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SERVICES AT ST MARY THE VIRGIN, FREELAND

| | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| Sunday 5th April | 10.00am Easter Day All age Easter celebration followed by Easter Egg Hunt |
| Sunday 12th April | 10.00am Whole Benefice Communion at St Mary's |
| Sunday 19th April | 10.00am Morning Praise |
| Sunday 26th April | 10.00am Joint service at Christ Church |
| Sunday 3rd May | 10.00am Morning Praise joint with Christ Church at St Mary's |

The above information is correct on the date published (**20/03/2026**). Should any changes be necessary, the up-to-date information can be found on our website below.

St Mary the Virgin is open seven days a week from 9am to 5pm/dusk. Please enjoy the space to look around, for prayer or for quiet reflection. See our website at www.stmaryfreeland.org.uk or the Benefice website www.hfchurch.org.uk

ST MARY THE VIRGIN CHURCHYARD

The Churchyard is now closed for burials unless previously reserved by faculty. A faculty indicates a space that has already been reserved under the Church of England rules.

The churchyard does still have space for the interment of ashes.

For further information or to contact the church, please see our website at stmaryfreeland.org.uk or use the QR code.



St Mary the Virgin Parochial Church Council

Thank you to Bruce Hammersley for the front cover photograph taken in Freeland.

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Useful contact details

Rector: Revd Dr Steve Stewart
01993 881270

The Rectory, Swan Lane
Long Hanborough OX29 8BT
Email: rector@hfchurch.org.uk

Curate: Position Vacant

Parish Worker One day a week, usually
Friday: Matt Cripps
Email: cripps@hfchurch.org.uk

Licensed Lay Ministers:

Clive Berry 01993 882080 and

Hugh Dalton *Emeritus*: 01993 881742

Churchwarden: Position Vacant

Flowers in the Church:

Janet Dalton 01993 881742

Weddings: Revd Dr Steve Stewart
01993 881270

rector@hfchurch.org.uk and
administrator@hfchurch.org.uk

You will find all sorts of interesting information about St Mary's on the "A Church Near You" website: www.achurchnearyou.com/5863. You can see a virtual tour of St Mary's on Google Street View at: <http://goo.gl/g53NJH>.

Thank you to Nikhilesh Haval for allowing the use of the images.

Children's and Youth Work - families are really welcome at all our services. At St Mary's the **first Sunday of the month is a Family Service** where everyone stays in Church, and everyone joins in with the all-age service. At the other **10am** services, children and youth can take part in games, discussion, art, and other activities in small groups close by. Come and give it a try!

Bible Fun Club

Our next event is on **Good Friday, 3rd April starting at 2pm in Freeland Village Hall**. Please join us to celebrate the Easter story with crafts, games and an Easter Egg trail. **From 3pm** we will be serving hot cross buns. Everyone is welcome to join us. Do check our website www.stmaryfreeland.org.uk. To join our email list for news about these upcoming events please send your details to administrator@hfchurch.org.uk.



The above information is correct on the date published. Should any changes be necessary, the up-to-date information can be found on our website www.hfchurch.org.uk.

From the Register: Interment of Ashes, Colin James 13th March 2026



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SERVICES AT ST PETER & ST PAUL, CHURCH HANBOROUGH

| | | |
|---------------|------------------------------|--|
| Sunday | 5th April | 10.00am Easter Day Communion |
| Sunday | 12th April | 10.00am Whole Benefice Communion at St Mary's |
| Sunday | 19th April | 10.00am Communion |
| Sunday | 26th April | 10.00am Communion |
| Sunday | 3rd May | 10.00am Communion |

SERVICES AT CHRIST CHURCH, LONG HANBOROUGH

| | | |
|---------------|------------------------------|---|
| Sunday | 5th April | 10.00am Easter Day Communion |
| Sunday | 12th April | 10.00 am Whole Benefice Communion at St Mary's |
| Sunday | 19th April | 10.00am Morning Praise |
| Sunday | 26th April | 10.00 am Joint Service with St Mary's at Christ Church |
| Sunday | 3rd May | 10.00am Joint service with St Mary's at St Mary's |

ST MARY'S BELL RINGING REPORT

The bells will be rung at the following times:

Sunday 5th April 9.30am - 10.00am

Sunday 12th April 9.30am - 10.00am

Weekly Monday practices will commence at 7.30pm and finish at 9.00pm.

Please contact the Tower Secretary, **Michael Probert (01993 882687)**, should you wish to discuss any bell ringing matters.

St. Mary's Bible Fun Club
presents

Children's Easter

Good Friday 3rd April
– 2pm to 3pm –
Freeland Village Hall

Come and join us for lots of fun craft,
games and Easter egg trail, along with
the telling of the Easter story.

Everyone welcome!

