

The Baldons and Nuneham Courtenay Newsletter



September 2020

FROM REVEREND TERESA STEWART-SYKES

As I write this, the scorchingly hot weather has just broken and there is torrential rain deluging the Vicarage garden. It seems the summer is over, and Harvest is just around the corner so I've been looking back over my first summer in Oxfordshire; here are some things that have made me glad over the summer:

- Counting the butterflies in my garden for the Big Butterfly Count
- The beautiful River Thames as seen from my kayak or whilst swimming in the evening
- The Perseid meteor showers seen from outside my caravan in the New Forest

And this is what has made me mad over the summer:

- Donald Trump's hair! – he wants to waste more water in his shower to keep his hair perfect!
- Plastic in my favourite prawn salad – a recent study by the University of Exeter has shown worrying levels of microplastics in seafood. We know that plastic pollution in the ocean is killing turtles and dolphins, but how harmful is it to us?
- Painted cycle lanes on the road are frankly useless! More investment in cycle paths please!

Seriously though, our experience of living during a pandemic has made us much more appreciative of the natural world, and of course how much our actions affect our environment? Like many people I have been working from home a lot more this summer and have noticed the natural world around me like never before; most of all this summer I've fallen in love with the River Thames! Perhaps you too have been cycling, walking and even swimming in the river a lot more this summer and so have come into greater contact with nature. Perhaps you too have looked up at the shooting stars of the Perseid meteor showers and felt the awe and wonder of creation and our own diminished self in the context of a much larger universe? I am reminded of Psalm 8 which asks God: "When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; what is man, that thou art mindful of him?"

This new perspective has encouraged us to behave more generously to others and to our planet. We are in the midst of a pandemic that has made us pause and feel vulnerable; our generosity to each other in the past few months has changed us and how we view each other. Our appreciation of nature over the past summer has prompted us to greener actions and an understanding of our impact on the environment. We know that we need each other, and we need the protection of creation to survive.

Harvest is a time to give thanks and we have much to be thankful for. The question is, was this a summer holiday romance or do we love our neighbours and our planet enough to make real changes to the way we live and bring a halt to climate change and ensure climate justice for everyone?

Harvest in the Baldons

Creation 2020: 26th – 27th September in St Peter's Marsh Baldon

Come and enjoy an exhibition of local artists on a theme of “Creation” inside St Peter’s Church. More information to follow via the village email.

Harvest Service: 4pm 27th September in the grounds of St Peter’s Church

You are invited to join an outdoor celebration of the Harvest and bring your gifts for the Wallingford foodbank.

Church Appointments

We are delighted to report that the appointment of Reverend Paul Wignall as Associate Team Vicar for the Bridge Group of Parishes was announced in August.

Advertisements have now been placed for our Families and Youth Worker to support Ministry across the Team and we hope that interviews will take place in early September

Dorchester Team Discretionary Fund

The clergy have at their disposal a limited fund which we are able to spend to support people who are in financial difficulties. It is particularly helpful in an emergency as we are able to be flexible and turn around funding very quickly. If you feel this fund could help someone you know talk to one of the clergy to find out more. Referrals are through the clergy and local health/ social provider professionals.

*The Revd Teresa Stewart-Sykes is Team vicar for The Baldons with Nuneham Courtenay, Berinsfield and Drayton St Leonard.
e-mail: RevTeresa@outlook.com and tel: 07823 809112*

A clergy person can always be reached in a pastoral emergency by ringing the Dorchester Team Office 01865 340007

Cover Photo: Apples at Baldon House, Natasha Eliot

BALDONS PARISH COUNCIL NEWS

SODC Local Plan 2034 Public Enquiry

During 3 weeks of July the Planning Inspectorate held the Public Enquiry into the South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2034. Due to Covid 19 restrictions it was held by video conferencing and was relayed live via SODC YouTube channel. The Baldons were represented by Dorothy Tonge and / or Elizabeth Gillespie on the sessions concerning developments proposed in the Green Belt and plans for land South of Grenoble Road.

This plan has been highly contentious with Government Minister for Communities and Housing Robert Jenrick MP instructing SODC to proceed with the Public Enquiry. At the conclusion, and in spite of the alternative argument and evidence presented, the Inspector has announced that he is supportive of all the major sites proposed for development in the Local Plan including at Chalgrove, Berinsfield, Culham and he supported the need for development of housing on the sites on perimeter of Oxford City, including Grenoble Road and Northfields, as meeting the unmet housing needs of the city near to the employment opportunities. This being of greater importance than the protection of the Green Belt.

