

# BLUNSDON

## VILLAGE MAGAZINE

July 2025



Photo by Debra Richardson





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**SEASONED FIREWOOD**



We are excited to share with you that with the generous support of Prestbury Cottage Trust we have finally cleared our historical shop overdraft. We have worked hard to clear all our historical debt since opening the new Shop and Cafe and with effect from 2nd June we are Bank Debt free which is a fantastic place to be - more detail will be shared with our Shareholders at our 2025 AGM in September. We can now focus on investing in our community shop instead of paying interest to the bank.

**Swindon Mayor Visit** We had the pleasure of hosting Madam Mayor, Fay Howard on Wednesday 11th June. Her visit tied in well with seeing our Upland Students in action in the shop and cafe. We shared our story over last 22 years and were able to demonstrate the value we add to our community not only with the cafe and shop but with the work experience placements and social activities we provide.

**Oude Gin Distillery** June saw the launch of Oude Gin in the shop. We hosted a successful Gin Tasting on 4th June and served Gin Cocktails on Thursday 26th June as part of our late night opening. Please do pop in and take a look at their range of products. Oude are also offering a £1.00 back scheme for recycling your Oude Gin Bottle.

**Expanding our Café** We are pleased to see that our cafe is very popular with both local residents and guests from further afield, so over the coming weeks you will start to see subtle changes as we start to generate more room/tables in the cafe area. We have secured a new feature table so our current large table will be moving into the cafe for larger groups to use or 2 smaller groups/families. Watch this space!

**Summer Raffle** YES it's that time of year again where we have been donated raffle prizes from our suppliers and we are selling tickets at £1.00 each. Please buy your raffle tickets during July and August when you are in the shop or cafe. We will not be running the monthly draw during July and August in order to focus on our Summer Raffle

**Dates for your diary**

- Tuesday 1st July 2.30 pm Tea & Talk: History of Arkell's Brewery with Philip Mercer
- Saturday 30th August 3 pm : Summer Draw and BBQ

**And finally...we are recruiting!** Ryan will be leaving us in September to start his career in the Police Force and our Weekend Assistants, Ed, Oscar and Naomi will be heading off to University. This means we have paid vacancies available in the shop and cafe. If you are interested, please drop off your CV with a covering note to say if you are interested in a weekend position or weekday position as we are recruiting now ready for new staff training in August.

Good Luck!

**Shop opening times are: Mon, Tues, Weds, Sat: 8 am - 5 pm Thurs - Fri 8 am - 7 pm Sunday: 8 am - 4 pm. Cafe closes 1 hour before the shop.**



# BLUNSDON HOLIDAY CLUB



## SUMMER HOLIDAYS 2025

### FUN SUMMER ACTIVITIES

- Sports & Games
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- Water Play
- Team Challenges
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### SESSION TIMES & PRICES



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We also have some spaces within the preschool for September for 2, 3 and 4 year olds - accepting both 15 and 30 hours Government funding.  
Blunsdon Preschool and Holiday Club



## Blunsdon Village Garden Club

June has been another glorious month with lots of warm sunny weather and finally we have had some longed for and much needed rain. Our gardens are now full of a variety of beautiful flowers as we approach midsummer.

Hopefully you are using the lovely weather to spend time outside in your own gardens or are able to travel further afield to explore the beautiful gardens and countryside in the counties around us.

We have a varied programme of talks and activities throughout the year but our July meeting will be for members only as we enjoy an afternoon tea at one of the local garden centres.

Now that Brenda and Stuart are unable to continue caring for the planters outside the village hall we are looking for willing volunteers to take on this task. If you are interested, please get in touch with me in the first instance to discuss what is involved.

As usual there will not be a club meeting in August. Enjoy the Summer.  
Jenny 07949087317



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## **OUR REGULAR EVENTS AND SERVICES AT ST LEONARD'S**

- **Baby & Toddler Group every Wednesday 10am-12pm**
- **Lego Club 1st Saturday 9.30-11am**
- **Men's Breakfast 2nd Saturday 9am in the shop**
- **Coffee & Book Sale 3rd Saturday 10am-12pm**
- **Community Prayers Monday 10-10.30am Fortnightly**
- **Bell Ringing every Friday 6-7pm**
- **Communion Service 1st & 3rd Sunday 10am**
- **Morning Worship 2nd Sunday 10am**
- **Breakfast Church 4th Sunday 9am (with breakfast!)**



**Everyone welcome!**



### **St Leonard's Church, Blunsdon, Weekly Services**

Our services have a monthly pattern depending on where we are in each month.

