



Eynsham



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January

Hedge laying at Long Mead was a spectacular success—
over 100 people turned up and we got our kilometre planted!



→ Images: Chloe Thompson

Village Buzz

Good news for Eynsham cyclists

Bike Safe has waited a long time to report good news and is delighted to let you know that work on finalising a design for the B4044 path has begun. The design will cover the whole route from West Way in Botley, along Eynsham Road past Hill End and Farmoor, to the toll bridge and the roundabout near the Siemens factory. From there, the path will continue to the vicinity of the A40 roundabout in Eynsham.

Specialist consultants have been recruited to develop proposals that will form the basis of a public consultation and, in due course, a planning application. Bike Safe has made available all the background studies and surveys we have done over recent years. It will have regular consultations with the County Council and the design team to ensure the path will be safe, continuous and a pleasure to use.

We have a good working relationship not just with the County Council, but also with other stakeholders, too. The most important of these is the University of Oxford, which owns much of the land on which the path will be built. The university has been steadfast in its support for the path for some years.

The design work should be completed by April or May 2025. We will, of course, let you know the next steps when the proposals are ready.

The Oxford Mail published a good report on the current situation. If you missed it, you can read it here: bit.ly/4g0OPAZ. And check out the website, too, at: b4044path.org

...and more good news!

Bike Safe's campaign for the B4044 path is part of a broader campaign to make cycling and walking easier, safer and more enjoyable. Building one multi-use path is a key element of a bigger plan for a network of connected and continuous paths for Eynsham.

We have been busy working with



the County Council and other cycling groups in Oxfordshire, such as CycloX and Oxfordshire Cycling Network, to ensure that new road and housing developments (e.g. the A40 corridor and the Salt Cross development) have high-quality and linked paths that will make Oxfordshire a model of good practice. There is still a long way to go, and old habits of treating pedestrians and cyclists as afterthoughts will continue to need to be challenged. However, it is great to see an emerging consensus on the need for more and better investment in cycling and walking.

To follow developments, go to: b4044path.org

Twelve Acre Farm solar coming!

The Twelve Acre Farm solar farm is finally close to connection, and Low Carbon Ltd will pay the community benefit that was discussed at the start of the project. The Low Carbon Hub will receive £20,000, which will help to fund the work of GreenTEA locally, while £30,000 will go to Eynsham Parish Council.



Welcome to our new PCSO!

by Helen Keen

We at the Eynsham Police Neighbourhood Team are excited to share that we are growing. We would like to welcome PC Hannah Leggott, who joined us recently. Hannah brings a wealth of experience, having served as a PC for three years and, before that, as a PCSO.

With her varied background, Hannah has a great understanding of the local area including Eynsham, Cassington, Barnard Gate, Standlake, Stanton Harcourt, Northmoor and Aston.

Both Hannah and I are here to support our communities, and we would love to visit your events and clubs if we can. If you have any concerns or just want to have a chat about issues in your area, please don't hesitate to get in touch by emailing eynshamNHPT2@thamesvalley.police.uk. We are always happy to listen and help in any way we can!

Stay safe, and we look forward to seeing you around.



Forever Fields book launch a sellout!

by Anthony Thompson

There was an amazing turnout to the launch of the Forever Fields book, held at the Bartholomew Room on 18 January. Attended by our local MP, Calum Miller, the event was visited by 400 people. The book follows on from the incredible success of the Forever Fields Art Exhibition in late 2023, where local people expressed their feelings and thoughts about the Botley West Solar Farm proposal in the form of art, sculpture and poetry.

The sculpture 'Connected', which was created by Andy Goodwin and the Willow Coppice team in Eynsham, took centre stage at the launch event. The book has already almost sold out. If anyone wishes to buy a copy (paperback £25, hardback £75), please order one at foreverfields.co.uk



Remember!

The deadline for content for Eynsham News issue 73 is 9 March 2025. Send copy to editor@eynshamnews.org.uk

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Around the village



Make a difference this year

The arrival of a new year often means a time of reflection. For many, they think about what they would like the next 12 months to bring and what changes they can introduce. Volunteering is often a popular choice, and it can be tailored completely to your skillset, experience, interests and commitments. Whether you have a little or a lot of time to offer, charities are delighted to welcome volunteers from all walks of life.

A good place to look for opportunities is the Oxfordshire Volunteers website (oxonvolunteers.org). This hub for volunteering vacancies across the county enables you to search by distance from your home to find very local opportunities, as well as remote, home-based ones.

Editor's note: *Eynsham-based organisations are often on the lookout for volunteers, as you can see below. See also page 11. And, for inspiration, volunteer drivers comment on some of the things that make helping out so rewarding.*

First-and-Last Mile needs help!

by Andy Swarbrick

First-and-Last Mile (FLM) is looking for a new director! Ideally, it should be someone with some spare time who has an eye for organisation.