Therefore, he is supportive of SODC's plans and once formally approved in their final version the plans will be adopted by SODC. It is expected that development on the Grenoble road site will commence in the mid 20's and deliver approx. 2000 houses before 2034. The Parish Council is naturally disappointed as we have argued strongly for many years for the protection of the Green Belt but we will continue to argue equally strongly for appropriate mitigation measures to protect our villages from the impact of these developments as they come along.

Village Green repairs

The council agreed at the last meeting to undertake undertaken repairs to the edges of the green opposite the school which had been badly damaged by vehicles during the winter both from developments and school parking. The work was undertaken during the school holidays and the existing hard surface extended at either end.

It is worth reminding villagers and parents that this area is only for the school drop off and pick up which the parish council has provided as a courtesy and it is not intended as a full parking area, which is precluded by the law governing Village Greens, The Commons Act.

The council also agreed in principle to a budget for undertaking repairs to the south side track along the green, with a view to plans being developed and work undertaken in 2021. The council still intends to hold a meeting with all those living along the south side of the Green prior to commissioning any work on the track. Villagers will be kept informed of progress.

Policy on management of Construction projects

During the past few months there have been a few construction projects in the village which have caused some inconvenience and damage particularly round the green and conservation area. Linked therefore with our Neighbourhood Plan, the council have agreed a policy document to be issued when planning applications are approved, which seeks to have cooperation between householders, contractors and the council over management of the site deliveries and any necessary repairs to the surrounding land. The document will be on the council website.

Planning applications

48 The Green MB P20/S2113 An application for replacement garage with office and utility space. The council has expressed concern about the height of the development and are considering an amended plan.

Shepherd's Halt MB P20/S2328/HH An application for a replacement conservatory and integration of garage into living space. The Parish Council are considering the application.

Solar Farm The Parish Council has no additional information about the proposed Solar Farm but the company had indicated they would be submitting a full planning application in the summer, so one might be expected in the next couple of months.

Date of next meeting

14th September 7.30pm The venue will be determined nearer the time.

We hope will be in the village hall with appropriate social distancing, if not it will again be via Zoom with information circulating with the agenda.

Do you care for a friend or relative?



Do you look after a friend or a relative in their home or yours? If so, Healthwatch Oxfordshire wants to hear from you! As an **independent champion for people who use health and social care, we want to know what it is like to be an unpaid carer and about the help and support you receive or need.**

Even if you only help someone for a few hours or you don't see yourself as a 'carer', your views are important.

If you are aged 18 or over and care for an adult relative, friend or neighbour who is elderly or has an illness, disability, mental health problem or addiction please share your views by completing an anonymous survey at www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/Unpaidcarers

If you'd prefer to talk this through over the phone, or to ask for a paper copy of the survey to be sent out to you, please call 01865 520520. To find out more about Healthwatch Oxfordshire see www.healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk

NUNEHAM COURtenay PARISH COUNCIL NEWS

It probably has taken longer than it should, but the village finally has an automated external defibrillator. It's housed in a bright green cabinet on the outside of the Village Hall.

The cabinet has two functions: it does not just make it harder to steal the defibrillator – there have been thefts of parish defibrillators in Oxfordshire – but it maintains a minimum temperature because sub-zero temperatures in winter can affect battery performance, freeze the gel in the defibrillator pads, and/or reduce the life of the electrodes.

Discussions started before any of the current Council were elected. The present Council decided on a device which tells you what to do so you don't need special training to use it. But defibrillator use normally happens under the direction of the emergency services, so you aren't usually acting without advice: the 999 operator tells you whether it's appropriate to use it or not.

Next meeting

The next meeting of the Council is on Tuesday 1st September. It won't be a physical meeting in the Village Hall but another remote one using Zoom, like the one the Council held on 7th July.

At a guess, one of the main items will probably be another discussion about the playing field as it seems to be taking even longer to get that sorted out with the Nuneham Courtenay Sports and Playing Field Association than it took to get a defibrillator installed in the village!

There is also interest among some parishioners about developing a Neighbourhood Plan, which is a bit like a Village Plan on which a lot of work was done a few years ago, but is a more legalistic process that can in the end create some local planning rules that South Oxfordshire District Council has to follow.