From 3pm we will be
serving hot cross buns.

Organised by St Mary's Church Freeland

LETTER FROM OUR RECTOR, REVD DR STEVE STEWART

As a child of the 1960s, it comes very naturally to me that things change. The very anthem of my childhood era was Bob Dylan's "The Times they are a-Changing". The 1960s may have been a particular era of radical change, but I wonder if the 2020s will be looked back on as a time of equally seismic cultural shifts.

However, the way in which most of us experience change is simply that which occurs in the very nature of life itself: birth, death, marriage, changing jobs, moving houses, divorce, illness, accumulation of wealth, or sudden loss of earnings. Just as we watch the seasons of nature change through our lives, so come days when we realise that nothing will be the same ever again.

How then is it part of the hardwiring of the human mind that we long for stability, things which are concrete, values which are sacred and unchanging? One thing we might note is that all human beings in all ages across the world have sought God. Not just a creator God, but a God who is active and the author of righteousness and stability.

Nonetheless, when we human beings invent our own gods, we tend to make them in our own image – and that very god becomes unstable and unpredictable.

But as Christians we worship a God not of our own invention, a product of our own brain, but a God who in Jesus Christ has revealed himself to us! And the wonderful news is that all of that longed-for hope, stability, certainty, love, goodness, eternity and truth can be found in Him.

Though blessed with great parents and a happy childhood, a stable home and a loving family, my own testimony is that I have never found anyone who offers what Jesus offers. And He doesn't just offer it to me: for all of us who go through the ups and downs of this sometimes very difficult life, He offers all those good things to you as well.

So, as we look out of the window and see the seasons changing, know that, as the Bible tells us, "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and for ever" (Hebrews 13:8).

Revd Dr Steve Stewart,
Rector, Freeland and Hanborough

If you would like to learn more about Church and what it means to be a Christian, simply join us at any of our churches or contact me for a chat at rector@hfchurch.org.uk

HANBOROUGH FORGET-ME-NOTS

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HANBOROUGH METHODIST CHURCH

Contact Gill Brakespear **Tel: 01993 883914 Email: gillbreakspear@btinternet.com.**

All services are in the chapel. A warm welcome awaits you all.

Thursday 2nd April 7pm Maundy Thursday Service at Davenport Road Methodist Church, Witney

A service of reflection

Friday 3rd April 10.30am Good Friday Section service.

A service of quiet contemplation

Sunday 5th April 6.00am Sunrise Service. Celebrating the joy of Easter morning. Location to be arranged

10.30 Easter Day Service Led by Revd Dr Sonia Hicks, Chair of the District

Sunday 12th April 10.00am Mr Karl Williams

Sunday 19th April 10.30am At Davenport Road Methodist Church, Witney

Sunday 26th April 10.00am Mr Graham Faulkner

Sunday 3rd May 10.00am Rev Charles Harris

THE CATHOLIC CHURCH OF ST PETER, EYNSHAM

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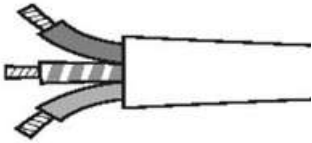
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Address: Abbey Street, Eynsham OX29 4HR Phone: 01865 881613

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THE CHURCH IS OPEN for Public Masses on Saturday at 5pm and Sunday at 10am. For any Weekday Masses, please see the webpage





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EASTER SERVICES AT HANBOROUGH AND FREELAND

Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth. To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood, and has made us to be a kingdom and priests to serve his God and Father- to him be glory and power for ever and ever! Amen. (Revelation 1:5-6).

Here are our Easter services as we remember, proclaim and celebrate the death and resurrection of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ:

Thu 2nd April Maundy Thursday 7pm - Reflections at St Peter & St Paul

Fri 3rd April Good Friday 2pm - Whole Benefice Meditation at St Mary's

Sun 5th April Easter Day 10am - Easter Communion at Christ Church

Sun 5th April Easter Day 10am - Easter Communion at St Mary's

Sun 5th April Easter Day 10am - Easter Communion at St Peter & St Paul

"For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures." (1 Corinthians 15:3-4)

NORTH LEIGH MEMORIAL HALL **FILM NIGHT: "THE CHORAL"**

Ralph Fiennes leads the choir in an impressively unsentimental Alan Bennett fable.

Saturday 18th April 2026

Doors open 7pm; film showing 7.30pm
Refreshment available; entry £5 (cash or card).

Future film nights will be on 16th May and 20th June.



