Challow NEWS

~ November 2026 ~



8th November

11.00 am

Act of Remembrance

The Community of East Challow are invited to pay their respect to the fallen and observe the 2 minute Silence

Village War Memorial

St Nicholas Church ~ Lych Gate

'Challow News' is the Community Newsletter of St. Nicholas Church, East Challow

Contacts

St Nicholas

Main Street, East Challow.
OX12 9SH

Churchwardens

Mrs Liz Belcher: 07842 407492
Dr. Jeff Penfold: 01235 763173

Vicar: Rev Alec Gill

07739 563894
Email: vicaralec@valebenefice.org.uk

Associate Vicar:
Rev Dr. Miriam Jones
07474 095190
vicarmiriam@valebenefice.org.uk

Licensed Lay Minister: Sarah Shackleton
07587 776609
Email: SarahLLM@valebenefice.org.uk

Benefice Office: Grove Parish Church,
Main Street, Grove. OX12 7LQ
Open: Mon - Fri 10.00 - 12.00
Tel: 01235 771479
Email: office@valebenefice.org.uk

a church NEAR YOU | THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND

Details of all Services and Festivals can be found on the St. Nicholas website page of A Church Near You
www.achurchnearyou.com/church/5811/

East Challow Parish Council
clerk@eastchallowpc.co.uk
Cricket Club - 01235 763335
R B L Club - 01235 763430
Village Hall - bookings.ecvh@gmail.com
Challow News - nigel.langford@me.com

Mably Way Health Centre
Church Street - 01235 770245
Newbury Street - 01235 639521

Emergency Defibrillator Locations

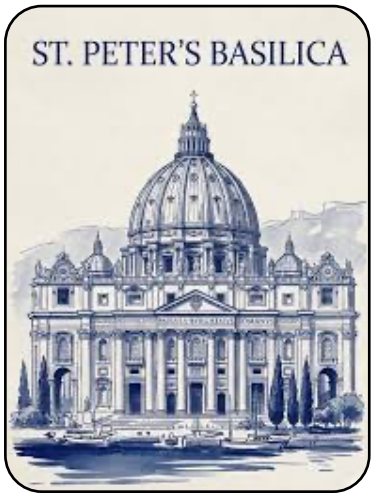
The Old Red Telephone Box
The Village Green, Main Street. OX12 9SR



Entrance Doorway
Challow & Childrey Cricket Club
Vicarage Hill. OX12 9RR

3 - Digit Numbers

999 - Emergency
111 - NHS (non emergency)
101 - POLICE (non emergency)
105 - NATIONAL POWER CUT SERVICE



St Peter's Basilica 400th Anniversary

Four hundred years ago, on 18th November 1626, St Peter's Basilica in the Vatican City was completed. It is the largest church in the world (measured by its interior).

Planned at first by Pope Nicholas V in the 15th century, its construction started on 18th April 1506, under Pope Julius II. The idea was to replace a 4th century church – Old St Peter's Basilica – built by the Emperor Constantine, supposedly on the site of Peter's martyrdom and burial. The new building took 120 years to finish.

Its dome, designed by Michelangelo, rises to a height of almost 450 feet from the floor of the Basilica to the top of its external cross and is the tallest dome in the world.

The original design of the Italian Renaissance church was created by Donato Bramante, with additional features by Carlo Maderno and Gian Lorenzo Bernini.

Despite its size and prominence, St Peter's Basilica is not the Pope's official seat and does not rank first of the major basilicas of Rome. That honour goes to the Pope's Cathedral, the Arch-basilica of St John Lateran, which is also seen as the mother church of all churches in communion with the Catholic Church, despite being located outside Vatican City.

Nevertheless St Peter's functions for most purposes as the Pope's principal church, because nearly all Papal liturgies and ceremonies take place there: this is because of its location within Vatican City, its size, and the convenience of being close to the Papal residence. The liturgies at which the Pope presides draw congregations of up to 80,000 people.

It also contains the ancient "Chair of Saint Peter", a gift to Pope John VIII from Holy Roman Emperor Charles the Bald in 875 which, despite its dubious pedigree, is used to symbolise the line of apostolic succession.