Last meeting

We would like to welcome Akshay Morye as a new addition to our Parish Council. At the July meeting, the Council co-opted Akshay to the vacancy that's existed since the 2019 elections.

We also discussed planning applications, the threatened gravel extraction site, the playing field, the defibrillator and other regular items.

Did you realise there's an amazing Roman pottery production centre buried where the County Council hopes to source most of Oxfordshire's future gravel? The parish council agreed to contribute to the cost of an archaeological report on the importance of the site which may help to kill off the chance of it being dug up cheaply for gravel.

Audit 2019-20

By the time you read this, the Council will have already held another Zoom meeting, a short one, on 19th August to conclude the audit of last year's accounts. I'm not going to pretend readers are likely to be kicking themselves about missing that one!

The Council spent an enormous amount last year, over £10,000, perhaps the most it has ever spent in a single year. There were four big items: the defibrillator and cabinet cost over £2,000; the new gateways cost the Council almost £1,900 – and the County Council a similar amount; the Clerk cost just over £2,500 (about £200 per month); and, finally, the Council paid over £1,000 in VAT but was able to claim back all of it.

If you dig around on the website, you can see lots more detail and it's your right to ask questions and inspect the records, if you wish.

NUNEHAM COURtenay VILLAGE HALL NEWS

Village Hall hopes to have a jumble sale in September. We are thinking that it might be fun to have it outside so will organise this via the WhatsApp group as it will be weather dependent.

The parish council have installed a defibrillator on the front of the hall after much planning and organizing. We really appreciate this.

Mandy and June were able to secure a grant for the hall, from a Covid recovery fund. This will allow us to do some repairs as well as secure the future of the hall during these uncertain times.

We thank Martin for cutting the grass in the car park across from the Old Forge.

As the grass and shrubs have all been trimmed we kindly ask everyone to be mindful of other residents when parking and not block the entrance to the car park. In this way, more than four cars can there. Please remember that this is the village hall car park and although no one minds people parking here, spaces should be left for users of the hall. Parking here is at your own risk as the village hall takes no responsibility for any loss or damage to your car.

