

# Holton, Waterperry & Waterstock News

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*FEBRUARY 2025*

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Holton, Waterperry & Waterstock News is delivered monthly and free-of-charge to all households in the three parishes, with additional copies left in the parish churches.

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We welcome letters, articles and announcements from individuals and organisations, but reserve the right to edit or to publish or not.

**All copy must be received no later than the 18th of the month prior to publication and with its author's name attached - anonymous entries will not be considered.**

The views expressed are not necessarily those of the Editor.

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## *February Church Services*

February 2 <sup>nd</sup>	9.30 St Leonard's Waterstock
February 9 <sup>th</sup>	9.30 St Helen's Albury 11.00 St Bartholomew's Holton 5.00pm St Mary's Waterperry
February 16 <sup>th</sup>	9.30 St Helen's Albury 11.00 St Leonard's Waterstock
February 23 <sup>rd</sup>	8.00 St Mary's Waterperry 9.30 St Helen's Albury 11.00 St Bartholomew's
March 2 <sup>nd</sup>	10.00 St Leonard's Waterstock
March 9 <sup>th</sup>	9.30 St Helen's Albury 11.00 St Bartholomew's Holton 5.00pm St Mary's Waterperry

## St Leonard's Waterstock

### Flowers and cleaning rota

February 2 <sup>nd</sup>	S. Getty
February 9 <sup>th</sup>	S. Getty
February 16 <sup>th</sup>	L. Stubbs
February 23 <sup>rd</sup>	L. Stubbs
March 2 <sup>nd</sup>	C. Tyce
March 9 <sup>th</sup>	J. Berrill
March 16 <sup>th</sup>	J. Berrill

## St Mary's Waterperry

### Flower rota

February 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Susan Fonge
February 9 <sup>th</sup>	Jan
February 16 <sup>th</sup>	Helen
February 23 <sup>rd</sup>	Jacqui
March 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Rebecca
March 9 <sup>th</sup>	Susan Fonge
March 16 <sup>th</sup>	Jan



## Letter from the Vicarage

Hello,

I don't know if it because it is the shortest month, a 'filling in' month, or if we are utterly fed up with winter by the time it comes and can't wait for spring during it but February seems like a month to be endured rather than enjoyed – except of course for those who celebrate their birthday in it. Of course if you do have a birthday in February you are in good company. Two queens, Mary Tudor and Anne, two Charles, Dickens and Darwin, two prime ministers, Robert Peel and Harold Macmillan and two knighted cultural icons Stanley Matthew and Norman Wisdom are just a few of the famous and infamous who were born in February. Apparently people born in February can be 'other worldly', sensitive, easily hurt and prone to loneliness. But then I guess that can be said of some people born in any month of the year!

Celebrations in February include Valentine's day of course. Some lesser known ones are 8<sup>th</sup> National Propose Day in India, so lots of nervousness on the preceding days I imagine. National Pizza Day in the US is on the 9<sup>th</sup> – given their diet that's kind of like having a National Breathing Day. On the 11<sup>th</sup> Azerbaijanis celebrate their tax service, can't see that catching on globally, while in Iceland it's Wife's Day on the 18<sup>th</sup>. Apparently there is also a 'Husband's Day' which is held whenever wives let them. Lastly, National Frog Legs Day is held on the 29<sup>th</sup>, given that this means only once every four years that's not nearly often enough in my view.

In the USA the 2<sup>nd</sup> is Groundhog Day, the ceremony taking place in Gobbler's Knob, Punxsutawney although this is now celebrated in many other places round the world. The idea is to ascertain how long winter will continue by looking at the shadow or non-shadow cast by the groundhog. The only similar weather predicting myth I can think of is the idea that if it rains on St Swithin's Day it will rain for the following 30 days. You may well know more attempts at divining the future weather.