Current director, Andy Swarbrick, told us, 'I didn't know anything about buses beforehand—apart from buying a ticket or using a bus pass! I have been so proud of helping to bring FLM to where it is today.'

The FLM success story now includes

running a school bus service as part of its scheduled community transport service. It is a huge task, but the benefits for the community are massive. FLM really is a stand-out community transport operation.

If you would like to get involved, please contact Andy Swarbrick on 07789 995111, or go to firstandlastmile.org.uk



Eynsham Online: your village website

by Joan Stonham

Eynsham Online continues to support local organisations and activities all year round, connecting them to you. It covers all village affairs, from bus times to cafés, the Car Scheme to the Country Market, the Croquet Club to planning issues—and an A-Z pointing to every imaginable public service.

In the year ending 31 December 2024, we promoted 15,451 events, hosted 13,529 news items, and forwarded 7,135 email enquiries! With more than 100 regular contributors, our visitor numbers are up by nearly 28% since 2023.

Please help us to keep helping you! Eynsham Online relies entirely on volunteers. Could you be a roving reporter or spare some techie time? Do have a word with Joan Stonham if so, or email online@eynsham.org.uk—it would be great to hear from you.

Contributions towards our baseline costs are warmly welcome, too. It costs £500 per year to host the website, and for email and technical support). To donate any amount, our HSBC bank account details are: sort code 40-20-06, account number 42300451.

Eynsham Online is an entirely independent service, under the aegis of Eynsham Online CIC.

Eynsham Day Centre—volunteers needed!

by Mark Johnson

The 'Monday Club' (see eynshamdaycentre.com) relies entirely on its loyal team of

volunteers. Following a few retirements, we're now looking to recruit some members of the community willing to give up some of their time to help us once a week. We set up the hall at 8.30am, welcome members from 10am and then finish up around 2.30pm. Despite the economic challenges faced by the charitable sector, we continue to thrive and offer a much-valued service to the elderly in our village.

Volunteering is a wonderful way to contribute to your community. We'd love to hear from you if you are able and willing to devote some of your time to this worthy cause! If you are interested and would like to hear more, please contact our coordinator, Lesley, on 07729 813229 or by email at labourne1956@gmail.com

ECS—why do our drivers do it?

by Celia Davies

Eynsham Car Scheme (ECS) is one of the branches of the Eynsham Good Neighbour Network (see p.12). ECS has a team of volunteer drivers who can offer residents without any transport possibilities help to get to their healthcare appointments.

Volunteering fits into their lives in different ways. Here are some comments straight from our drivers.

'I work from home as an IT professional, and my flexible hours allow me to participate in the Car Scheme and drive clients to their appointments during the working week. It's a great opportunity to take a break from the laptop and meet and interact with interesting new people, as well as making me feel like I've done something small to make someone's day just a little bit easier. I love hearing clients' stories and their thoughts on life in Eynsham.'

'I'm recently retired and am still fairly new to Eynsham. I wanted to get involved with the local community in some way, while still being around for the grandchildren. Driving long-

standing residents to hospital appointments has given me a whole new perspective on Eynsham and its history—as well as familiarising me with driving round Oxford.’

‘I find that being a volunteer driver takes you away from your own problems for a while. It is good to chat and I have met several people who have become my friends.’

‘I’m still working a couple of days a week, but when the lists of possible drives come out, I find there is still often something I can volunteer to do. And, sometimes, taking people to appointments in Witney, I can nip to a shop or have a quiet coffee before collecting them again.’

‘My retirement diary seems fuller than my work one! So when I look at a list of drives for next week, I can’t often say yes. But there are sometimes short-notice drives—I’m happy to get a phone call and if I can reschedule for those, I will. I don’t like to think that we are in danger of letting someone down.’

Gatehouse Volunteers

We invite people to make homemade cakes and sandwiches for The Gatehouse Oxford, a charity that offers free support for homeless people. They would also welcome winter hats and men’s clothing, as well as single sleeping bags or single washable duvets (not feather). All donations should be labelled with your name, date and contents, and you can get pre-printed allergen labels by calling Marie on 01865 604262. See bit.ly/4hh4LQW

Remembering Paddy Coulter

by Angela Coulter

Paddy Coulter, who sadly died recently, moved with his wife Angela to Eynsham in 2007 after living for many years in Oxford. Their elder daughter Rachel and her family also live in the village, while their younger daughter Alice and her family live in Oxford.

Born and brought up in Northern Ireland, Paddy was educated at the Methodist College, Belfast (where he was Head Boy), and at Queen’s College, Oxford, where he studied Greats (Classics). As an experienced journalist and television producer, much of his career was devoted to improving the quality of reporting on international development, for which he was awarded an OBE in 2000.

He was Head of Communications at Oxfam, Director of the International Broadcasting Trust, Director of the Reuters Journalism Fellowship Programme at the University of Oxford, Communications Director of the Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative (OPHI) and a Fellow of Green Templeton College, Oxford.