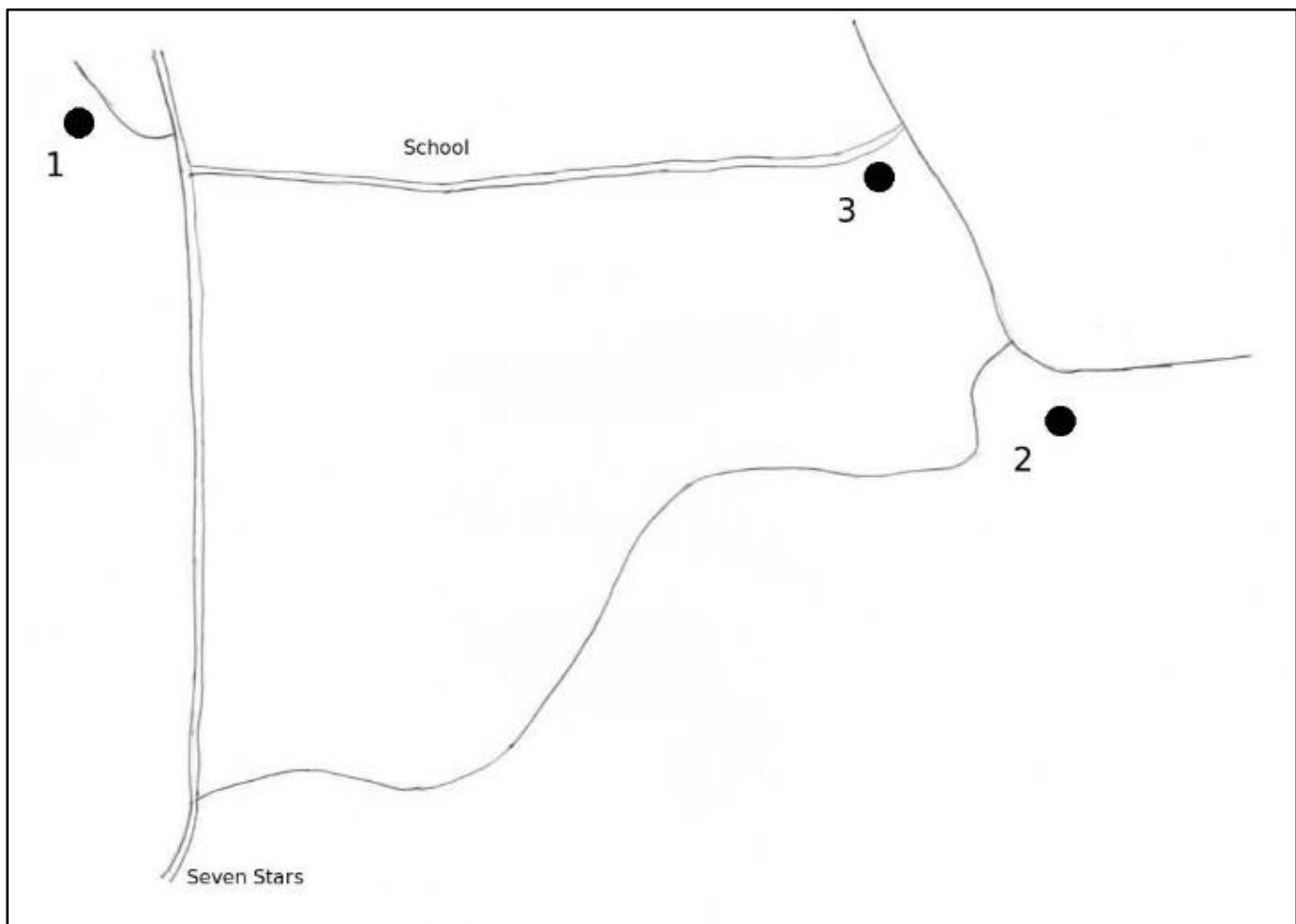
CLEANER REQUIRED

**Please contact Caddy Attewill
19 The Green, Marsh Baldon
01865 343336**

MILLENNIUM TREE TRAIL PROJECT

Although the current upheaval has held up our plans to some extent, we are hoping to go ahead in the autumn or winter with the first stage of the Millennium Tree Trail project (reported in the Feb 2020 Newsletter). Parish Council discussions with Queen's College seem to indicate that Queen's would agree to our idea for 3 mini-orchards around the Green and so we are about to put in a detailed proposal. These areas would be planted with a small number of fruit trees of different heritage varieties, including local Oxfordshire species, to link us to the historical orchards which were once a feature of village life.

The orchard part of the project is being led with the expert knowledge of Diana Belli and Lizie Giraudeau. We will keep you informed of progress and we will be welcoming community participation once we have approval. We are also continuing discussions with Queen's regarding other possible planting sites for trees. If you have any questions or suggestions do get in touch with either Ali Barne (343624) or Sue Shaw (341605).



Sites 1 and 2 on the sketch map are on the edge of the Green and site 3 is in the small triangular area on the Green by the allotment on the east side.

**Organise fuel bills, suppliers
before winter –
Citizens Advice tip**



**Oxfordshire
South & Vale**

Did you know that Citizens Advice has advisers who can help you sign up with a new fuel or electricity company, or switch to a better tariff?

There's no charge for our time and you won't be steered towards one particular supplier because we're impartial, having no links with any of them. We offer one-on-one sessions (by telephone at present) and we'll take a close look at your individual situation.

Now is the time to sort it out before winter closes in with cold autumn gales. We can help you understand energy bills and various kinds of tariffs, supporting you if you want to switch and calculating the savings you might make. If you've fallen behind on bill payments, we can advise you on ways to reduce your debt by budgeting or trying a new payment scheme, for example.

We can also tell you about energy efficiency measures around the house, like draught-proofing windows and doors and installing LED light bulbs. Grants may be available to pay for thermal insulation. We can check your benefit entitlements and help you to claim them if you're eligible. There are several helpful schemes like the Priority Services Register and the Warm Home Discount.

And if you have any complaints against your current supplier, we can help you resolve them.

You can find the relevant information on our website at www.citizensadvice.org.uk/energy or phone our AdviceLine on 0300 330 9042.

ITEMS FOR THE NEWSLETTER

Items for the October 2020 issue newsletter
by 16th September please

Any villager is welcome to send items for publication in the newsletter. Please send copy to Natasha Eliot: tashaandjames@btopenworld.com. Alternatively, I can be contacted on 343478 or at Baldon House East, Marsh Baldon.