We invest in a huge amount of time and effort in trying to anticipate the future generally – there are industries dedicated to it and for many their income depends on getting it right. But I think most of us, no matter who we are, can't help spending time looking ahead and indeed it is very necessary at times and foolish not to. The challenge comes when we spend time worrying about the future, especially the future we cannot control. Planning ahead is a virtue but living constantly in the shadow of future possibilities is a waste of the present.

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus (you knew he'd be in this at some point!) said; "*So do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will bring worries of its own. Today's trouble is enough for today.*" Focusing on the here and now, being mindful of the moment, is to make the most of the hours and days we are given and the people who we are given to share them with. In other words dealing with what we can control in the present is a Godly thing in the sense that we are allowing God to take care of the currently unknown in the knowledge we will be given the tools and resources to deal with it when it comes, if it comes.

And now I'm off to consult the long-range weather forecast!

Stay blessed,

*David*  
Rev David Bendor-Samuel  
01865 872102,  
dbendorsamuel@btinternet.com

## *Holton & Waterperry W.I.*

'Isn't it cold in the winter?' The answer is no, as reported by Karen and Bret Wiles at our January meeting about their life on a restored, all mod cons barge called 'Edith'. They have a special wood burning stove and have rights as boat owners to search for timber within a certain radius of their boat. Karen and Bret decided to give up a comfortable life and buy a barge 16 years ago and now wonder why they didn't do it sooner. They spent 3 years at Gloucester docks, boated along the Severn Estuary to Portishead and then to Bristol and Bath and along the Kennett & Avon Canal to Reading where they joined the River Thames. They have met challenges along the way including the 105 locks and are currently moored at Goring. Their presentation was unparalleled, so much detail, delightfully presented verbally and with exceptional power-point pictures and commentary. Life living on a canal has its drawbacks but the upsides far outweigh those as shown by Karen's wildlife photography - kingfishers, herons and outstanding views. We were treated to an excellent talk.

When booking talks and despite the WI handbook recommendations, it is impossible to know what the quality will be. However, we have enjoyed some exceptional talks this year.

We have been happy to welcome some new members this year and hope they are enjoying all the WI has to offer. If anyone else cares to join us, please do. Speak to one of our committee members.

Our next meeting is on the 4th February and is entitled 'A Taste of Yorkshire in Food and Traditions' by Peter Hague. Yorkshire members will be most interested!

*Barbara Martin*

## **Dr Rogers Trust** **Educational Grants for Young People in Holton**

When the Trust was set up in February 1980, the Constitution stated:-

**“The objectives of the charity is to promote the education (including social and physical training) of children and young person’s resident in the area of the ancient parish of Holton. The Trust Deed instructs that Trustees shall have special regard to the promotion of education in accordance with the principles and doctrines of the Church of England”.**

The Dr Rogers Trustees will be meeting in April 2025 to consider applications from apprentices, trainees and students, aged 14 to 21, who are resident in the parish of Holton, for grants to assist in the purchase of books and equipment or towards the cost of educational trips or courses.

A maximum of 2 grants per applicant will be considered, the first whilst at school and the second for undertaking further education up to the age of 21.

**In 2024 two grants were awarded to young people.**

If you would like further information, please contact: Carol Johnston, Trustee/Clerk, Chance Cottage, Holton

Email: [carol.johnstonfj@btinternet.com](mailto:carol.johnstonfj@btinternet.com)

Applications **MUST** be made in writing to the above by **5<sup>th</sup> April 2025**.

# *Holton Parish Council*

## Vacancy for a new Parish Councillor

*To express an interest or for more information, contact the Parish Clerk or any Parish Councillor.*

## Holton Orchard Winter Pruning

**Saturday February 15<sup>th</sup> 2025 10.00 am in Holton Orchard (note change of date).**

Kieron will again instruct and lead us in aspects of winter pruning of the orchard trees. The improvement in the trees has been remarkable since we started the regular pruning sessions. Just an hour or so and hot drinks and cake so please come along and perfect your pruning technique.

## Planning Applications:

P24/S3828/FUL. Slaymaker, Holton. OX33 1PR.