Challow Chatter

Hello Everyone...

It seems unbelievable that it's November already, and as I am writing this the sun is shining and the birds are singing, but of course all can change very rapidly.

Roxy and I are still out and about enjoying the weather and countryside. There have been some beautiful mornings with a ground mist covering the area, and on the surrounding hills it's looks almost like snow, then as the sun gets higher it gradually burns off the mist leaving the fields exposed. Absolutely amazing. I couldn't find as many conkers as last year, luckily my son brought me some, (he doesn't mind indulging my eccentricity) so I have enough for my bowls of spider deterrents to place around the house. I haven't a clue where this idea came from, but I have done it for years.

Our Harvest Festival was wonderful, the Church was beautifully decorated, so many thanks to all those who made the lovely displays and made it look so special. The Cubs and Beavers decorated an illuminated tree with messages on the leaves they had made, it was most impressive. It was good to have them in church for the service. This year we supported the local food bank and had donations from St. Nicholas school, the Cubs and Beavers, and of course our own congregation. In all 160 items were given. With our monetary collection, and the sale of the fresh produce we were also able to give £190. 00 to the food bank. Thank you so much everyone, I think we did well.

Jeff Penfold was our valiant Ride and Strider this year and his sponsorship raised £325.00 which will be split between the Historic Church Trust and our own St. Nicholas Church. Well done that man. Thanks also, to the team who welcomed the visitors to our church offering refreshments, and of course the sponsors.

Happy 100th Birthday Marion

It is with great delight that I can tell you that Marion Lovegrove celebrated her 100th birthday on 30th September.

Marion was married to Peter in St. Nicholas Church in March 1953and lived at Park Terrace along with Peter's parents while Peter did his National Service. Sue their daughter was brought up there until they moved to Windmill Hill in 1958. Frances their other daughter was brought up at Windmill Hill. Peter and Marion were married for 54 years and Marion continued living there until she moved to St Katherine's House in May this year. Marion attended church regularly and also helped with the practical side of things. She recalls spring cleaning the church with Mrs Ilott when she was younger, the hot water for scrubbing the floor had to be carried over the road from Mrs Ilott's and it was a down on your hands and knees job. Knowing both of them I expect they had a good laugh while they worked. Marion also worked for Mr and Mrs Ody, on the days she worked there she would boil an egg so that Mr Ody could take it to the vicarage for Rev Anderson's breakfast.

She was also a dinner lady at St Nicholas school working with her friend Bet Denny the cook. She also sold poppies for Remembrance Day at the school and in the village.

She was a member of the Women's Section of the British Legion where, with her friends Bet Denny and Val Langford sold bingo tickets on Wednesday and Sunday nights. Marion was also an accomplished dart's player for the Goodlake Arms, and has trophies to prove it.

It's a real pleasure to write about Marion I got to know her through church and other village activities, when I first came to the village over forty years ago. I know she had a card from King Charles and Queen Camilla on her birthday, which I'm sure she was pleased with. Happy birthday Marion even if it is a bit belated. I hope you like this short tribute to you.

It will bonfire night soon, so I hope you enjoy yourselves safely, either at an organised display or at home. Please make sure you keep pets safe and secure. Roxy is very nervous of the bangs from the fireworks so I shall try to keep her distracted from it. When I was a child my brother's, sister, and myself used to save up and buy a box of Standard Fireworks from the village shop, for about half a crown. All the kids did, all perfectly legal and we were just told to behave and not be stupid with them. My family always went to my Aunt and Uncles at Grove for a huge bonfire party, half the village were there, with an enormous fire, a Guy and very little supervision, we set off our own fireworks and I can't remember any mishaps ever happening, it was a great evening. The thought of it all looking back as an adult makes me shudder though.

Remembrance Sunday is on 8th November, and the Act of Remembrance will take place at the Lychgate starting just before 11.00am, Everyone is welcome to join us in this ceremony which I think is an important event, so I hope that you can be there to honour those that gave so much for their country. Please try to call in to see the poppy displays done by Helen Sherwood they are always spectacular.

An early note for your diary Carols on the Green will be December 14th 7.00pm. let's hope the weather is kind to us. It couldn't be worse than last year when it chucked it down, but we still persevered. So, see you by the Christmas tree on the green.