→ Paddy Coulter © Angela Coulter

Paddy sat on the boards of many charities, including Comic Relief, Oxfam, CAFOD, Practical Action, UNICEF UK, the Media Trust, and the Equal Rights Group. He also chaired the boards of trustees of both Broadcasting Support Services and the human rights charity Article 19.

Paddy’s death on 3 November 2024 was marked by published obituaries in The Guardian and The Times, together with online tributes from many of the charities he supported. However, in Eynsham, he will be remembered as a governor of Bartholomew School and as the first chair of the Eynsham Partnership Academy Trust, a role he held from 2012-18, carefully steering it through its establishment as a multi-academy trust responsible for several schools.

In all these activities, Paddy is remembered for his ebullient personality, intellect, warmth, humour, and outstanding ability to connect with people of all nationalities and backgrounds. He is greatly missed by Angela, his

daughters Rachel and Alice, his sons-in-law Ant and Ben, and his four grandchildren, Laurie, Ted, Jamie and Lois.

Eynsham News, your news

Eynsham News is a community newsletter, delivered free to every household in the village every two months. It would not exist without input from all kinds of people in the village. You are always warmly welcome to get in touch with your ideas, news, views and events by emailing editor@eynshamnews.org.uk

If you do not have access to email, you can also write to us with an old-fashioned pen and paper! Just label your envelope ‘Eynsham News’ and drop it off at Eynsham Library on Mill Street, either through the letterbox or to a member of the team, who will kindly pass it on to us.

The deadline for material for our next edition is Sunday 9 March.

Worried about costs?

Are you worrying about how to manage the cost of living? Or do you know a neighbour or relative who lives in the parishes of Eynsham or Freeland (Ancient Parish of Eynsham) who is struggling to make ends meet? Eynsham Consolidated Charity provides small- to medium-sized grants to residents who need financial help.

Under 25? Need help with educational costs? The Bartholomew Educational Foundation makes money grants to people living in the village of Eynsham who are under 25 for books, equipment, travel, etc.

Please apply to both funds in confidence via the Clerk, Catherine Barton, by emailing eynshamcharities@gmail.com or by writing to the Trustees via the Clerk, c/o Bartholomew Room, The Square, Eynsham, Witney OX29 4HW.



Remember!

The deadline for content for Eynsham News issue 73 is 9 March 2025. Send copy to editor@eynshamnews.org.uk

Out and About



Eynsham Rotary and Santa brave the weather!

by Tessa Hammond

The Eynsham Rotary Club were pleased to escort Santa on some of his local village tours in December. It was a depleted schedule this time, in part thanks to Storm Darragh—but we did manage to get out and about in central Eynsham and Cassington.

We would very much like to thank those who came out to meet Santa. It is a joy to see the enthusiasm of the children and adults alike! We'd also like to say a big thank you to all those who gave so generously. See you next year!



The right kind of bombing!

Over Christmas and New Year, you may have spotted some colourful knitted and crocheted bunting, hats and sleeves on bollards around Market Square, the post office, Spar and the village hall. There were also a few cheeky characters sitting atop some of the village post boxes.

This 'yarn bombing' was the work of a dozen or so villagers who wanted to brighten up the dark winter days and bring a smile to people's faces. We at Eynsham News think it worked a treat!

What's in a (gardening) term?

by Nick Clapton

What do the gardening terms 'hardy', 'half-hardy' and 'tender' actually mean? They indicate how well a plant can tolerate certain temperature ranges and conditions. Broadly speaking, hardy plants can tolerate colder winters, but neither half-hardy and nor tender plants can cope with our winters at all. However, the hardiness of a plant can depend on factors other than temperature, including how well-established a plant is, how good your drainage is (winter wet usually kills far more plants here than winter cold), and whether you benefit from the microclimate provided by shelter, such as a south-facing stone wall. It can be a complicated picture!

In our region, we can grow one of the widest ranges of hardy plants imaginable, including many from warmer places such as New Zealand or the mountains of South America. Thus, we have smaller-flowered hardy fuchsias (such as *F. magellanica*, the white form of which can manage -15C), which are tougher than the big, blowy hybrids. Hebes, too, usually survive (especially the smaller-leaved varieties), as do many perennial salvias. My big bush of *Salvia* 'Royal Bumble' was knocked back by about half in the cold -10C snap of 2023, but recovered magnificently and flowered like mad all last summer. Anything designated hardy—be it, a perennial, shrub or tree, or an annual—by a British grower should survive 95% of our temperatures, provided the cold is not too prolonged and the ground itself doesn't get frozen.

'Half hardy', in my view, must be one of the silliest terms in horticulture. What it really means is 'don't sow until all danger of frost has more or less passed'. It is exclusively used to describe annual flowers that need mild weather to flourish (such as

cosmos and zinnias), as well as vegetables (most of which are annuals, after all). But, then again, some annuals—sweet peas, for example—are hardy and will survive some frost.