Retrospective application for the relocation of barn from position approved by P05/W0463.

P24/S4002/LDE. John Watson School, Wheatley Park School Campus, Holton. OX33 1QH. Wooden hexagonal gazebo for educational outdoor learning.

## Bus Service

The Parish Council has had a request from a villager regarding the re-visiting of the possibility of a bus service picking up in the village and connecting with other routes. Some years ago there was a trial of such a scheme but it failed due to lack of uptake by villagers. In order to take this further we would like to know what the need might be and whether there would be sufficient support to encourage a bus company to consider such a scheme. There may be other options which could be considered when we know what the need might be – Dial a Ride, Links with other villages etc. Please contact the Parish Council and share your ideas.

## HWW News

Copies of the HWW News are available on Holton Parish Council website under Village Information – HWW News.

**The next Parish Council Meeting will be held on Monday 10<sup>th</sup> February 2025 starting at 7.00 pm** In Holton Village Hall Committee Room.

Agendas will be on the village notice boards and Parish Council website.

Contact details below.

Clerk to Holton Parish Council (Sonja Barter) Home Farm House, Holton, Oxford OX33 1QA

Email: [clerk@holtonoxford-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@holtonoxford-pc.gov.uk)

Tel: 01865 872334

Copies of Holton Parish Council Meeting Agendas and Approved Minutes can be viewed on the Holton Parish Council website [www.holtonoxford-pc.gov.uk](http://www.holtonoxford-pc.gov.uk)

# *Holton Bus Shelter*

## Bring and Take Dates for 2025

As promised here are the dates for the Bus Shelter Bring and Take for this year. The spring edition is towards the end of April. This gives us all plenty of time to sow vegetable seeds and annual flowers. Any surplus can be brought along to the first event and swapped for something you didn't sow. All you will need to do after that is take home your new seedlings, plant them out and, if last year is anything to go on, watch the slugs feast on them.

Look forward to seeing you in the spring.

### Bus shelter dates 2025:

Spring Sunday, 27<sup>th</sup> April

Summer Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> July

Autumn Sunday, 28<sup>th</sup> September

Christmas Sunday, 7<sup>th</sup> December

## Bus shelter 'Book Week'

The book swap is always popular at the quarterly bus shelter events - would it be worth doing more often? To test this out there will be a **BOOK WEEK** at the bus shelter with a selection of fiction paperback books for all ages on the shelves from the afternoon of **Saturday 15<sup>h</sup> February until lunchtime on Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> February**. Please do bring your books down to swap if you have any, and whether you do or not please help yourself to anything that you'd like to read. There will be some bookmarks available in the shelter if you'd like to write a recommendation for anything that you bring down. This book week will be a try out so if you have any feedback during or following the event we'd be pleased to hear it. Thank you, and happy reading!

*Allan East*  
*aeast@holtonoxford-pc.gov.uk*

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# *Holton Village Hall*

## *Afternoon teas.*

The coffee mornings and afternoon teas at the Village Hall continue to be a great success. Many thanks to everyone who helps for all their hard work. There will be afternoon teas in February 2025 on 6th and the 20th. They will be from 2.30pm until 4.00pm. These events are really well attended so come along for Tea, Coffee, Cake and a chat with friends and neighbours.

## *Quiz Night 11<sup>th</sup> April*

Following the success of the 6<sup>th</sup> December Quiz night, another event has been arranged for 11th April. Full details of costs and how to book a team will be in March's edition.

## *50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary*

It will be fifty years since the Village Hall was opened and the Village Hall Committee are looking to organise an event to mark the occasion. Look out for further details in later editions

## *Future Events*

For up to date information on all events at the Village Hall please access the website at [www.holtonvillagehall.co.uk](http://www.holtonvillagehall.co.uk)

## *Booking the Village Hall*

If you would like to book the Village Hall please call **07873 857063** or please E-mail [bookings@holtonvillagehall.co.uk](mailto:bookings@holtonvillagehall.co.uk)

*Mel Ault*  
[mel\\_ault39@outlook.com](mailto:mel_ault39@outlook.com)

# *Holton Cock and Bull*

The stars didn't quite collide in this lovers' tale.