That's all for now I hope to see you about the village when I'm out and about with Roxy.

So as always stay safe for yourself and others.

Liz Belcher

East Challow Parish Council

www.eastchallowpc.co.uk

Autumn Clear Up

It's the time of year when we are all tidying up our gardens for the winter. Please could we remind villagers to cut back any vegetation overhanging public rights of way.

Reminder

This is a polite reminder that the barrier gate in the Parish Council car park, adjacent to St Nicholas School is closed daily at dusk or 9.00pm, whichever comes sooner. With the winter coming the gate will be closed quite early in the evening.

It is opened by 7.30 the next morning

Dog Fouling

With increased usage of the recreation ground for sport, please can I remind you that Under the Dogs (Fouling of Land) Act 1996 a person who is in charge of a dog must clean up after it when it fouls any footpath, highway, verge or other open space to which the public have access. Please clean up after your dog.

Road Closure

There will be a temporary Road Closure on Road Between Circourt Road and Faringdon Road, East Challow, Wantage.

A Temporary Traffic Regulation Notice is being issued and will operate from 14/12/2026 08:00

The anticipated completion date is 14/12/2026 18:00.

Parish Council Meeting

The next Parish Council meeting will take place in the Village Hall at 7.00 pm

Wednesday 11th November 2026

You are welcome to attend, minutes are available to view on the Parish Council website.

Play Area update

The toddler swings are now back in service. Both toddler swing seats have now been replaced. Thank you for your patience whilst the Parish Council carried out this essential maintenance.

Recreation Area update

The Parish Council are pleased that they have been able to install a second picnic bench on the recreation ground. The Parish Council were able to do this with the support of a grant from the Oxfordshire County Councillor Priority Fund.

MUGA/Tennis Court

Please note the MUGA/tennis court will be closed from Sunday 25th October for the winter months. This will be opened again around Easter

Oxford Traffic Filters

From Monday 28 September the traffic filters trial will replace the congestion charge, and car drivers will no longer have the option to pay the £5 congestion charge. Permits are available for many groups, including Oxfordshire residents, Blue Badge holders, community health and care workers, and mobile traders.

From the Editor....

Marion Lovegrove, my neighbour of over 60 years, who I have known all my life recently celebrated her 100th Birthday.

There was a small celebration held in her honor at St Katharine's House in Wantage, attended by her daughter, son in law, grand children and great grandchildren and also friends of the family.



Her 100th Birthday card from the King & Queen was viewed by everyone, birthday cake was eaten and some celebratory fizz was drank as well, it was a lovely afternoon spent remembering times gone by.

Happy Birthday x



Happy 100th Birthday



Marion Lovegrove

1st November - International Day of Prayer for the Persecuted Church

More than 360 million Christians worldwide face persecution in their home countries. This includes harassment, detention, legal restrictions, violence, torture, and even death for their faith in Jesus.

The Bible tells us to pray for those who are persecuted, as if we were ourselves mistreated. It says that if one member of the Body of Christ suffers, we all suffer (1 Cor. 12:26).

And so it is that for more than two decades the World Evangelical Alliance has organised the International Day of Prayer for the Persecuted Church (IDOP). It has become a global event uniting hundreds of millions of Christians worldwide.

The day is held on the first Sunday in November, in order to align it with the liturgical season of All Hallow-tide, which remembers both Christian saints and martyrs.

The IDOP is also supported by Open Doors, The Voice of the Martyrs, and Christian Solidarity Worldwide (CSM), among others.

Those giant autumn house spiders

We've all been there – quietly relaxing at home, when suddenly a HUGE thing with LONG legs scuttles right by you. You can't help but jump, and if you are normal, scream.

What just scared you was a fully grown adult male Eratigena atrica. They are among the largest spiders in Central and Northern Europe.

It has not just come in from the cold. It has been living warm and cosy, hidden in your house for weeks. Now it has left its dark hiding spot to race across your carpets and walls and bed with a definite purpose in mind: it is looking for love.

For autumn is mating time for the big spiders, and there are also females living in your house, safe and secure in cracks, lofts and behind furniture.

