are those of the contributor at the time of submission and do not reflect the opinions of South Stoke Parish Council or the editor.