TOM ROBINSON

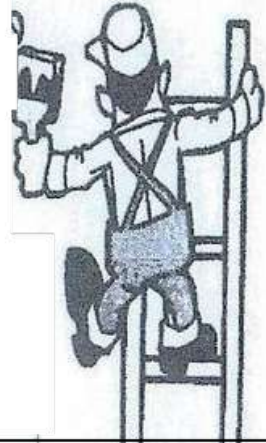
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FREELAND PARISH COUNCIL UPDATE



New Contact number for the Clerk

Fay, our Clerk, now has a new phone number **07818 572997**; please use this to contact her in future, either by phone or text.

Parish Councillors

We still need new Parish Councillors! If you care about our community and would like to get involved we would welcome you on our team. Help the Parish Council to deliver a great village experience for all – join our team. We have many areas of involvement – such as planning, village maintenance as well as the playing fields and Garden of Remembrance. If you are interested contact our clerk, Fay: **Clerk@freelandparishcouncil.gov.uk**

News from Oxfordshire County Council

Potholes are still an overriding issue, particularly the fact that repairs are poorly carried out and soon need redoing. Liam Walker, our County Councillor, is continuing to put pressure on the Highways Department to improve delivery and ensure contractor compliance with guarantees. Remember to use Fix my Street App to report potholes.

News from West Oxfordshire District Council

Savings made over the last year have enabled the cost of garden waste bins to be frozen this year. Additionally, units to house the homeless have been procured to save on hotel bills. Salt Cross Area Action Plan has been formally approved with a Net Zero requirement. Campaign on food waste - 25% of contents of grey bins is still food waste (some still edible). Mobile phone reception now working alongside OCC to get better analysis of problem areas. Fly tipping - please notify WODC as soon as you see any, to prevent further build up.

Annual Parish Meeting

The Annual Parish meeting will be held 7.30-9pm **Friday 15th May in the Village Hall.**

Defibrillators

The two defibrillators in the village are located in the telephone box by the Primary school and at the village hall to the left hand side of the porch. If these are used for an emergency please let me know asap on **Clerk@freelandparishcouncil.gov.uk**.

Planning applications

All planning applications can be viewed online via the WODC website at:

www.westoxon.gov.uk/planning or Woodgreen Council Offices; 01993 861420.

Next meeting

The next meeting will be on Monday 13th April at 7.30pm in the Newell Room. If you wish to contact the Parish Council about a particular matter and have access to the internet, please have a look at the Council website where lots of useful information is held. The website can be accessed via **https://freelandparishcouncil.gov.uk**. You can also follow us on Facebook (**@freelandpc**). Alternatively, please contact me 9am-4pm, Monday to Friday – **Fay Friend, Parish Clerk on 07818 572997 or email: clerk@freelandparishcouncil.gov.uk.**



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FREELAND ENERGY GROUP (FEG)

The weather at this end of winter was not great, but wet days have meant that the group wasn't able to respond to neighbours' requests for thermal imaging. A thermal image for many can be the proof of cold leaking in. Not that FEG wants to enter into any domestic arguments, but a picture might be the proof needed to convince the household that yes there is a draught around the window. Get in touch with FEG to be added to the waiting list for thermal imaging. And about that draught - for under the door why not try your hand at making a sausage draught excluder? Old clothes stuffed into a tube of fabric can be surprisingly efficient. Or you can see sample draft excluders next time we have the energy saving stall out. (And you only have to ask, for us to come along to one of your community group meetings with that table.)



We don't expect you'll be surprised to know that transport comes within the CAPZero action plan, and with that in mind look out for an addition to the First and Last Mile's service. From May we expect to see a Saturday journey linking North Leigh, Hanborough and Freeland to Eynsham. More details to come.

Also for the village, the Freeland Community Hub (FCH) has appointed an architect for the renovation of the Methodist Chapel, which will start when the sale is completed. FCH are hoping that the Chapel will be an exemplar for sustainability and conservation, contributing to the CAPZero targets, with improved insulation and under floor heating by an air-source heat pump. You will find details of the Project at: <https://freelandcbs.community/>

Looking wider for events in the area to add to your calendar include Eynsham's Great Big Green Weekend - **Friday 12th to Sunday 14th June**, and in the autumn, their Open Homes event is **12th & 13th September**. This will showcase changes people have made to their homes to increase energy efficiency and or generation.

And if you are wondering what is happening across Oxfordshire about energy generation and energy saving projects dip into this informative page

<https://www.lowcarbonhub.org/p/programmes/peoples-power-station/>

If you have something to add to that project, please share with FEG too.

Lastly, be wary – there are those trying to take advantage of your plans for cleaner energy and home improvements - check this link <https://www.lowcarbonhub.org/p/how-to-spot-and-avoid-eco-scams/>

New members to FEG will be very welcome, please get in touch.

freelandenergygroup@outlook.com



Freeland House & The Lodge



Situated in the friendly village of Freeland, 11 miles from Oxford, on the edge of the Cotswolds, set within beautiful grounds overlooking the Oxfordshire countryside.