If you think giant house spiders are big, you are right. With a body length of 1.6cm, their leg span can commonly reach up to 7.5 cm. And heaven help you if you find you are sharing your house with a cardinal spider (Tegenaria parietina) – their bodies are up to 2cm long, and their long hairy legs can span up to 12cm. If that thing runs down the couch towards you, you'll notice it! And giant house spiders are fast. They can hit speeds of up to half a metre per second.

The good news is that giant house spiders are as scared of you as you are of them. They are disease-free, and their bite is extremely rare and harmless. They even pay their rent by eating your flies, mosquitoes, and other small bugs.

So, try and be kind to them, and let them live with you – they don't like the cold outside very much. Just lift your feet as they gallop across the carpet…

SlimmingWorld

feel real good

Tuesday - Grove
Old Mill Hall Dixon Suite
OX12 7LB
4:00pm, 5:30pm & 7:00pm

Thursday - Wantage
Methodist Church Hall
OX12 8DA
5:30pm & 7:00pm

Saturday - East Challow
Challow & Childrey Cricket Club
OX12 9RR
7:30am & 9:00am



With Becky
Member & Consultant
07359 531030





~ Save the Date ~

Monday 14th December

7.00 pm

Carol Singing

on the Village Green

(Carol sheets will be provided)



King Alfred Quilting & Textile Group

Monthly Meetings

Are you creative? Do you like textiles, hand sewing, or machine sewing?

Come along to the King Alfred Quilting and Textile Group in East Challow. We're about much more than just quilting; we turn our hand to all sorts of textile arts and needlecraft and a bit of mix media. Whether you're a lifelong maker or a complete beginner, there's always a warm welcome waiting for you.

We meet on 1st Wednesday evening of the month where we have speakers, or demonstrations. The 3rd Wednesday of the month is a sewing day where you can hone your skills and get advice and chat.

Wednesday 7th November:

19.00 hours: @ East Challow Village Hall.

We have an in-house demonstration on the Japanese art of Sashiko (Sashiko is a traditional Japanese hand-sewing technique that uses a simple running stitch to reinforce, repair, and decorate fabrics)

~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~

Wednesday 18th November:

10.00am: Sewing day @ Challow & Childrey Cricket Club.

Come along to see what we are about and join our friendly group. You can come to a day or evening events or both.

Visitors are welcome for all events. (fees apply)

For more information visit our website

www.kingalfredquilters.org.uk

Helen on 07763 923000

Janice 07786 333497

Wantage Art Group

7.30 Wednesday
November 18, 2026
East Challow Village Hall
OX12 9SR

Sketching clothed figures:

Demonstration and practical session



Sue Klemencic will give a brief demonstration before leading us from quick sketches to longer poses for more finished drawings.



Please bring your own sketch books or paper, preferably A3 or bigger, plus pencils and any other materials you would like to use.

New members and visitors always welcome
Only £5 for first two visits!

You can contact us on wantageart@gmail.com
For more info see www.wantageartgroup.co.uk or tel. 01235767829

WARM SPACES • WARM SPACES

East Challow Community Warm Spaces

Join us for a Hot Drink and friendly conversation at

Challow and Childrey Cricket Club from 11.00 am

Friday 6th November

Friday 20th November

The Parish Church of St Nicholas

Notices



To all who attended the funeral of Mary Mann.

Thank you so much for being there at the service.

Your presence was a great comfort. We also want to thank you for your generous donations to St Nicholas Church in Mary's memory.

It is a wonderful tribute.

With our gratitude,
David, Peter, Alison, and Jonathan.