Tender plants are native to warmer climes, and these generally do need to avoid exposure to frosts. Yet again, though, there can be exceptions to the rule. If you are lucky, and have good drainage and shelter, you might be able to leave dahlias in the ground over winter, for all that they are tender Mexican plants.

You will have gathered by now how variable this whole thing can be, and here is a case in point. My front garden faces south, and is sheltered from driving westerly winds and storms by a six-foot wall. It is very well drained (lots of imported topsoil) and, in summer, it can get 10 hours of continuous sunshine. And yet my hardy acanthus are like triflids, hardy sages abound (though I lost the supposedly hardy 'Black and Blue' variety a few years back) and my *Fuchsia riccartonii* (another hardy one) is six feet high, despite being pruned back to the ground every April. My back garden, by contrast, is only 30 feet long, but faces north. Part of it is in full shade, with ferns, hellebores and camellias in pots. This area never exceeds about 28c. Only 20 feet away, however, it is as dry as a bone, has poor soil (in spite of everything I dig into it), is very hot and sunny (often well above 40C on a hot summer's day)—yet its most vigorous inhabitant is a large-leaved ivy called 'Ravensholst', a form of *Hedera algeriensis*, described on the Royal Horticultural Society's website as both hardy and shade-tolerant.

So, as you see, 'hardy', 'half-hardy' and 'tender' can be slippery terms—generalisations that tend to need further exploration. I would be particularly wary of garden centre labels describing something as 'At last, a hardy form of x!'—even Oxfordshire is a lot less 'tropical' than, say, the Isles of Scilly, so be careful with your echiums (themselves biennial, so if they get a bad frost in year one, they won't 'come back' at all!)

Oxford Flower Club

Oxford Flower Club meets monthly in Cumnor and is attended regularly by people from Eynsham. Christmas cheer and flair were very much the themes demonstrated at our last meeting. Gill McGregor gave us a humorous and entertaining afternoon during her third visit to Oxford Flower Club.

Gill is a respected international floral art designer, author, demonstrator and teacher. She has a passion to inspire through the demonstrations she carries out around the country. Members enjoyed her fabulous displays, as well as learning interesting facts and techniques, in particular, leaf manipulation.

In December, members enjoyed a tasty festive lunch at Frilford Golf Club. Stunning, far-reaching views over the golf course—and a delicious meal—made for a great afternoon.

Forthcoming events include: demonstrator Graham King (January), 'The master and the apprentice' with Jane Belcher and Angela Edmonds (February), and demonstrator Elaine Stoner (March). See page 11 for more details.

For more information, call Karen on 07967 555750. bit.ly/42cPkoC



→ Helena

Clever Little Thing

by Helena Echlin

In March 2021, I moved to Eynsham after nearly 20 years living in California. When I told people where we moved from, most were puzzled. Why give up eternal sunshine for this flat, grey March sky? But, after the escalating wildfires in California, Eynsham was a haven - and a welcoming one, too.

As soon as my family moved in, neighbours popped by - with a homemade Victoria sponge, the offer to lend a lawnmower, and advice on

wild swimming. The pandemic turned my life upside-down, but here, with the kids back in school, I finally had the peace I needed to write *Clever Little Thing*, the novel I'd been dreaming of.

It's the story of a mother who must confront a disturbing change in her eight-year-old daughter after the sudden death of their babysitter. I solved plot problems on the lock-to-lock walk and cleared my head with swims in the Thames. The book is a psychological thriller and, in my experience, you can only write a scary story if you feel that you're in a safe place. Eynsham is a good place to belong and, also, it turns out, a very good place to write a novel.

Eynsham Museum: your community museum

by Sarah Medina

Eynsham Museum is first and foremost for the community. We like to stay in touch with you on social media (Facebook and Instagram: search for 'Eynsham Museum'), and on the museum website (eynshammuseum.org.uk). Even whilst the museum is closed for winter, a new Object of the Month goes online on the first day of each month, building a picture of what the museum is all about.

We are now in the process of planning a short-but-sweet regular newsletter, to be sent by email every month or so. If we don't already have your email address and you would like to sign up for this, please email us to let us know at info@eynshammuseum.org.uk

Baby weighing!

by Sue Greenwood

Changes in healthcare provision mean that there is no longer a baby clinic in the village. Consequently, to attend a clinic, parents now need to take their babies to Carterton or Witney.

As a resource for the village, we are providing scales to weigh your baby. They are available on:

- Mondays, 10.30-11am (term time) at St Leonard's Church Hall, during Walkie Talkies; and
- Wednesdays 10.30-11.30am at St Leonard's Church, during Warm

Welcome Wednesdays.

Do come along and use the scales, free of charge. But please be aware that there will be no health professional available.