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So much to look forward to...



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FREELAND COMMUNITY HUB UPDATE

All systems really are GO! We're expecting to complete on the purchase of the Chapel in April and look forward to welcoming all supporters into the building for a celebration before the hard work begins. Watch out for an email or Facebook announcement soon!

We still need volunteers Anything from:

- Taking a sledgehammer to walls and floors, or wield a paintbrush
- Delivering flyers around the village
- Putting out chairs for fundraising events...
- ...or even hosting your own fundraising event!

Think you can help, even just as a one-off? Get in touch!

Further fundraising events are currently planned. We hope to build towards one event each month. Dates for your diary include:

- Folk music and spoken word – **18th April**, see the advert at the back of this issue
- Voice Boc Choir – **18th July**, recital at Freeland Hall, 6pm
- Auction of Promises – **14th November**

Other events to be scheduled include: a talk on the history of the Methodist Chapel; sale of pre-loved children's clothing, games and toys; quiz at the Oxfordshire Yeoman; a Treasure hunt Summer Fun Run; and due to popular demand, the return of the Santa run in December! If you are willing to organise an event—large or small—please get in touch.

Several grants have already been secured. Two further applications have been submitted, including one to the Low Carbon Hub for insulation and a Westhive/WODC match-funding bid. As renovation plans are finalised we will be in a stronger position to apply for major heritage funding, although this is highly competitive.

This project continues to move forward thanks to the energy and generosity of the village. Your support—through shares, donations, volunteering and attending events—will help turn this shared vision into a reality. **More information at www.freelandcbs.community**

Freeland Community Hub



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FREELAND FOOTBALL NEWS

The U12s are doing brilliantly and won the knock-out cup semi-final. They progress to the final which is on **Saturday 2nd May**. They were runners up in the Autumn league and have had a great start to the Spring league!



The Under 9s are also progressing well, and have had some great results in their winter league. The tea bar selling home made cakes, bacon rolls and drinks is open for all their home games. We are still recruiting for our new **Under 7's side** (Current Year 1 going into Year 2 in September); please get in touch if your child is interested. **Home Fixtures: 28th March – U9 & U12; 25th April – U9 & U12; 2nd May – U12's Cup Final at Clanfield FC 3pm, Knock Out.**

CRICKET FOR ALL

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FREELAND CRICKET CLUB

The new season is less than two months away, and we have already started our **U11** and **U13** indoor coaching. **Adult and U15** nets start on **Sunday 22nd March** and will take place in **Gosford Hill Sports Centre, Kidlington**. Outdoor coaching will start after the Easter holidays.

U15a and adult nets - every Tuesday from **14th April at 6pm**.

U11s and U13s coaching - every Friday from **17th April at 6pm**.

The **Under 9s** will start on **Saturday 16th May at 10am**

Women's Softball will start on **Wednesday 15th April at 6pm**. If you are interested in playing or would like your children to take part, please contact me on the details below.

Simon Brown, Chair freelandu11@gmail.com

WEST OXFORDSHIRE COMMUNITY TRANSPORT **411 BUS SERVICE FROM MONDAY 1st SEPTEMBER** **MONDAY - FRIDAY (NOT BANK HOLIDAYS)**

West Oxfordshire Community Transport (WOCT) are pleased to announce that from September 1st 2025, we will be operating the services 411/s/418 formerly operated by First & Last Mile. Oxfordshire County Council have written the timetable for the route which we are happy to publish. Please don't hesitate to get in touch if you have any questions regarding the new services.

| | | | | | |
|----------------------------|--------------|---------------|--|--|--|
| MyBus ticket | Day | Week | The tickets are available now in addition to the usual £3 one way ticket. Bus passes are still valid. | | |
| Adult | £6.50 | £25.00 | | | |
| Young Person (5-18) | £3.50 | £14.50 | | | |

Eynsham - Long Hanborough via Freeland

| | | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Eynsham Church (o/s) | 08.45 | 10.25 | 12.25 | 14.25 | 17.25 |
| Eynsham o/s Surgery | 08.50 | 10.30 | 12.30 | 14.30 | 17.30 |
| Freeland o/s St Mary's Church | 08.56 | 10.36 | 12.36 | 14.36 | 17.36 |
| Long Hanborough, opp. New Road | 09.02 | 10.42 | 12.42 | 14.42 | 17.42 |
| Long Hanborough on Station Forecourt | 09.05 | 10.45 | 12.45 | 14.45 | 17.45 |

Long Hanborough - Eynsham via Freeland

| | | | | | |
|---------------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Long Hanborough, on Station forecourt | 09.10 | 11.05 | 13.05 | 14.50 | 17.50 |
| Long Hanborough, adj New Road | 09.13 | 11.08 | 13.08 | 14.53 | 17.53 |
| Freeland opp St Mary's Church | 09.19 | 11.14 | 13.14 | 14.59 | 17.59 |
| Eynsham o/s Surgery | 09.25 | 11.20 | 13.20 | | 18.05 |
| Eynsham Church (opp) | 09.29 | 11.24 | 13.24 | 15.09 | 18.09 |

Buses should stop anywhere along Wroslyn Road where it is safe to do so.