Sunday 8th Nov

Remembrance Day

Charitable Offerings will be taken in aid of the **Royal British Legion**



~ Thank you for your generosity ~

Parish Church of St. Nicholas - Service Information & Rotas

Sunday	1st Reading	2nd Reading	Gospel	Coverings
1st November **Morning Worship** Jeff Penfold **All Saints Day**	Revelation 7: 9 - 17	1 John 3: 1 - 3	Matthew 5: 1 - 1 2	White
8th November **Eucharist** Rev Alec Gill **Remembrance Day**	*REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY* (see clergy for alternative readings)			White / Red
15th November **Eucharist** Rev Alec Gill **2nd Before Advent**	Zephaniah 1: 7 + 12 - end	1 Thessalonians 5: 1 - 11	Matthew 25: 14 - 30	White
22nd November **Eucharist & Baptism** Rev Miriam Jones **Christ the King**	Ezekiel 34: 11-16 + 20-24	Ephesians 1: 15 - 23	Matthew 25: 31 - 46	White / Red
29th November **Eucharist** Rev Alec Gill **Advent Sunday**	Isaiah 64: 1 - 9	1 Corinthians 1: 3 - 9	Mark 13: 24 - 37	Purple / Blue

	Date	Sacristan	Sidesperson	Prayers	Readings	Organist
1st Sunday	**1st November**	Ruth	Frances / Nigel	Linda	Ruth	Ruth
2nd Sunday	**8th November**	Claire / Louise	Linda / Noel	Louise / Claire	Graham	Ruth
3rd Sunday	**15th November**	Jenny	Liz / Jeff	Jenny	Fiona	Graham
4th Sunday	**22nd November**	Nigel	Trish / Sue	Nick	Claire	Graham
5th Sunday	**29th November**	Nigel	Liz / Jeff	Paul / Nick	Jenny	Graham

~ If you are unable to attend please arrange cover for your week ~

Thursday	Sacristan
5th Nov	Mandy
12th Nov	Jenny
19th Nov	Heather
26th Nov	Mandy

Cleaning		Flowers	Coffee
26th Oct - 1st Nov	Linda	Heather	Mandy
2nd - 8th Nov	Claire	Claire	Jan / Hilary
9th - 15th Nov	Savita	Jenny	Val / Savita
16th - 22nd Nov	Mandy	Mandy	Linda, Janet, Sylv
23rd - 29th Nov	Sue & Trish	ADVENT	Sue,Trish, Frances

St. Nicholas Church

THE 200 Club

October

~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~

£50 - N° 135 ~ Mrs S. Swift

£20 - N° 38 ~ Mr R. Haynes

£10 - N° 166 ~ K. Lindsey

~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~

Would you like to join?
For further information please contact
Tricia Shand - 01235 764222
the.shandies@btinternet.com

Dirty Oven?

I'm here to help...

I'm Tom, your local Ovenu expert. I can bring your cooking appliances back to a showroom shine using 100% eco-friendly, odour free products. I professionally refresh ovens, hobs, extractors and microwaves, giving you more time to savour the moments that matter.

ovenu oven valeting service
01235 239 938
ovenu.co.uk/south-oxon

All entries for the **December & January** Issue of the Challow News
Must be submitted by
10th November 2026 *
Email: nigel.langford@me.com

Please note
**** NEW MONTHLY PRINT DEADLINE***

Subscriptions to the 200 Club contribute towards the £20,000 which is required annually to keep our Village Church open,
in good repair and available for all who wish to use it.

The 200 Club is a monthly draw

There are 3 prizes each month - £50, £20 and £10

There is an additional prize of £100 in December.

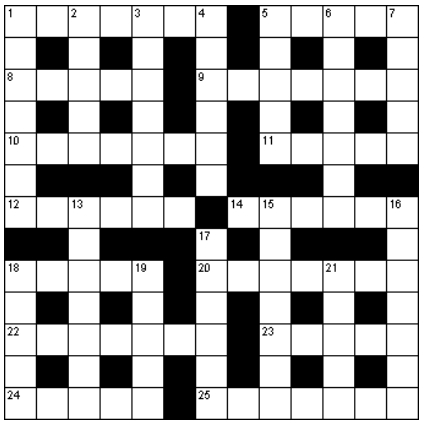
The draw takes place on the First Sunday of every month

The cost is £2 per number per month, which can be paid monthly, 6 monthly or annually, and can be paid for by Cash or Standing Order.