Anyone is welcome, including children (we have a play corner).

We have a hearing loop, disabled access and we are a registered sight loss friendly church

**1<sup>st</sup> Sunday Holy Communion 10am**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday Morning Worship**

**3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday Holy Communion 10am**

**4<sup>th</sup> Sunday Breakfast Church 9am – we serve a free breakfast from 9am and this is followed by a short informal service at 9.30am**

**5<sup>th</sup> Sunday This service will also be at 10am and will be informal in nature.**

Our communion services serve non- alcoholic wine and gluten free wafers if desired.

Obviously, services at Christmas and Easter will vary.

Please contact Helen [griff9999@btinternet.com](mailto:griff9999@btinternet.com) or Paul [paulkmorris777@gmail.com](mailto:paulkmorris777@gmail.com)



## Parish Council News – July 2025

I am sad to announce that our longest serving Parish Councillor has decided to retire through ill-health. **Mick Compton** is a well-known character in the Parish and has steadfastly supported us for over 40 years. His local knowledge and wide council experience will be missed, along with the stories he can tell about the village (and some of the villagers!). We hope your health improves as you enjoy your well-earned retirement. A massive thank you and good luck old friend.

We have also lost another great friend to the Parish. **Mark Jones** our Caretaker has also left us for pastures new. He has been a stalwart over nearly 20 years looking after the Parish assets and freeing the community of litter. We will miss the jingle of his keys, his cheery smile and chat around the village. Thank you Mark for all you have done in your time with us, and good luck in your new job.

June was not quite as ‘flaming’ as we hoped it would be, but the growth of grass, trees and shrubs has been enormous. So much so that we have again had to intervene and do the Borough’s work along footpaths and verges. Thankfully our trusty **Parish Cllrs Nash and Tayler** have worked hard to improve these overgrown areas. Thank you to them for their hard work. If you have shrubs or trees or any growth next to a footway, can you please ensure they are trimmed and don’t impede any users as they pass your property. Please ensure that there are no nesting birds before you do any major work. Thank you.

We also have the same issue with overgrown graves and plots in the Cemetery. We are going to take a pragmatic view of this issue – if the grave or plot looks unsafe, appears abandoned or neglected or the ownership rights have expired (over 75 years) we will instruct our grounds maintenance team to intervene and take responsibility and make it safe/tidy it up. We will not take over ownership just maintenance. If you have a loved one in the cemetery and you don’t want this to happen, please let us know. Otherwise please have a look and make sure it is maintained, thank you.

### **Linley Road Refurbishment – Multi Use Games Area (MUGA)**

July should see us virtually through the major building works. We do apologise for the difficulties caused by the construction process and hope the benefits outweigh those inconveniences.

### **Village Hall**

Claire our Assistant Clerk has reminded me that there are still some slots available for long-term bookings, so please call her on 01793 705617 or at [Claireboles@blunsdon-pc.gov.uk](mailto:Claireboles@blunsdon-pc.gov.uk) to ask for details. (she works Monday, Tuesday and Thursday) Or you can look on our booking system on the website [www.blunsdonparishcouncil.co.uk](http://www.blunsdonparishcouncil.co.uk).

### **Village Maps**

We have now put the final Village Map in place at the top of High Street on Ermin Street, so stop and have a look.

### Ermin Street Project

We now seem to have found a way to work with SBC Highways, and work on the hedge and tree planting is currently being re-planned in line with their specifications. Our Land Management Consultant **Oliver Saunders** will be about asking residents for their input into the improvements to the verges and roadsides. All in the aid of better road safety and more importantly slower speeds.

### Planning Applications

S/25/0688/BURGES 39 Ermin Street Blunsdon SN26 8AA Change of use from Residential (Use Class C3) to a mixed use as residential and for day care of dogs including use of existing outbuilding/summer house for the housing of dogs. **PC have requested more detail before they can comment.**

S/HOU/25/0672 Erection of single storey rear infill extension to include alterations to the existing conservatory and existing side rear extension. 108 High Street, Blunsdon Swindon SN26 7AB. **PC supported this application**

S/AMEND/25/0608/TB Land at Hill Cottage Blunsdon Swindon SN26 8BZ - Non-Material Amendment from previous application (S/RES/19/1773) relating to removal of proposed footpath in southern part of site. **PC objected to the removal of green space**

### Planning Decisions

S/HOU/25/0398/BURGES 4 Manor Close, Blunsdon Swindon SN26 7BD Conversion of garage into living accommodation. Granted Permission/Delegated Decision

S/HOU/25/0476/MCKELL Uplands 31 High Street Blunsdon SN26 7AG Erection of single storey rear extension, loft conversion and demolition of detached garage. Granted permission/Delegated Decision



### Your Speedwatch Needs You!

Our hardy volunteers are out regularly helping with road safety in the Parish. This has led to many prosecutions by local Police for those abusing the law. They always need volunteers and provide training.