Quizzes galore!

by Jon Young

Quizzes are a hugely popular pastime, and we are fortunate in the village to have lots of opportunities for you to join in. See page 11 for forthcoming quiz dates, and remember—you can follow the village quizzing news on the Eynsham Quizzers page at Eynsham Online. bit.ly/40xYSsS

The Evenlode Quiz: The Evenlode's general knowledge quiz is on the first Sunday of the month from 7:30pm with a £2 entry per person. Six rounds of general knowledge and current affairs, a quickfire buzzer round - and other stuff. There's a cash prize for the winning team, plus choccy bonuses during the night. To reserve your table, call 01865 882878.

The White Hart Quiz: Rich & Deadly's quiz is 10 years in the running - and still counting! (Note: guest hosts take over from time to time.) It's held on the first Wednesday of every month at 8pm; £2 per person entry. The maximum team size is six and there's a cash prize for the winners. There's even the famous bonus binbag of mystery during the evening (lucky dip)!

The Red Lion Quiz: Peter Moore's popular Red Lion quiz is now held on the second Monday of each month; £2 per person entry. The maximum team size is six. The quiz includes a Play Your Cards Right bonus round.

Kingsley Café Music Quiz: Test your pop knowledge at Eynsham's newest quiz night, hosted by Jon Young. Includes rounds on pop music, chart toppers, film music—and much more besides. Held on the third Thursday of every month at 7.30pm, the entry is £3 per person. Cash prizes and fizz for winners and runners-up, plus choccy bonuses throughout. To reserve your table, call 01865 410792.

If you would like to support us by advertising, please email Sarah R on ads@eynshamnews.org.uk



Balancing the books

Parish Council Budget for **2025/26**

Just before Christmas, we finalised the Parish Council Budget for FY 2025/26. As will be expected, the cost to residents will rise, but we've made every effort to minimise the increase by reducing our costs and seeking alternative funding (e.g. grants) for our projects where possible.

What's the cost?

Our total budget will be £394,450, with a precept request to the District Council of £322,177—we make up the difference ourselves (e.g. via grants). Residents living in a 'band D' property (check yours online) will pay £145.26 for the year, a 17.3% increase on last year's £123.84, or 41p more each week. We appreciate this is the third year in a row that residents have faced a rise, but it is a slightly lower 'step up' than last year, when it rose 22.8%.

Why is it rising?

We're facing the same, continuous increase in energy costs as residents,

as well as an increase in staff costs due to the changes in National Insurance contributions. In FY 23/24 we regained responsibility for the Village Hall, which costs us more than the income from hiring fees. There has also been an increase in tax-exempt households due to low incomes. And Eynsham generally has more facilities to maintain than other villages, which is costly.

We've focused on being more efficient; for example, we've hired a Maintenance Operative to handle tasks in-house rather than paying for contractors. That said, we won't ever cut back on maintaining our community facilities, services and green spaces. These are community

assets, valuable to us all, to enjoy today and preserve for tomorrow.

New projects

We'll continue making critical upgrades to our play area equipment and to the Village Hall facilities. We're also planning to create a local Art Trail using grant money—we hope residents will help us with this! More information on planned projects and the Budget will be shared at the Annual Parish Meeting on 4 March.

Join us?

We could reduce our costs further if we had a full remit of Councillors. If you're interested, email us via epc.comms@eynsham-pc.gov.uk

Dates for your Diary – Full Council Meetings:

Tuesday 18 February 7.30pm

Annual Parish Meeting: Tuesday 4 March 7.30pm

Tuesday 18 March 7.30pm

Tuesday 15 Apr 7.30pm

All meetings are held at the Village Hall. Public attendance welcome, in person or online via a link within the agenda. Check the website.

A Note from the Chair



The start of a new year gets us thinking about what we want to achieve in the coming year. Our new Clerk, Michelle Legg, joined us in January, which presents a good opportunity to review our Strategic Plan. It will also be great for Michelle to meet many of you at our Annual Parish Meeting on 4th March.

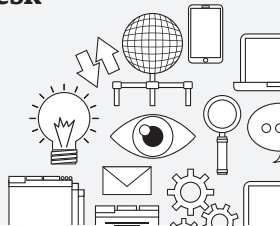
The projects that I'm personally looking forward to are the Sports Pavilion re-build—with the challenges of fund-raising to support it—and a new burial ground for Eynsham. We may soon have some updates on the latter to share. I'm also looking forward to creating the Art Trail. We'll shortly be inviting applications from local artists who can involve the community in creating exciting new artwork that can be linked with a walk around the village.

This year we'll continue to put forward the views of the council and our residents concerning all the new developments, whether that be the West Eynsham and Salt Cross housing, the A40 project or the Botley West Solar Farm. We've just heard that the Government has accepted the Botley West application, with the inspection to take place later this year. We'll keep you updated.