RAIL CONNECTION TIMINGS

FREELAND / HANBOROUGH / OXFORD & return

| | | | | | | |
|----------------|-------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| 411 Bus | Freeland, Village Hall* | 08.56 | 10.36 | 12.36 | 14.36 | 17.36 |
| 411 Bus | Hanborough Station | 09.05 | 10.45 | 12.45 | 14.45 | 17.45 |
| Train | Hanborough Station | 09.18 | 11.19 | 13.19 | 15.17 | 18.14 |
| Train | Oxford Station | 09.30 | 11.29 | 13.29 | 15.27 | 18.32 |
| ----- | | | | | | |
| Train | Oxford Station | 08.44 | 10.46 | 12.45 | 13.44 | 17.23 |
| Train | Hanborough Station | 08.53 | 10.55 | 12.54 | 13.54 | 17.33 |
| 411 Bus | Hanborough Station | 09.10 | 11.05 | 13.05 | 14.50 | 17.50 |
| 411 Bus | Freeland, Village Hall* | 09.19 | 11.14 | 13.14 | 14.59 | 17.59 |

West Oxfordshire
Community Transport
 woct.org.uk 01993 630124



FREELAND COMMUNITY BUS TIMETABLE **EVERY THURSDAY – AVAILABLE TO ALL**

Outbound pickup:

| | |
|--|-----------------|
| Freeland Village Hall ----- | 10.00 am |
| Little Free Library – 138 Wroslyn Rd --- | 10.05 am |
| Nash Lane ----- | 10.05 am |
| Freeland Primary School ----- | 10.05 am |

With drop off at:

Waitrose car park, Witney
Sainsbury's supermarket, Witney

Return pickup:

Sainsbury's supermarket, Witney ----- BY REQUEST
Waitrose car park, Witney----- **12.30 pm**

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INFORMATION

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UNACCEPTED FREELAND RAMBLERS



1/03/2026

Today's Ramble peaked far too early. I had big plans early in the week, batted away a threatened court summons from Barker and Pawson, then it rained so the planned route up past the escarpments was crushed. Something had to give and it wasn't my medication.

It is St David's day so we tried to find a David to join us on our winding up and down, round and about route (to be honest it was mostly round this month but don't tell), failure is a fact of life.

The Leek Strategy: Legend says that during a battle against the Saxons, St David advised Welsh soldiers to wear Leeks in their caps so they could tell friend from foe. To this day, some Welsh regiments still have a tradition where soldiers eat a raw leek on St David's Day. As the old Northern English proverb goes, 'There's Nowt as strange as folk!'

Our next ramble will be on Sunday 5th April (Yes Easter Sunday) at 10am from the bus shelter opposite the Oxfordshire Yeoman. All are welcome, except Mrs Trellis.

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NORTH LEIGH HISTORY SOCIETY

The next meeting on **Tuesday 7th April at 7.30pm in the Memorial Hall, Park Road, North Leigh OX29 6SA** will be a talk by Richard Martin on **'The History of Witney Blanket Hall'**

All welcome. Members **£20** per year, visitors **£5** per talk. Further details are available from **Diana Power (01993 882301) or Robert Kyte at kyterobert@gmail.com**



4-7 years



7-10 years



10-14 years



14-18 years



During February, all sections had great fun eating and making pancakes. **The Rainbows** tried Chinese pancakes and sweet pancakes with toppings, The **Brownies and Guides** also made pancakes, some of the guides' pancakes were described as Yorkshire puddings, all was good fun!

This year was 100 years of Thinking Day, a day when we think about other Girl Guides and Girl Scouts around the world.

The theme this year was friendship, so all sections thought about friendship and what it means to them. One activity was drawing the uniform of brownies in other countries and another making a rainbow out of post-its, with messages about friendship on them.



We are in need of a guide leader/helper for the Guides aged 10-14 years. They meet on a Tuesday between 7.30-9.00pm. If you can offer any help, please get in touch, we are flexible, so anything you can offer would be gratefully appreciated. Please email **freelanddistrictguiding@btinternet.com**

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DEVELOPER FUNDING MUST BE USED TO SUPPORT OUR COMMUNITIES

You may have seen recent reports that Oxfordshire County Council is holding **£269** million in unspent developer contributions. This money is collected from developers through planning agreements and is intended to help fund vital infrastructure such as roads, school places, transport improvements, and community facilities needed when new housing is built.