For advertising queries, please contact Leanna Maggs on:
leanna.maggs@gmail.com or on 01865 340 521

The Baldons Fuel Charity

Annual Report of the Trustees for the year ended 31 December 2019

The list of Trustees, who served during the year, were:

Mr J T Wright	(Resigned April 2019)
Mr R Claridge	(Resigned April 2019)
Mr D J Greenaway	
Mr C Nichols	(Chairman)
Mr G R Hobbins	(Treasurer)
Mrs A Porter	
Mrs A Barne	(Appointed April 2019)
Mr A Johns	(Appointed April 2019)
 Mrs B Wright	(Clerk)

Trustees are elected for a three-year term at the Baldons Parish Meeting. The next election takes place in April 2022. The Chairman thanked John Wright and Ray Claridge for their valued contributions as trustees over many years and welcomed Alison Barne and Alan Johns as new trustees.

There were two Ordinary meetings of the Trustees in 2019, supplemented by telephone discussions between the Chairman, Clerk and the other Trustees. A meeting also took place with representatives of the Parish Council which clarified the process by which a new trustee is appointed. This is now documented.

The main business remains the settling of fuel allowances for needy parishioners and granting of special payments for hardship cases or for educational purposes.

Income for the year, almost exclusively investment income, totalled £18,841 (2018 - £17,959) and expenditure £18,519 (2018 - £19,391), leaving a surplus for the year of £322 (2018 – deficit £1,432). Of the expenditure £ (98.5%) was spent on The Trusts objectives and £300 (1.6%) on administration.

Cash in lieu of fuel was paid to 27 parishioners totalling £4,770 (2018 – 28 parishioners totalling £5,400). Special grants decreased from £12,630 in 2018, to £12,063 in 2019. Personal alarm systems accounted for £1,126 and are currently available to 6 individuals.

There were no changes to the investment portfolio in the year. The market value of investments held increased by £115,224 (+19.5%) compared with the previous year, leaving net assets of the Charity, at 31 December 2019, of £708,738 (2018 - £593,192).

C Nichols
Chairman



Changes at THE BALDONS FUEL CHARITY

Barbara Wright became Clerk to the Charity in 1981 and has served ever since. She has contributed so much and we shall miss her knowledge and the kindness and understanding she has shown to so many villagers.

Graham Hobbins has been both a Trustee and the Treasurer for many years. His wisdom, calm good sense and caring nature have been a guiding influence.

We thank them both and shall miss them.

But do not despair: we have found two excellent replacements.

Bruce Don joins us as a trustee and **Emma Timms** as clerk. Both have lived in the villages for years, and indeed Emma grew up here, so they will be known to most people.

Chris Nichols - 343388
David Greenaway - 343496
Alison Porter (Chair) – 340405
Ali Barne – 343624
Alan Johns (Treasurer) – 343268
Bruce Don – 343330
Emma Timms (Clerk) – 341461

The Baldons Fuel Charity can give financial support towards the costs of energy, education, such as uniforms or school transport, personal alarms for the elderly or in any other situation when financial help might make life a bit easier. Apply in confidence to any of the trustees or the clerk.

CRICKET MATCH REPORT: BALDONS CC LOST BY 34 RUNS TO ASTONS CC

Reported by Henry Williams

An eagerly anticipated encounter had its first setback when persistent rain forced the Baldons off their hallowed strip into an away fixture down in the Astons. We arrived to find that superior draining was not their only home advantage as the pitch gradients made the Lord's slope look like Bolivian salt flats.

After some typically shrewd warmups, the terrifying opening pair of Toby Winn and Harry Bower set to work. With Toby's pace and bounce pushing batsmen on to the back foot, Harry's smart line and length snaffled an early wicket. Nonetheless, the top-heavy Aston batting lineup fared well with Henry Williams and Jasper Taylor, at first change, only able to contain the run rate rather than snaffle a much required scalp.

At 61-1 after 17 of the 35 overs, the innings was delicately poised and wicket keeper captain Cosmo Taylor was forced to turn to spin. This is what they had been waiting for. With the slower bowlers now forced to bowl uphill from one end, the Aston top-order began to show some leg-side intent. As the ball was flayed into and over the boundary, Stephen Fearnley and Phil Price held their nerve admirably with Price skittling their key batsman. Archie van Dijk was called in to stop the flow of runs and did exactly that with only 17 from his 3 overs. As the innings came into its final symphony, Cosmo returned to his fiery openers and Harry delivered a blistering 4 over spell to round out the innings. He picked up another 3 wickets and ended with impressive figures of 8-0-32-4. A special mention should also go to the non-stop boundary-riding of Phil Barry and the exceptional in-fielding and catching of Kian Downes.