If you would like to join the 200 Club, please contact Tricia Shand

Email: the.shandies@btinternet.com

Telephone: 01235 764222



Across

1 Borne (7)

5 Easily understood (5)

8 Roamed (5)

9 Floral wreath (7)

10 Connected row of houses (7)

11 Over (5)

12 Money chest (6)

14 Shut (6)

18 Serena's sister (5)

20 Root vegetable (7)

22 Driver under instruction (7)

23 Surpass (5)

24 Topic (5)

25 Changed (7)

Down

1 Unpredictable (7)

2 Port in Kent (5)

3 Bureaucratic procedure (3,4)

4 Knife for stabbing (6)

5 Immature form of insect (5)

6 Coloured pencils (7)

7 Evade (5)

13 Flourish of trumpets (7)

15 Of greatest size (7)

16 Marked with spots (7)

17 Old Greek city (6)

18 Personal manservant (5)

19 Gumption (5)

21 More pleasant (5)





WANTED

Record Collections
LP's - Singles & Memorabilia
Rock - Blues - Folk - Jazz - Reggae
Large or Small
Collections in Ex Condition
> Cash Paid <

07789 158485 / 01235 760383

SKY SPORTS
SHOWN HERE
- LIVE - Super Sunday Football

Challows RBL Club

Call in and see all that the Club has to offer

Socialise over a drink from the Bar or enjoy a game of Darts, Snooker or Pool

Opening Hours

Monday - Thursday

7.00 pm - Close

~ ~ ~

Friday - 6.00 pm - Close

Saturday 1.00 pm - Close

Sunday 1.00 pm - Close

Planning an Event or Party

Our Main Hall

with Kitchen Facilities

are available to hire

~ Contact ~

01235 763430

Hand Bell Ringers

10.30 am

Every Tuesday

New Members Welcome

01235 763430

For more details



Saturday Night Entertainment

~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~

14th November

Locarno Beat

8.30 pm

~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~

21st November

Flashback Band 80's

8.00 pm

Admission £10.00

[Cash on the door]



Buddy Holly Tribute

Sunday Night Cash Bingo



(Eyes down at 8.00pm)

Monday Night Poker

redtooth poker

Challows Afternoon Club

for all over 60's

we meet every month

2 pm - 4 pm

Every 3rd Thursday

Everyone Welcome

Club Membership is NOT a requirement to attend any events here

Thames Valley Police and Crime Commissioner

New CCTV Hub for Oxfordshire and spiking sniffer dogs!

Early in October I officially launched a new countywide CCTV control room in Abingdon Police Station.

The new arrangements bring together public space CCTV from across Oxfordshire into one enhanced control room as part of my Thames Valley CCTV Partnership.

The benefits are clear. In addition to a modernised more effective system, we can expect closer links with frontline officers and police control rooms to help prevent crime, catch and convict criminals and ultimately increase people's feelings of safety in our public places.

Eight CCTV Operators and one Supervisor will be employed in the Abingdon Control Room, monitoring cameras across the whole of Oxfordshire from one location increasing opportunities to react to live incidents and stop crime as it is taking place. Technological advances will also see CCTV integration with existing police systems to help support investigations, enable officers to access footage remotely, and share high-definition images across the force area more easily.

In a nationwide first, Thames Valley Police have launched a pioneering new police dog capability designed to help identify criminals carrying spiking drugs.

The team of 6 dogs; Maverick, Puma, Dusty, AJ, Reggie and Major, have been specially trained to detect drugs commonly linked to spiking offences, including substances that are often carried in small quantities or in liquid form.

This pioneering new capability demonstrates Thames Valley Police's commitment to tackling violence against women and girls and harmful offences within the night-time economy and builds upon the force's other work in the night-time economy including Project Vigilant.

While incidents of spiking in Thames Valley remain low, prevention tactics such as these help to stop harm before it occurs; ensuring less people become victims of crime. The dogs will support proactive police operations across both force areas, helping to identify, disrupt and pursue offenders.