We've recently welcomed back Nick Relph as a Councillor. Residents may recall he was my predecessor as Chair. As always, we need more Councillors so please get in touch if you'd like to give some time back to your parish. It's a great way to meet people and find out more about what goes on.

Finally, a big thank you to Richard Wilkins, our Deputy Clerk, who kept everything running whilst we waited for our new clerk to start.

From the Clerk's Desk



Happy new year to you all! I hope this January edition of the Eynsham News finds you well and staying warm during these winter months. As well as a new year, this is a new beginning for me as I embark on becoming the new Clerk for Eynsham Parish Council.

I'm Michelle Legg and I'm delighted to be serving this wonderful village community. I will be responsible for ensuring the smooth running of Council operations, supporting the staffing team, managing our resources, and facilitating the Councillors in their work to serve Eynsham.

I bring to this role extensive experience in local government administration and community service, having been the Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer for Wheatley Parish Council for several years. I also worked for district councils across the leisure, parks and environmental services.

I will be based in the Village Hall and encourage you to get in touch if you have any questions or queries about any council business.

I'm working closely with our Deputy Clerk, staff and Councillors to immerse myself in all the issues, projects and challenges that the Parish faces. I've also enjoyed getting to know the village—you have so many places for a good coffee!

I look forward to meeting more of you throughout the year—perhaps you can join us at the Annual Parish Meeting in March—and contributing to this vibrant community's continued growth and success.

I can be contacted with any issues you may have via epc.clerk@eynsham-pc.gov.uk

Q&A: Sarah Rees, Communications Officer



When did you join?

I started in June 2021 as the Parish Council's first Communications Officer, working part-time. I love my job! It's rare to get to 'create' a new role and I've enjoyed developing new communication channels to help better engage with the community.

What's been the best aspect?

It's been interesting to learn all about how local governance works, as well as getting to know Eynsham. There's such a vibrant, passionate community living and working here! I enjoy being able to help connect the community and the Council, and ensure residents are informed about what's happening locally.

What are the biggest challenges?

Understanding the nitty gritty of Parish Council process can be complicated. Fortunately, I have wonderful and very supportive colleagues who help me. It can also be dispiriting when a (very) few people are unpleasant towards us on social media. My colleagues and Councillors work so hard to do the right thing for this community.

What do you like about Eynsham?

I wish I lived here! It's attractive, historical, on the edge of beautiful countryside and full of interesting people doing interesting things.

What's the highlight so far?

I spent one of my volunteering days helping with the Eynsham Museum and that was fantastic; what a super group of people!

Get in touch with Sarah on

epc.comms@eynsham-pc.gov.uk

These pages have been supported by Eynsham Parish Council.

Contact: epc.comms@eynsham-pc.gov.uk or visit www.eynsham-pc.gov.uk. Find us on Facebook and X, too!

Events Preview

Eynsham Community Choir: 'Between Winter and Spring'

by Sarah Medina

Come and enjoy Eynsham Community Choir as we sing at our first independent concert, 'Between Winter and Spring', on Saturday 8 February, 7.30-9.15pm, at St Leonard's Church Hall. Tickets £10. Book online at bit.ly/4a7uGYT

A benefit concert for Nature Recovery Network and the Peace Oak Association, this will be a mellow evening of song, verse and more, bringing warmth to the end of winter and looking ahead to the wonders of spring.

And to sing with us regularly, do come along to the Baptist Church Hall on Thursday evenings, 7.15-9pm. We're a warm, friendly bunch, and we sing some beautiful songs, learning by ear with no pressure, but with lots of joy. This term runs from 9 January to 3 April (with 13 February off), for only £50 for the 12 weeks. Come and see what you think! We'd love to have you with us.

Women's Institute—going strong

by Valerie Johnston

The Women's Institute held a Christmas dinner in Woodstock on 10 December 2024. We all enjoyed good food and a large raffle, and Nicholas Gill entertained us with some Great American Jazz songs.

Lucy Gasson, whose passion is the 'hidden curiosities' of Oxford, will be speaking to us on 11 February. And on 11 March, the WI will celebrate our 102nd birthday—certainly making us one of the longest-living societies in Eynsham! When first established, we had 109 members—probably most of the women in Eynsham.

Eynsham WI meets on the second Tuesday of each month (except August) in the Village Hall. Visitors are always welcome—we just ask for a contribution of £4. We always have interesting speakers, a raffle and refreshments, and there are special events throughout the year. The WI is open to all women over the age of 18

and exists to give women a voice, to provide the opportunity to make friends, to educate and inform, and to be encouraged to get involved in things that matter to them—to 'make a difference'.

Night in the Museum

by Rowan Knowles

Flexicare (flexicare.org) is an Oxfordshire charity that, for 40 years, has been providing a specialised, ad hoc sitting service for families with a disabled child in Oxford, Abingdon, Wantage and surrounding villages.