Of that total, **£154.5** million has been allocated specifically for schools and education, highlighting the scale of the funding available and the importance of ensuring it is used to support our growing communities.

These contributions are meant to ensure that when new homes are built, the infrastructure needed to support those homes is delivered alongside them. However, far too much of this funding is currently sitting unspent in council accounts, rather than being invested in improvements that residents can see and benefit from.

Across our area, many residents are already feeling the pressure that comes with development. Increased traffic, pressure on school places and stretched local services, overloaded sewage systems, are all concerns I regularly hear about when speaking with residents.

At the same time, proposals in the new District Council Local Plan could see around 18,000 additional homes built across West Oxfordshire in the coming years. With this level of growth being proposed, it is absolutely vital that infrastructure keeps pace with development.

Developer contributions should help deliver improvements such as safer roads, additional school capacity, better transport links, and investment in local facilities so that communities can continue to thrive as they grow.

As your County Councillor, I am continuing to press the County Council to ensure this money is actually spent where it is needed.

It is no good for hundreds of millions of pounds to sit in a council bank account while communities are dealing with the pressures created by new development. This funding was collected for a purpose, and it should be used to deliver the infrastructure that residents were promised. Residents quite rightly expect that when development takes place, the infrastructure should come with it not years later.

Cllr Liam Walker County Councillor
Liam.Walker2@oxfordshire.gov.uk

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FREELAND WI

March saw our annual general meeting. By popular demand we ran our 'Gin & Bubbles Bar' and then everyone settled in to listen to the financial report and annual review.

We had an enjoyable and varied programme during the year that featured a 'Whodunnit' play, talks on the Evenlode Project and the history and etiquette of afternoon tea, crafts including origami and flower arranging, two very competitive evenings, one being teams participating in a jigsaw race and a yule log decorating challenge. On a beautiful summer's evening we played croquet at Eynsham, an evening at Freeland garden centre planting spring bulbs followed by homemade soup in the village hall, a cookery demonstration and a really fun New Year's party featuring a two course supper and a game of Rock 'n' Roll bingo. Goodness, we were busy!



Following the election of the committee and president we had a 'Get To Know You' session. Members were invited to speak about themselves, perhaps about their family, career, interesting story, anything that our ladies may be unaware of. The range of careers revealed was wide and varied and we heard some remarkable personal stories which included a flight on Concord, an honorary University degree, 19,000 miles clocked up cycling around the world, a stolen kiss with a young Sir Paul McCartney, the 4 minute mile record stop watch, an embarrassing moment with Strictly Come Dancing star Brendan Cole and life as a farmer's wife. This was a great success, we learnt so much about each other.

Our next meeting on **Monday 13 April starting at 7.45pm**, Marea Brown will be running an Indian block printing workshop. (Visitors: if you would like to join us for this event, please can you kindly let us know in advance via email:

freelandwi@oxfordshirewi.co.uk. NOTE: there will be an additional charge of **£4.50** to cover materials).

Freeland WI is a fun and friendly group of ladies who enjoy a wide and varied range of activities. It meets on the second Monday of the month in the Village Hall commencing at 7.45pm. The meetings usually consist of a speaker or activity followed by a raffle and refreshments. A copy of our 2026 programme was included in the February edition of The Grapevine (available on the Freeland Parish Council website) and on the Village Hall noticeboard. Visitors are welcome to join us for an evening for a suggested donation of £5.

For information and to see what we have been up to, please check out our Facebook page: Freelandwi. Alternatively, contact our secretary **Rosie James on 01993 881997** or email: **freelandwi@oxfordshirewi.co.uk**

Anne Marvin Freeland WI

“MEMORIES OF LIFE IN FREELAND”

It is my desire to compile and (eventually) print a booklet of “Memories of Life in Freeland”. I have already spoken to a number of villagers about this and found a positive and willing response. If you are interested in submitting your “Memories of Life in Freeland” or being involved in any way, please contact me either by phone or email, or just call in for a chat.

Graham Lay, 139 Wroslyn Road; **07460 223048** or **grahamlay4@gmail.com**



ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

Friday 15th May, 7.30pm–9pm

Freeland Village Hall

Refreshments served

7.30–8pm short presentations

8–9pm a chance to circulate, view village group displays,
and meet Councillors

FREELAND WINE CLUB

The next event for your diary is on **Friday 27th March at 7.30pm in Freeland Village Hall** presented by the welcome return of **Preet Sohato of Edgmond Wines**.

This will feature the **wines of South Africa** with great food and our wine raffle. Entry fee **£10** for members and **£14** for guests (Please note annual membership **£10** was due on 1st January). Bookings at **FreelandWineClub@gmail.com**



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IST HANBOROUGH FREELAND SCOUTS GROUP

As Spring gets fully underway, our Scout Group has continued to enjoy a busy and varied programme across all sections, with plenty of opportunities to learn new skills and take on new challenges.