Having taken a year off to visit Australia, Ian Johnstone missed his girlfriend so much that after just a few months he decided to fly back to Britain to surprise her with a marriage proposal. The only snag was that Amy Dolby had decided to do the same - in the opposite direction. They even missed each other when they stopped over at Singapore, sitting in the same airport lounge at the same time, never realising the other was there.

When she arrived at Johnstone's apartment, after the 11,000-mile flight across the globe, a heartbroken Dolby said, 'We are both quite impulsive people - always trying to surprise each other.' Meanwhile, Johnstone went to her apartment armed with an engagement ring, a bottle of champagne and a bouquet of flowers. 'I thought she was winding me up when she phoned me from Australia,' he said. Johnstone then proposed over the phone. 'I didn't know whether to laugh or cry but I accepted,' said Dolby.

*Name and address supplied*



## Recipe: Winter Vegetable Cobbler

1 tablespoon olive oil  
8 small onions , halved  
225g swede, chopped  
Half a small cauliflower head, in florets  
400g canned chopped tomatoes  
2 tablespoons cornflour  
300 ml vegetable stock  
2 teaspoons chopped fresh oregano

1 garlic clove, crushed  
2 celery sticks , sliced  
2 carrots , sliced  
225g button mushrooms, sliced  
55g red lentils, rinsed  
4 tablespoons water  
2 teaspoons Tabasco sauce  
Fresh oregano sprigs to garnish

### For the topping:

225g SR flour  
4 tablespoons butter  
2 teaspoons chopped fresh oregano  
150 ml milk

Pinch of salt  
115g grated mature cheddar cheese  
1 egg, lightly beaten

(The vegetables can be varied according to taste and season. Curry paste can be substituted instead of Tabasco. The topping can be made with wholemeal flour.)

- Preheat the oven to 180c/gas4.
- Heat the oil in a large frying pan and cook the onions and garlic under a low heat for 5 minutes.
- Add the celery, swede, carrots and cauliflower and cook for 3 minutes.
- Add the mushrooms, tomatoes and lentils.
- Mix the cornflour and water together in a small bowl to form a smooth paste.
- Stir the paste into the frying pan with the stock, Tabasco and oregano.
- Transfer all to an ovenproof dish and bake in the pre- heated oven for 20 minutes.
- Make the topping by sieving the flour and salt in a bowl. Rub in the butter. Stir in most of the cheese and oregano. Beat the egg and milk together in a small bowl and add enough to the dry ingredients to make a soft dough. Knead, then roll out on a lightly floured surface to 1 cm thick. Cut into 5 cm rounds.
- Remove the dish from the oven and increase the temperature to 200c/gas 6.
- Arrange the dough rounds around the edge of the dish.
- Brush with the remaining egg and milk and sprinkle with the rest of the cheese.
- Cook for a further 12 minutes .
- Garnish with oregano sprigs and serve.

*Holton and Waterperry WI*

# Holton News

This month we have a piece from Nina about farm life.

I hope you all had a Good Christmas. Let's see if the star of New Year will help to lead us to a miraculous solution like 3 wise Kings to baby Jesus. The new government introduced some changes which will be greatly affecting all people in this country. Welcome in the world of inheritance tax for farmers. Farmers are assets rich, cash poor. They will be forced (most of them to pay this tax). That means if your income per hour is less than national minimum wage and you will have to sell working/farming land. In real life it is always a small print worth to look at. There are numbers of regulations farmers have to meet not to pay. A farm is like one organism. If you sell a part of it nothing will work further. Food production is seriously threatened by this new regulation. Payment of this tax will make the food industry decline. Businesses will be in trouble and the economy will go down. Despite the fact of hard work, and trying to go afterwards for quiet and polite protests farmers need the public on their side like never before. Please do think positively about people who are putting food on our tables and say a little prayer if you can for a miracle to happen.