We are delighted, once again, to host the Ivel Trio, comprising flute, cello and piano, for a magical 'Night in the Museum' classical concert. The trio will perform amongst the dinosaurs in the stunning University of Oxford Museum of Natural History on Saturday 1 March. Doors open at 7pm for a prompt 7.30pm start.

The performance will be followed by a drinks and canapé reception, included in the ticket price of £35. Tickets are available online or by emailing: events@flexicare.org See bit.ly/3W5ENHY

Combe Mill

Combe Mill is a late-19th century Grade II listed watermill by the Evenlode river which used to be the workshop for the Blenheim Palace Estate. On 16 March, 10.30am-4.30pm, come and enjoy our 'In Steam' themed event, 'STEM—Change & Adapt'.

There will be a spring market, and our gift shop, tombola and riverside tearoom will also be open. Admission is £9 for adults, £7.50 for concessions, and children go free. There's free parking and dogs are welcome, too!

On Wednesdays from 19 March, Combe Mill will be open for self-guided tours and visits to our tearoom. Volunteers will be on hand to talk about the mill and its history. Admission: adults £5, concessions £4, children free.

Happy birthday, Bartholomew Players!

by Denise Santilli

Eynsham's amateur dramatic group, Bartholomew Players celebrates its 50th birthday in 2025. With such a

long history - and with audience feedback such as 'Why bother going to the West End when you can see equally professional, outstanding performances from the Bartholomew Players in Eynsham'—we think we must be doing something right!

Founded in 1975, the group was originally led by teachers at Bartholomew School - hence our name—and held in the school hall, until we moved to the new Eynsham Village Hall in 2001.

We have always put on high-quality plays by known authors, starting out with Noël Coward's 'Blithe Spirit' and continuing with two productions per year, in May and November. We are honoured to have the patronage of well-known TV playwrights Laurence Marks and Maurice Gran, and were delighted when they co-directed last year's production of 'Pack of Lies', which enjoyed great critical acclaim.

Bartholomew Players members range in age from 18 to 84 years and come from all walks of life. One of the original members, Steve Ashcroft, is still very active in the group today, despite living in Sweden for six months of the year!

We always welcome new members, too! If you would like to get involved, either in an acting or stage support role, do come and join us. We meet on Wednesdays, 7.30-10pm at Long Hanborough Methodist Hall until 17 March and, thereafter, at Eynsham Village Hall. For more information, email Publicity Officer Denise Santilli at bart.players@gmail.com

Our next production, on 14-17 May, is 'Present Laughter', one of Noël Coward's best comedies—and a personal favourite of his—involving misunderstandings, extramarital affairs and complicated relationships. It's a suitably upbeat play to help us celebrate our 50th birthday! See bartholomewplayers.co.uk

Eynsham Library Opening

Monday:	9.30am-1pm, 2-5pm
Tuesday:	Closed
Wed/Thr/:	1-5pm
Friday:	1-7pm
Saturday:	9.30am-1pm
Sunday:	Closed

Events Diary

See more at Eynsham Online

eynsham.org.uk

Oxford Flower Club

Fourth Thursday of the month (except Aug and Dec), 1:30pm for 2pm start, Cumnor Village Hall

23 Jan: Demonstration by Graham King (January)

27 Feb: Demonstration by Jane Belcher and Angela Edmonds, 'The master and the apprentice'

27 Mar: Demonstration by Elaine Stoner. Info: Karen 07967 555750

Eynsham Abbey Singers

7 Feb, 4-5pm, St Peter's Catholic Church

Informal concert 'Lumen ad revelationem' (A Light to the World).

With a retiring collection in aid of Gatehouse and Middle East Humanitarian Appeal charities.

Eynsham Community Choir

8 Feb, 7.30pm, St Leonard's Church Hall

'Between Winter & Spring': benefit concert for Nature Recovery Network and the Peace Oak Association.

Tickets: £10. Drinks and nibbles: £5 suggested donation.

Book your tickets here:

bit.ly/40mxuNr

Women's Institute

Second Tuesday of the month, 7.30pm, Eynsham Village Hall

11 Feb: Speaker Lucy Gasson:

'Every Object Tells a Story'. The

competition is for an item beginning

with the letter L. *11 Mar:* The WI's

102nd birthday celebration

Rotary Club

11 Feb, 7.30pm, The Swan Hotel

The Rotary Club of Eynsham is a friendly and informal group that meets twice a month at The Swan.

We initiate events and projects to support the Eynsham community and Rotary International charities, and we normally have a speaker

once a month. Come along for a trial meeting to meet us and see what

we do. No age restrictions and no obligation! **Stop Press! We have**

heard that The Swan may be closing.

Please check before you attend any event listed there.

Eynsham Society

19 Feb, 8pm, Eynsham Village Hall, AGM

Kingsley Cafe music quiz

20 Feb, 7.30pm, Kingsley Cafe

To reserve a table, call 01865 410792.