The Scouts have had an exciting half term so far. They recently welcomed back a former Scout who came to speak about his experiences in the army and attending the World Scout Jamboree in South Korea, giving the troop a fascinating insight into both military life and international Scouting. The Scouts have also been trying something a little different with karate sessions, and they are looking forward to a fire night before Easter to practise their outdoor skills. A couple of camps are already being planned for next term, giving everyone something to look forward to as the weather improves.

The Cubs have been getting hands on this month while working on practical skills. They've been learning the basics of bike maintenance and trying their hand at some DIY projects. One of the highlights was making their own very sticky duct tape wallets, which proved both creative and entertaining! Meanwhile, our other sections continue with their usual mix of games, activities, and skill-building as we head towards the Easter break.

As always, our programme relies entirely on the dedication of our volunteer leaders. If anyone in the community has ever thought about getting involved, even occasionally, we would always welcome new adult volunteers. Full support and training are provided, and helping out is a rewarding way to support young people in our area.

Hugo Pottinger (Publicity Rep)

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LITTLE FREE LIBRARY NEWS

Firstly, many thanks to Blenheim, who have replaced the missing doorknob that had fallen off the new Little Free Library. It now has two shiny new doorknobs and looks much better!

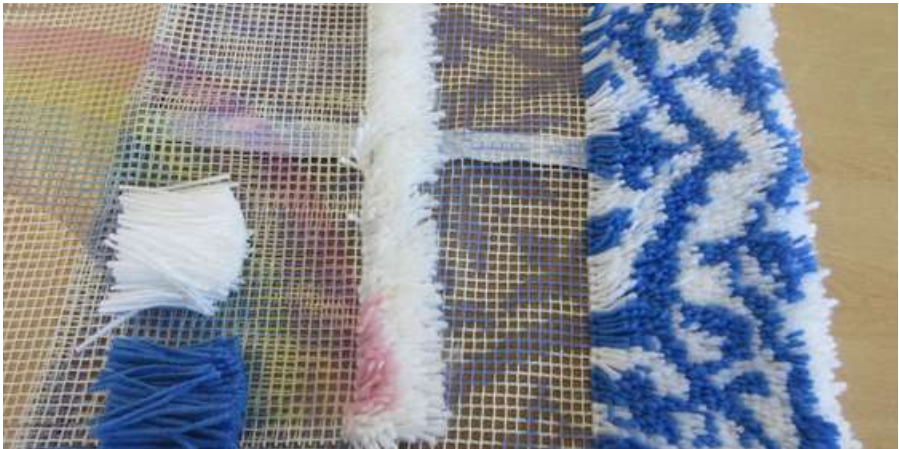
Both Little Free Libraries continue to be well used, and the storage boxes behind the bus shelter tend to fill up quickly. If the boxes are full, please wait a few days before trying again to donate books rather than over-filling them. Our team of volunteers regularly check the shelves and the storage boxes to tidy them up and to re-stock.

We've had a lot of children's books donated recently, especially picture books, so thank you for your generosity. It appears that we have a lot of very eager young bookworms in the village, which is wonderful! It is fantastic to see so many books flying off the shelves every week. Thank you for your continued support, and happy reading!

Matthew & the Little Free Library volunteers (Sue, Fi, Jenny and Caroline)

01993 359 543 / ruddlem@gmail.com / 138 Wroslyn Road

FREELAND CRAFT GROUP



This kit reminded us of the old Readicut rugs we used to make, but will soon turn into a very unusual cushion cover by fixing short pieces of wool to a printed canvasnice and warm for the winter!

Our little group always welcomes new members for a chat, or to exchange ideas of new crafts or to help each other with old ones. We meet each Wednesday afternoon from **2-4pm** in the Newell Room at the back of Freeland Village Hall. There is usually a subscription of **£1** per meeting to cover hire costs. For further information, or someone to go with, please contact: Helen **01993 882305** or Margaret **01993 881316** (marglwright52@gmail.com)

Margaret

AUCTION OF PROMISES

FREELAND COMMUNITY HUB



It is the intention to hold an **Auction of Promises** to raise funds for the Freeland Community Hub on the evening of **Saturday 14th November 2026** in **Freeland Village Hall**.

It would be appreciated if all Freeland organisations take note of this date to avoid clashes.

Broadly, the auction will proceed in a similar manner to the very successful and enjoyable auction held in 2010 to raise money for the church bells appeal, but this time will hopefully incorporate an on-line auction for those that cannot attend the physical auction. The on-line auction will occur immediately prior to the physical auction with the high bid being the starting bid for the physical auction. Sealed bids may also be made.