Meanwhile, moo pets at the farm are gracefully chewing food like they did thousands of years ago waiting for humanity to get wiser, use their resources efficiently with a little understanding and research of important matters. The new pet the bull named Uncle Jim has the same charismatic influence on heifers like Elvis Presley on the girls.

Lola Moo is in expecting a new calf. She was very lucky it was to be pregnant or being the main ingredients in a casserole dish. At least as humans we should have more choices.

At least what we think.

I wish you all Happy New Year.

Kind Regards,

*Nina*

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\*  
\* **St Bartholomews Church, Holton** \*  
\* **New Church Yard Tidy** \*  
\* **Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> March 2025 - 10.00am** \*  
\* **Please come and take a look at the new church yard and help to clear the area** \*  
\* **for a bonfire.** \*  
\* **All welcome with your gardening tools** \*  
\* **Refreshments provided.** \*  
\* **Further information, please contact: Carol Johnston on 07831577343** \*  
\*  
\*\*\*\*\*

# Waterperry News

Well, January got the year off to a damp and foggy start. The hedgerows and trees looked exquisite dressed with rime ice, sparkling when we got a glimmer of sunshine, but mostly giving the fields an other-worldly atmosphere that we don't see very often, all to do with the fog in the prolonged freezing temperatures. Of course this made the roads tricky and there were a couple of reports of vehicles parting company with the road at the usual danger spots – I hope everyone stayed safe.

Sadly, January also brought the news that we'd be losing our farm shop. I'm sure if like me you used the shop weekly, you'll miss the convenience of groceries on our doorstep and the fantastic quality of the meat. These are difficult trading times for many, but British agriculture has generally taken a hit in recent years. When will this country stop being obsessed by cheap, cheap, cheap and actually take an interest in how our dinners get to our tables and have a conscience about how our livestock are reared and how farmers can make a living faced with competition from heavily subsidised inferior produce from Europe? Sad times for our rural economy that the UK is becoming increasingly urban and people are losing touch with a proud history. Too many seem to think that food is produced in microwaveable plastic cubes and the countryside is just a tourist attraction. I know all the farm shop's customers will thank Lois, Gemma, Issy and their team for the last few years and wish Will & Lois well with future plans for the farm.

**On the Parish Council front**, we're really hoping that a spell of drier weather will enable us to get on with a few small projects we have identified. We have booked a painter to give the phone box a much-needed makeover as soon as weather allows. I've seen his work on another defib phone box in a local village and it will be great to see ours shiny and proud again!

We'll be chasing up the implementation of the **Speedwatch** scheme to have that in place in time for increased summer traffic and you will hopefully see a new sign at the white gate, designating us a **Community Speedwatch** village. We are also looking at placing some kind of planter or plant display at the village white gate, to give it a bit more 'presence' and to more clearly 'own' our verge. We'll keep you posted.

We've been nagging the County Council (OCC) – the Highway Operations Team at OCC – to do something about clearing our blocked road drains and we'll continue to nag! It would be nice to be able to walk the village road without needing waders! If anyone feels inclined to report the blocked drains on FixMyStreet (again!), it might keep the pressure on them.

As I mentioned briefly before, the Parish Council would like to implement and encourage something of a wildlife diversity project in the village. We have a few ideas, but it would be lovely to get villagers involved – please drop us a line ([mail@waterperry.org](mailto:mail@waterperry.org), chairman@waterperry.org) with suggestions, or even better, come along to our next meeting.