Despite Harry's valiant effort, an imposing target of 190 from 35 overs was set - a required run rate nearing 5 and a half. As the batting order was hurriedly thrown together, captain Cosmo strode out to the middle with the experienced Charles Taylor. Within a few overs, talk on the bench was turning to whether anyone would get a bat, as the phenomenal opening partnership tore into some very adequate Aston bowling. As Cosmo threw his hands at width, Charles played smartly through the leg side and it looked as if the game was won.

Sadly, as the proverb suggests, all good things must come to an end. Inevitably Charles, and later Cosmo, with a truly remarkable 72 runs under his belt, were prised out of their pivotal vigils. The soft underbelly of the Baldons batting line-up was exposed and thereafter was a clear struggle to keep up with the rate. Some lusty blows from Phil Price and Jasper Taylor helped stay the axe, but the Aston boys could smell blood and their skiddy left armer ripped through the lower order.

As you would expect, the boys were all smiles at the end having given the better-equipped Astons a good old scare. All in all, a fantastic day's play book-ended with another mandatory squirt of hand sanitizer.

Our next home match is against Great Milton on Sunday 6th September at 2pm. If you would be interested in playing for The Baldons Cricket Club please email baldonscc@gmail.com

Meanwhile here are some of Terry Trinder's photos from our village game on 1st August.



GREAT NEWS

**BERINSFIELD LIBRARY IS NOW OPEN
PLEASE NOTE THE SLIGHT CHANGE IN
OPENING HOURS**

Monday – closed

Tuesday 10-12.30 & 2-5.00pm

Wednesday 10-12.30 & 2-5.00pm

Thursday 2-5.00pm

Friday 10-12.30 & 2-5.00pm

Saturday 10-12.30

**Our community activities are all on hold
for the moment but we will be back.**

Pop in and see us.

**We will meet and greet you, have a one-way system
and books are quarantined for 72 hours**

All welcome

**VISIT YOUR LOCAL LIBRARY AND
SEE WHAT WE HAVE ON OFFER**

www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/libraries

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 Oxfordshirelibraries



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M: 07449 925444

P: 01865 340521



OUR CHURCH BUILDINGS ARE NOW OPEN for Private Prayer and some Services

After the initial Lockdown we have gradually been able to return to parish worship and this has been a joy and delight for some but an anxiety for others. **There are many opportunities to join the churches both in services online and in person in the Dorchester Team.** Wherever you live you may go to any of these services to worship. All we ask is that you make sure that we know you are coming as the services are subject to some restrictions. Obviously if further restrictions emerge we will have to pull back in line with Government guidelines.

Each week the Team sends out an update letter along with invitations to our weekly 10.30am Zoom Services and who to contact if you would like to attend in person. If you would like to receive this let Rev Jennifer know at jennifer@morton8.co.uk.

6th September

10.30am Festival of St. Birinus (Preacher Canon Sarah Foote)
8am Holy Communion Warborough
9am Holy Communion Drayton / Holy Communion Long Wittenham

13th September

10.30am Holy Communion at Stadhampton
8am Holy Communion Dorchester
9am Holy Communion Berinsfield
9.30am Short Parish Prayers Clifton Hampden
5pm Holy Communion Marsh Baldon

20th September

10.30am Ordination of Rev Catherine Schneider as Priest (sorry, no places)
8am Holy Communion Warborough
9am Holy Communion Drayton / Holy Communion Long Wittenham

27th September

10.30am Berinsfield Communion / 'Muddy' Church Clifton Hampden
8am Holy Communion Dorchester
9am Holy Communion Stadhampton
4pm Outdoor Harvest Festival Marsh Baldon

There are regular services on the TV and radio and prayers and other information are on the Church of England's or The Diocese of Oxford's website.

We are now also able to offer small weddings and funerals in church. To make a funeral or wedding arrangement please call 01865 340007 or Rev Teresa on 07823 809112.

Current information will be posted to www.dorchester-abbey.org.uk and www.achurchnearyou.com