Please contact me if you are interested in helping and have an hour to spend each week, and I will arrange for someone to contact you.

### Swindon Borough Council – Ward Councillors' Surgery

This month's surgery will be in the Village Shop and Cafe as usual, on **Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> July** between 11:30 and 12:30.

### Resident Feedback Welcome

Recently, we've been encouraged to engage more closely with residents regarding parish matters. As you'll see from this newsletter and Facebook, we do regularly share updates about ongoing and upcoming projects. However, we're always keen to hear your ideas and feedback directly.

If you have suggestions about what projects the Parish Council should consider, please let us know by using the **Contact Us** page on our website: [Contact | Blunsdon Parish Council](#). You're welcome to submit your thoughts anonymously—simply enter NA in the name and email fields if you prefer not to provide those details. Alternatively, please pop your





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comments in an envelope and post it in the Village Hall post box marked for the Clerk's attention.

**Parish Council Meetings –**

The regular Parish meetings will be on **Monday 7<sup>th</sup> July** and **Monday 21<sup>st</sup> July 2025**, at 19:30 in the Village Hall. If you want to come along, please let us know, details are on the Parish Council, notice boards, Website in the Blog section and on our Facebook page.

Ian Jankinson – [ianjankinson@blunsdon-pc.gov.uk](mailto:ianjankinson@blunsdon-pc.gov.uk) – 07702 684281

Parish contact details – Tel: 01793 705617 – [clerk@blunsdon-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@blunsdon-pc.gov.uk)

. FOOD FOR THOUGHT.  
Outside Catering



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**Thursday 3rd & Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> July**

**If you would like a copy of our menu, please email  
[grahamrowcliffe58@outlook.com](mailto:grahamrowcliffe58@outlook.com) or WhatsApp 07515 288414  
Pre orders welcome by WhatsApp or text 07515 288414.**

**\*\*\*Did you know the café is open until 7pm on Thursday and you  
can take your fish & chips into the café and enjoy a nice tea or  
coffee with your meal.**

### Notes from the Editor

The magazine is run by volunteers from the village. All your ideas, comments and contributions will always be welcome.

Blunsdon Village Magazine is available to read online at Blunsdon Parish Council website: [blunsdonparishcouncil.co.uk](http://blunsdonparishcouncil.co.uk)

EDITOR: Please email all items for the magazine to [blunsdonmagazine@gmail.com](mailto:blunsdonmagazine@gmail.com)

Arlene tel. 07493 978388

ADVERTS: For advert enquiries please contact Penny on 01793 722073

**Front Cover:** Bill and Ben from Ceres Road allotments

**Your August Magazine will be delivered from: 25<sup>th</sup> July**

Magazine issue	Deadline for items for inclusion
<b>August</b>	<b>16<sup>th</sup> July 2025</b>
<b>September</b>	<b>20<sup>th</sup> August 2025</b>

**Thank you** I would like to thank friends, neighbours and the kind people of Blunsdon who sent their good wishes, cards and presents to me while in hospital for an operation. My stay at GWH was a good one and the long days passed with plenty of visitors. I am now well on the road to recovery and out and about, mostly very local. Thank you all.

Madeline Webb.





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## *A Recipe from CookFoodFan*

### Spanish Tastes

All this sunny weather makes you long for holidays, laid back ways of life in different cultures where time seems to slow down. Having enjoyed a week of tapas and vino tinto I have chosen a recipe with all the tastes of Spain, it's easy, is cooked in one pan, tastes delicious and is a low-fat fiesta of a dish.

### **Spanish-Style Chicken Bake (serves 4)**

- |  |                                       |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| 1 medium onion, cut into 8 wedges                          | 1 medium red onion, cut into 8 wedges |
| 500g new potatoes, quartered lengthways (so they are thin) |                                       |
| 8 whole garlic cloves, unpeeled                            | 8 medium tomatoes, quartered          |
| 75g chorizo  | 8 boneless, skinless chicken thighs   |
| ½ tsp sweet smoked paprika                                 | ½ tsp dried oregano                   |
| 1 green pepper, deseeded and cut into stripes              |                                       |
| Salt and black pepper                                      |                                       |

1. Heat the oven to 200C/180C fan/gas mark 6. Put the onions, potatoes, garlic and tomatoes into a large roasting tin and season with salt and lots of black pepper. Toss everything together and roast for 25mins.