While on the subject of wildlife, something of a personal appeal - please drive carefully on the roads over the next month or two: February is peak time for foxes and badgers to be travelling further afield to find mates and to establish new territories and deer will also be

on the move more as young animals seek their own territories. In cold weather they may travel to find new food sources. This will inevitably bring them into conflict with traffic especially on the lanes. The colouring that gives them camouflage in dappled woodland, fields and muddy banks unfortunately also makes them hard to spot as they graze along verges or attempt to cross roads. I am sickened every time I see a poor crumpled body at the road edge, knowing that so often this could have been avoided with a bit more driver attention to the road ahead. This isn't the forum for debate about vermin, control or disease, but I would ask you just to consider that until as recently as the late 1900s in the Indian and the African continents tigers and elephants (and many other animals) were considered a threat to farmers and their livelihoods and were routinely hunted to the point of teetering on the edge of extinction: foxes, badgers, deer, owls, otters, stoats and weasels are OUR wildlife – lets respect them all, after all, we're the ones encroaching on their habitats. On a purely practical note, roe deer, muntjac and badgers can weigh in at around the same as your 4-6 years old child or your family pet labrador. Imagine the impact of hitting one on your emotions and on your car. Look ahead, especially at night, and be ready to stop quickly to let an animal pass safely on its way.

Finally, still on the subject of habitat and wildlife, as this month's magazine goes to press the Inquiry into the appeal by the developers to build the **Science & Technology Park at Waterstock** will be drawing to a close. Thanks to huge concerted efforts driven by Waterstock residents, a very powerful case against development has been put forward, drawing on evidence from wildlife groups, the CPRE, golfers, riders and walkers – in the end it will be down to the Inspector to decide and we must hope that he has been impressed and swayed by all the evidence and passion. Updates from Waterstock are posted on our local Facebook groups.

### **The next Parish Council meeting is scheduled for Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> February.**

A final note on PC business – new guidance is that parish councils should fall into line with official 'government' domain names to make it clear that the PC is a local government entity. This will mean a new website address and email addresses to include the ".gov.uk" suffix - the Parish Council's new website address will be [www.waterperrywiththomley-pc.gov.uk](http://www.waterperrywiththomley-pc.gov.uk). The new address will be up-and-running in the next few weeks, but for the next few months, the current website address ([www.waterperry.org](http://www.waterperry.org)) will also be in operation. Look out for more information in the March edition of HW&W News and via the village Facebook group.

*Sue Parker*

### **Vases for the church flowers**

Having a clear out?

If you have any vases - large or small, glass, metal or pottery - could you drop them round to Jacqui at Duck Cottage (near the post box). A small team do the church flowers every week and would be very grateful for some more vessels. We do a symmetrical display on the altar, flowers in the porch, by the desk with the Visitors Book and two posies for the Waterperry Horticulture School founder Beatrix Havergal and for Avice Sanders together with much loved villager Kit, so any donated can be put to use. Thank you in advance!

*Helen Marshall*



# *Waterstock News*

## Flooding update

The ditches running through the village that Stephen, Jason, Geoff and Michael tackled recently are now flowing well and provided they don't block at pinch points we are hopeful this will improve our flood protection. The houses that were flooded in September are sadly still drying out so Angela, Keith, Lizzie and family are still not able to move back but hopefully it won't be long now. Meanwhile John W is leading the way to open up the exit route of water from village ditches down through his wall and garden to the fish keep at foot of our garden. He has taken down a section of damaged wall and is busy undertaking repairs. The next section that was going to be rebuilt eventually has fallen down spontaneously during latest winds – John advises that it was badly bowed and made worse by the flood. He says those that have walls on the village side of old garden should check their walls as they too may be bowed or leaning partly from age and partly from the force of water from the flood.

On a particularly cold January Rob and Geoff did a very worthwhile but freezing two hour inspection of the village with Carl Stallwood, Highways Consultant for Oxfordshire County Council. He came to advise us and review actions following the floods in September. He praised some of the good stuff we are already doing and made some recommendations which Rob will be following up with individual households. He also mentioned he is working with SODC on the flooding outside Chilwell House School.

## Big Birthday

After a rough time this year healthwise, Jane (Hanson) is doing really well and had a lovely celebration of her 80<sup>th</sup> birthday with family and friends. She is living proof that 80 is the new 60 as she really does not look it!