Matthew Barber

Listening. Serving. Taking Action

www.matthewbarber.co.uk

CHALLOW & CHILDREY CRICKET CLUB

OUR WINTER OFFERING

SKY & TNT Sports

now shown LIVE

Bar opening times through this period will generally be

Monday	4pm - 9pm
Tuesday	4pm - 9pm
Wednesday	4pm - 9pm
Thursday	4pm - 9pm (11.00pm when Darts match is on)
Friday	4pm - 10pm
Saturday	11.30am - 6.30pm
Sunday	11am - 6pm

If you would like to join the club as a member it's just £20 for the year

Remember that everyone is welcome at the Cricket Club, membership is not required to enjoy the facilities, although it does mean we can keep you up to date with news and events at the Club

www.challowcricket.co.uk

admin@challowcricket.co.uk

01235 763335

National Tree Week

21st to 29th November

It really is time to appreciate our trees. Did you know:

That the UK has 123,000 ancient and veteran trees, and more ancient oak trees than the rest of Europe combined?

Or that trees help us feel better? Studies have found that exposure to forests generally reduces our mental and physical stress, anxiety, and depression.

Or that 95% of land carbon in the UK is stored in soil, and trees help put it there? When wood and leaves fall, their carbon gets stored in the soil.

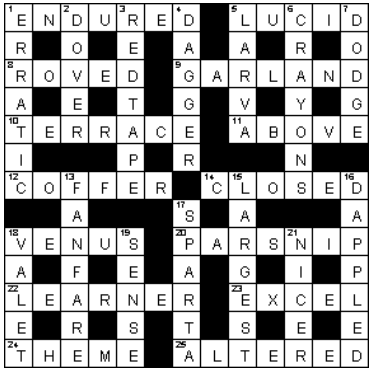
Or that hedgerows alongside our roads can reduce air pollution exposure by up to 63%?

No wonder that each year the Tree Council and its partners bring together the conservation sector, volunteers and tree-lovers to mark the start of the annual tree planting season. Together, they plant thousands of trees and hedgerows, to celebrate these "magnificent mainstays" of our landscape.

And we need more trees. Sadly, only 13% of the UK's total land area is covered in trees. That's compared to an average of 46% in Europe. In England, the figure is just 10%.

On the plus side, there are more than 80 community tree nurseries in the UK, growing an estimated 250,000 trees a year, often from locally collected seed, and which are given away or sold at minimal cost.





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sjackrill@gmail.com

Good news about dog theft

The only good news there can possibly be about dog theft is that it is going down, and finally this is true.

After a horrific spike in thefts during the COVID-19, when due to 2020 lockdowns it seemed that everyone wanted a puppy, things have now settled down. According to pet insurance data and police figures, recorded thefts have dropped by more than 20%.

The new Pet Abduction Act of 2024 made pet theft a specific criminal offence, although criminals still target popular breeds like French Bulldogs, Dachshunds, and Staffordshire Bull Terriers.

So, it pays to keep your dog safe. Make sure your garden is securely locked, never leave your dog alone outside a shop or in your car, and ensure your microchip details are up to date. Finally, take some clear photographs of your dog, from different angles, and record any unusual or distinguishing features they may have.

Why you should not squeeze your teabag

More than eight million of us drink at least two cups of tea a day. Many of us drink five cups or more. As a nation, we love tea.

George Orwell loved tea. Back in 1946 he even wrote an essay, 'A Nice Cup of Tea' to set out his 11 rules for making the perfect brew. But nowadays, we turn to chemistry professors on the Tea Advisory Panel for their tea-making tips.

Why chemistry professors? Because there are almost 2,000 chemicals in tea, which is a "wildly rich molecular mix". And everything you do to your tea changes its chemical makeup.



So – some tips:

First of all, use *boiling* water on the tea leaves.

Secondly, warm your mug or teapot. That ensures the water is HOT when it hits your tea leaves.

Thirdly, swirl the bag or pot – swirling releases more of those subtle flavours.

Fourthly, let it mash, steep or brew for three to five minutes, to get the best flavour.

Fifthly, *never* squeeze your teabag! That releases bitter tannic acids.

Sixth – add the milk last, or the water won't be hot enough to brew your tea. Apparently, adding milk first is a historical relic from when boiling tea could break fragile china cups.

Seventh – take a moment to enjoy your tea. Chemists stress that medium to strong tea is really good for you. It increases your hydration, your cognitive function, and your bone health. It even helps cut the risk of type-2 diabetes and heart disease.

Finally, beware tea in America. They do odd things with it there. They use lukewarm water over indifferent tea bags. Even worse, they sometimes put a teabag in a mug of cold water and then boil it in a microwave. This is sacrilege!