2. While the vegetables are roasting, skin the chorizo and cut into 5mm slices. Put the chicken thighs on a board and slash each 2 or 3 times with a knife. Season all over with black pepper. Mix the oregano and paprika together and set aside.

3. Take the roasting tin out of the oven, scatter the chorizo over the veg and turn everything a couple of times. Place the chicken on top of the vegetables and chorizo and sprinkle with the paprika and oregano mix. Season with a little salt, return to the oven and roast for another 20mins.

4. Take the tin out of the oven, tip it so you can get at the juices to drizzle over the chicken. Tuck the pepper stripes around the chicken and vegetables.

5. Turn the oven up to 220C/200C fan/gas mark 7. Put the tin back in the oven for a further 20mins until the chicken is golden and crisp.

6. Serve. As you eat the meal squeeze the garlic out of the skin to enjoy the deliciously soft flesh.

(You may need a piece of bread to soak up the juices.)

Fancy some Aioli (garlic mayonnaise) on the side?

Here's a cheat's recipe:

Mix together 240g ready-made mayonnaise, 2 to 3 finely grated garlic cloves, a pinch of salt and 1-2 tsp lemon juice. Taste and then season with more salt or lemon juice.

*Enjoy*



## **BLUNSDON CRICKET CLUB**

The Foxes are currently 4th in the league. Recent Results:  
Swindon 4ths – won by 3 wickets, thanks to three scalps on debut for Rahul Tiwari and a belting 68 runs from Yadhu Thoppay Prabakaran, plus a watchful 42 from James “Mary” Shelley.

Goatacre 3rds – the first defeat of the season by 8 wickets, despite a strong opening stand of 70 from Dave “Botty” Bott and Harry “Mystery” Roke, the mighty Goats dominated the rest of the match.

Keevil – match abandoned following a bit of drizzle causing players to scurry into the nearest pub, fearing for their lives, and only re-appearing when it was safe to do so at closing time.

Upcoming matches in July, Wiltshire league Division Six – Every Saturday. Play begins at 1 p.m.

5th – away to Nationwide House 2nds, at the Pipers Way Oval

12th – home to Bathford

19th – away to Royal Wootton Bassett 3rds, this side of Wootton Bassett

26th – home to Swindon 4ths

2nd August – away to Goatacre 3rds, at the Billy Goat Gruff Ground



## **BLUNSDON WI**

The Blunsdon W I welcomed Hayley Scott for our May talk. Hayley is a former Forensic Practitioner (Crime Scene Investigator) with over 14 years of working with the Metropolitan Police. Hayley gives talks at clubs, schools and universities. Among the various subjects Hayley discussed at the meeting were finger-prints, or to be more specific, the nine different fingerprint patterns with diagrams of each of them! For anyone wishing for more information of this fascinating subject look on [www.forensicexperience.com](http://www.forensicexperience.com)

Several of our members have recently had a tour of the historical town of Malmesbury.

Another day was spent on a visit to Cricklade including the museum.

Some more energetic ladies took part in Walking in Wiltshire – Ancient Avebury – a 5 mile history walk exploring Avebury’s ancient landmarks.

A visit to Cotswold Farm Gardens, near Cirencester, is planned for the near future. Let us hope that the current good weather continues for this!

Next month’s meeting will take the form of a visit to Devizes - including a canal trip.

For more information please contact Anna on tel: 01793 706392 or check out our website: [jackie707.wixsite.com](http://jackie707.wixsite.com)





The picture was taken at a special meeting we held recently when we donated £5,875 to some local charities. Representatives from Prospect Hospice, Wiltshire Treehouse, Youth Adventure Trust, Samaritans, and Swindon Carers attended to receive their cheques in person. These five charities received a combined total of £4,500.

Most of the funds were raised by means of our Christmas Santa Sleigh Collection held in December at Asda West Swindon, Morrisons Dorcan and Tesco Superstore. Owens World Foundation was also one of the beneficiaries from the Christmas Sleigh Collection. In March we funded their purchase of two Bleed Control Kits costing £250 each.