See page 7 for more info.

Age UK Lunch Club

21 Feb, 12-1.30pm, The Red Lion

A chance to meet and eat in friendly company. Menu prices starting from

£4.80. To book, contact Sue on

07827 235414.

Nature Recovery Network

22 Feb, 10am, Long Mead

Hedge laying for beginners!

Eynsham Arts Group

27 Feb, 7.30pm: Talk by professional artist Francesca Shakespeare

26 Mar, 7.30pm: Talk by Julia Sorrell:

Dreamscapes and figurative painting.

Mill Street Arts, 66 Mill Street. £5 on

the door (£4 for students)

The Evenlode quiz

2 Mar, 7.30pm, The Evenlode (and the first Sunday of every month)

Reserve your table on 01865 882878.

See page 7 for more info.

Rich's White Hart quiz

5 Mar, 8pm, The White Hart (and the first Wednesday of every month)

See page 7 for more info.

Eynsham Repair Café

8 Mar, 2-4pm, Eynsham Scout Hall

Normally covering sewing, (creative)

darning, small electrical repairs and

tool sharpening; often wood repairs

and bike repairs (small puncture,

gear checks, etc.). Do check online

(bit.ly/40mnJi0) or on Facebook

closer to the date for the list of repairs

offered by our amazing team of

volunteers. Drinks and cakes

available while you wait.

Peter Moore's Red Lion quiz

10 March, 7.30pm, The Red Lion (and the second Monday of the month)

See page 7 for more info.

Eynsham Carnival

29 March: Eynsham Carnival Family

Disco. Look out for details on

social media!

Eynsham

Community Choir

Thursdays, 7.15pm refreshments,

7.30pm singing, Baptist Church Hall

A relaxed, informal choir. All

welcome! First class is free. Info:

Emily Marshall, Choir Director,

07969 522368

Zumba® classes

Fridays, 9.30am, Eynsham Village Hall

Two left feet welcome! First class is

free. Info: [bethstephensonsemail@](mailto:bethstephensonsemail@gmail.com)

[gmail.com](mailto:bethstephensonsemail@gmail.com)

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Details of all events were correct at the time of going to press but may change. Please check with the organiser before attending. Send your events news (about 70 words long) for our April edition (issue 73) before 9 March to editor@eynshamnews.org.uk

Eynsham News is published by a local, not-for-profit voluntary group, set up solely to produce a community newsletter of broad general appeal. Free delivery to every household is arranged by volunteers. Local stories, snaps and snippets are always welcome—and corrections! Items submitted may or may not be included and edited. Opinions expressed by contributors are not necessarily those of the News Group. Inclusion of an advertisement does not imply endorsement of the product, service or event.

This newsletter is 100% recyclable in your normal recycling bin. It is printed on Carbon Capture paper which contributes to the Woodland Trust's tree planting programme.



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Eynsham Baptist Church

Main Sunday event at 10.30am
Lombard Street, Eynsham OX29 4HT
eynshambaptistchurch.co.uk
01865 882203
eynsham.baptists@gmail.com
To book the church hall, call 07554
012535 or email rccarley@outlook.com

St Leonard's CofE

Main Sunday event at 10.30am
21 High Street, Eynsham OX29 4HE
stleonardseynsham.org.uk
Church Administrator
Louise Parker 01865 883325
stleonards_stpeters@btconnect.com
The church hall can be booked
for events.

St Peter's Roman Catholic Church

Sunday Mass at 10am. Abbey Street,
Eynsham OX29 4HR
stpeterseynsham.org.uk 01865 881613
The 'Tolkien Room' is available for
hire call 01865 423655



Eynsham Good Neighbour Network

EGNN exists to support anyone in need in the village.

It has three branches:

Good Neighbours

07443 564516

Eynsham Car Scheme

07469 764174

Eynsham Food Bank

07450 328530

Contact us, if you need help.

For more information, go to:
bit.ly/4aiN0hD

Classified Ads

Advertise your business here,
email: ads@eynshamnews.org.uk

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01865 884405 / eynshamcellars.com

Evenlode DIY

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07778 298312 grimebusters.co.uk

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Trusts, Tax, Powers of Attorney.
1 Abbey Street, Eynsham OX29 4TB.
01865 884400 / pellmans.co.uk

Rotary Club of Eynsham

is a friendly group who are determined
to contribute to both local and
international wellbeing. If you'd like
to do more for your community,
please come and join us.
Contact: tessajhammond@gmail.com

The Pet Nanny – your local pet care service.

Dogs, cats or smaller pets.
Drop ins or walks, tailored to your
needs. DBS checked. Insured.
Canine first aid trained.
Contact Jen Wilkins 07778153292
wilkinsjennifer73@aol.com

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Established over 20 years, the
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0330 043 5743
nutshellaccounts.co.uk