"Thank you for putting the colour into my once black-and-white world."

Life Coaching

and

Neurodiversity Coaching

Orchard House Clinic
Wantage

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Open Doors and the persecuted church

***"With God all things are possible."*- Matthew 19:26**

Have you noticed what the signs outside St Nicholas' church say, at the moment?

In Dhamtari district of Chhattisgarh State, India, there are churches where you will find signs like these: "Only Christians are allowed to enter church for prayers. If others come of their own free will, they will be held responsible for their choice."

Why would a church put up a sign that seems to discourage people from attending? The reason is to do with India's state anti-conversion laws. Under the strict terms of the Rajasthan Prohibition of Unlawful Conversion of Religion Bill enacted 2025, for instance, even a voluntary conversion must be approved by the local authorities.

More than half of India's population (about 718 million people in a country of roughly 1.4 billion) live under such laws as currently 12 out of 28 states continue to expand statutes, effectively restricting religious conversion. They purport to protect people from forced conversion but, in practice, the laws are abused to persecute and oppress Christians. generically as 'anti-conversion laws', they can vary in their severity, depending on which state you live in. States that have enacted anti-conversion laws more recently, such as Maharashtra and Rajasthan, often add stricter procedures, harsher sanctions, and stronger links to interfaith marriage. Punishment can range from demolition or forfeiture of property, to arrest and even life imprisonment.

To give an example of how this can work in practice, think about the thousands of believers in the UK and Ireland who flocked to Christian festivals this summer - joyful places of worship, teaching, prayer and community. Nobody would expect their time there to end in arrest. But at a three-day Christian conference in Rajasthan State in June, a meeting of around 200 believers in Udaipur was disrupted by Hindutva extremist groups, acting as vigilantes, who circulated videos of their disruption on social media and accused the organisers of trying to forcibly convert tribal people to Christianity.

"Following the implementation of the anti-conversion law and the arrest of these Christians, the Christian community has become fearful of gathering, whether publicly or privately," says Suraj Thakur. "Many house churches have stopped meeting. Christian activities are under surveillance, and even Christian centres hesitate to rent their premises for Christian activities." He adds: "Local political representatives of Bharatiya Janta Party (BJP), along with Hindutva extremist groups, actively oppose Christians by delivering hate speeches against tribal Christians, thus creating disputes among villagers. Christians are often accused of receiving foreign funds and converting others to Christianity through allurement."

That's why signs are appearing outside churches. They are there as a precaution against violent attacks, at the same time, effectively saying, 'Enter at your own risk'. Those who do, and who are not registered as Christians, have to fill in a form stating that they are visiting the church voluntarily. They have to provide personal details, photo ID, and information about the place of worship, together with a declaration that they have not been unduly influenced, threatened or deceived to attend. Imagine if you were asked to fill in such a form before entering St Nic's!

"Christian leaders and believers have become concerned as a result of these reports regarding the freedom and safety of Christian worship," says Priya Sharma*, a local Open Doors partner in India. "We request prayers for the church in India, that it may receive protection, courage, wisdom, justice and peace, and for the freedom of every person to practise their faith without fear." Amen.

"With God all things are possible."

Waste & Recycling Information



Tuesday 3rd November	Green + Brown + Food
Tuesday 10th November	Black + Food
Tuesday 17th November	Green + Brown + Food
Tuesday 24th November	Black + Food
Tuesday 1st December	Green + Brown + Food
Tuesday 8th December	Black + Food



Please ensure your Waste & Recycling Bins are placed on the kerbside before ***06.00 am*** *to ensure your bins are emptied*

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Please return your bins to your property ASAP after collection to ensure they are not blown onto the road causing an obstruction or damage to other vehicles

Please help to keep our Village Tidy and free from Fly Tipping

Please take any Large Items to the Waste & Recycling Centre at Stanford in the Vale

Faringdon Road, SN7 8LD

There is an Air Ambulance BLACK Recycling Bin for Clothing situated in the Parish Council car park on Canal Way

There is also a GREEN Recycling Bin for Shoes etc.

situated in the car park at the Cricket Club on Vicarage Hill

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