Additionally, two representatives from MIND, Motor Neurone Disease, the North Wiltshire Association, attended the meeting to receive a cheque for £875 from the fundraising Quiz and Ploughman's Supper we held in March.



There is more information on our website. Go to [www.rotaryswindonnorth.org.uk](http://www.rotaryswindonnorth.org.uk) click on "Special Presentation Meeting". If joining a Rotary Club interests you, please get in touch.

Email: [rotaryswindonnorth@gmail.com](mailto:rotaryswindonnorth@gmail.com)

Phone: 07710 228697 (Ken) or 07712 078942 (Chris)

### **The Chatterbox – Hopeful**

Hope is a newborn baby, tiny fingers tightly curled, asleep in a see-through cocoon

While anxious parents watch and wait in silence and awe.

Hope is a weathered farmer, rubbing his chin as he studies the clouds in the evening sky

While the yield appears heavy and ready for tomorrow's early start.

Hope is a newly married couple, so eager to fulfil their new roles as they rush forward, hand-in-hand, laughing

As they're showered with confetti by family and friends.

Hope is an awkward, angular, teenage boy who's yet to start to shave each day. Staring at the exam paper in front of him, he visualises those dreaming spires and a crisp, white coat.

Hope is the tiny kitten; dirty, feeble and lost.

Gently scooped up from the side of the road, it nestles in the warm security of the crook of my arm.

Hope is an orange Camper Van, recently repainted and its destination, as yet, unknown.

The drivers are moving away from all that's familiar to discover a different way of life.

Hope is the elderly couple who sit patiently in the hospital waiting room.

Waiting for news, for better or worse, they'll face it bravely together.

Hope is the would-be lead violinist, waiting in turn to impress and be unforgettable

With only four strings, nervous fingers and a soul full of beautiful notes.

Hope is a smile when I'm uncertain, encouragement when I'm feeling weak.

A look that says, 'I'm with you'. With love, there's always hope.

Wishing you a hopeful and happy month of July!





### Reading with Wine

Hello Sunshine! I hope you have all enjoyed the glorious weather that we've been having, especially if you took some time to enjoy some of the Rosés that I mentioned last month- Rosé in the sunshine is a hard combination to beat!

It's official, summertime reading is here so I'm recommending holiday reads. First up, **Hester and Harriet**, by Hilary Spiers. Two sisters decide that their sixties is time to travel, and they head off to Italy in search of adventure...and find more than they bargained for. I loved this one for a few reasons, firstly all the delicious food and wine; perfection. Secondly, the generation crossover between them and their nephew is just lovely to read about; even if things do go wrong on a couple of occasions. Thirdly, the lovely sense of community that grows throughout the book- plus a dash of romance too. Finally, there is a mystery to solve which I wasn't expecting- it quite simply has everything for a summer recommendation! Its pairing is obvious but at the same time difficult as there is so much choice; because there is so much to celebrate, I am going with an Aldi Costellore Sparkling Rosé. In a beautiful bottle, it will feel like a treat, but it's only £7.25 If you are looking for a summer gift, I promise you this one will go down well...as it did for the Blunsdon residents who happen to receive one from me- double guarantee.

Another pick is **The Orange House** by Isabelle Broom. I was lucky enough to be invited to the launch of this one, and hearing the author talk about their writing, always brings the story to life. Henry and Violet are gifted a beautiful house in the hills of Majorca but it is something of a fixer upper. As they navigate life in two countries and raising a son with neuro diverse needs, life is not as idyllic as one might think. When all reaches rock bottom, quite literally in one section, it is a question of do they give up, paper over the cracks or build on what they had? I loved the honesty of life from Violet's perspective, which is ironic, as she is keeping a big secret. As you'd expect there were also a fair few options for wine pairings but the one that I kept coming back to is an Orange Sangria that I tried at the Asda Wine Event; and was lucky enough to come home with a recipe card. Start with a bottle of the Gros Manseng Vin Orange (also at a good price £8.13), add a cup of sliced peaches, an orange, a lime, one cup of strawberries, ½ cup of fruit juice, ¼ cup of brandy and ¾ cup of peach schnapps- add all into a jug and stir to combine. My advice is let the flavours come together and chill in the fridge a couple of hours before serving- you'll be the hostess with the mostest at any summer party! Just like Violet would like to be at The Orange House...and of course, the orange connection makes it a perfect match. Orange wine is currently causing quite the divide so I'd love to hear your thoughts...I thought I was in one camp but this Sangria has swayed me permanently!

Read as much as you can in these longer evenings, but please drink responsibly.  
Reading with Wine

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