## Sad news from Waterperry

Waterperry Farm Shop is closing /will have closed by the time this newsletter is published. It was a lifeline during lockdown as many of us relied on the deliveries from Lois during Covid. It has also been a popular 'destination' for Waterstockians and others to walk to with its lovely selection of foods, nice coffee, toy tractor rides (grandchildren favourite) as well as meat, deli and other produce. We will definitely miss it and thank Lois and her team for all their hard work.

## Sheep driving through the village

After around a thirty year break, for the second time in recent months we had the joy of seeing a couple of hundred sheep being herded by some very keen sheepdogs and 'shepherds' through the village to their fields. The sheep arrived by truck but the farmer didn't want to bring a big wagon through the village so they off loaded them at the Ickford end of the lane and herded them up through Stockwell Lane to Richard Hazell's land.

## Final Stages of Public Inquiry into Proposed Development on Golf Course

Henry Manisty who has been leading our defence team asked for a big thank you to everyone from near and far that came to support our expert witnesses and speakers. In particular, given the distance from Waterstock to Cholsey special thanks go to regular attendees like Sara (who managed every day!), Rozzie and Rodney, Carole, Jenny B, Susie and Nick, Johnny P, Talbots, Arthurs, Spencers, John W, Chris Hill and Clark Friend from

Tiddington and Paul Earley from Thame.

Henry summarises the final witness sessions of the Inquiry completed in late January: “There was a strong turnout of golfers and Waterstockians to support Nick Edmondson who made the Parish's case about the damage that would be caused if Waterstock Golf Club were to close. England Golf went first, with a well-argued case against the development, its witness surviving a fierce cross examination from the developer's barrister. Nick then gave a terrific passionate performance, making powerful points, as did Dave Youens, in a moving contribution from the perspective of a disabled golfer. They were followed by an impromptu and highly effective intervention by the Captain of the Waterstock Golf Club's Seniors Team. This was a session that needed to go well and it did. Thanks and congratulations to Nick and all the golfers.

The next session covered more general planning matters in particular, to recent changes to Green Belt policy creating the new Grey Belt concept intended to facilitate development within the Green Belt. Here Michael Tyce, following on from the Council's planning expert, displayed his mastery of the Green Belt agenda and presented a detailed case for why Waterstock's Green Belt protections should remain strong even under the revised planning regime. He again drew attention, to the failure of the developers to demonstrate any need for a Science & Technology Park at Waterstock, when well-established alternatives in the Science Vale and elsewhere, already exist in Oxfordshire. It was an impressive performance that reduced the developer's barrister to silence. Unexpectedly he decided not to cross examine a clearly disappointed Michael, who was more than ready to face the challenge!

During the proceedings there was a discussion on flooding, during which the developers claimed that flood risk on the development site, based on Environment Agency projections, was low. Fortunately, Edward Dyson was in the audience and, in a spirited intervention, pointed out that his house and others in nearby Draycott had also been assessed at low risk of flooding by the Environment Agency-- and had flooded no less than three times.

There was then a Round Table discussion, chaired by the Inspector, on what Conditions should be imposed on the development if he allows the Appeal. This is work still in progress. The closing speeches of the barristers appearing for SODC, the developer and Waterstock will be heard at the end of January and then we wait for up to two months for the Inspectors Decision.”

*Lorna Arthur*

*February* great for *Snowdrop* walks



Waterperry  
Gardens

## **WINTER** AT WATERPERRY GARDENS

There are few better places to celebrate the arrival of spring than Waterperry Gardens in Oxfordshire, where the historic ornamental gardens provide the perfect setting for the Galanthus. These wonderful little heralds of spring carpet the old orchard and riverside walks at this time of the year, and winter aconites are also likely to bring a smile to visitors' faces, providing new hints of colour in the garden (normal garden entrance fee applies).

Waterperry boasts beautiful displays of double and single-flowered snowdrops all around the 20 acres of gardens and is the perfect excuse for a walk in the gardens followed by a visit to the Teashop to warm up - a lovely way to spend time with friends and family.

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