The evening itself will be ticket only and the ticket price will include buffet style food and in addition a Pay bar will be available.

We will need assistance to obtain promises and on the night there will be extra help needed to enable the event to run smoothly.

The event is being co-ordinated by Graham and Ria Lay and if you are interested in being involved either as a member of the auction committee, a helper or as someone wishing to contribute a promise then please contact them by phone **07460 223048**, by email **grahamlay4@gmail.com** or call in at **139 Wroslyn Road** for a chat about it.

More detailed information will be included in future editions of The Grapevine particularly regarding event sponsorship and contribution of promises...

UPDATES FROM WODC

The Council approved the Area Action Plan (AAP) to the development of Salt Cross Garden Village. The Inspector's report, published after a rigorous and extended examination process, fully supported the Council's strategy for delivering a climate-conscious, well-designed and future-ready community. Crucially, it confirmed that the Council's flagship Net Zero Carbon Development policy - which sets ambitious energy efficiency requirements for new buildings - is justified, effective and fit for purpose. This is a great achievement that puts the council ahead of other local authorities. It would not have happened without the support of our communities.



An outline planning application for the site is already under review, alongside ongoing discussions around funding for local infrastructure and services through Section 106 agreements. Detailed planning applications for individual parts of the village will follow in due course. For more information the link is:

<https://news.westoxon.gov.uk/news/salt-crossgardenvillage-gets-the-greenlight-as-ambitious-plan-due-to-be-approved>

The Council passed a motion to address issues with **Mobile Phone Signal in Rural Areas**. Mobile phone reception coverage is very patchy in West Oxfordshire; Freeland and the western part of Long Hanborough are particularly badly affected. It is a source of frustration for residents.

There is also growing concern as traditional BT copper phone lines are being phased out and customers are being moved to Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP), which relies solely on the power supply. During a power outage, households in non-signal areas are cut off and at risk. This problem affects many rural areas across the UK, and it is why I raised a motion at the Council to bring the matter to the Government's attention and demand its urgent resolution. Following the Council's support for the motion, the WODC Director of Place engaged with the Council Members to identify no-signal areas across the district.

The Council will request technical support from the OCC, and then the Leader of the Council will write to the Minister of State for Culture, Media and Sport, requesting an urgent resolution to this problem. I will monitor progress on this matter.

Contributed by Dr Lidia Arciszewska
District Councillor for Freeland and Hanborough

OXFORD BUS AND MORRIS MOTORS MUSEUM

Tricycles became popular 150 years ago. The Penny Farthing reached the peak of its popularity in the 1870s. However, not everyone was keen to ride such contraptions. There were many accidents and injuries, and some people were not physically capable of climbing onto a Penny Farthing, balancing, and safely dismounting. An alternative was needed.



Tricycles had been around since 1819, but no model had ever been put into production. The French had been the major innovators in the development of cycles but the Franco-Prussian war in 1870 meant their engineering expertise was diverted for military purposes.

In 1876 an Englishman, James Starley of Coventry, took out a patent for the Coventry Lever tricycle. His first model was constructed with lever gearing, but he quickly abandoned that for a chain-driven model.

James later designed a 'Differential Gear' so that the wheels could rotate at different speeds when cornering. Such devices are used on motor vehicles today. However, James cannot be said to have invented the differential because earlier versions existed although James was probably unaware of them. He registered a patent in 1877, number 1956.

The photograph is of Royal Salvo Companion tricycle on display in the museum. It is designed for the gentleman to sit on the right with the higher saddle, as we look at the photograph, while the lady sat on the left. This tricycle became known as the 'Sociable'. The gentleman had control of both the rack & pinion steering, which was operated by the middle upright handle, and the brake, which was operated by the lever to the left of the gentleman.

In April our free heritage bus rides restart on the **first and third Sundays of the month** for the summer season. **Our popular Easter Chick Hunt will be held on 5th April Easter Sunday, and on the Easter Monday Bank Holiday. Our Easter Bunny will be about on both days.**

*On **Sunday 26th April** some of our vehicles will be participating in 'Drive It Day' organised by the National Association of Road Transport Museums, of which we're a member. While the event is not at the museum, we expect many visiting vehicles at the start and end of the day.*

HANBOROUGH RAIL STATION Yard, Main Rd, Long Hanborough OX29 8LA

HAVE YOU WATCHED CHANNEL 4'S DIRTY BUSINESS?

The three-part series, produced in collaboration with local campaign group Windrush Against Sewage Pollution (WASP), follows Professor Peter Hammond and Ash Smith as they expose sewage pollution and regulatory failures that have allowed it to continue. The programme lays bare what many communities already know: the raw sewage is being dumped into the rivers and seas across England, killing the ecology and creating risk to human health and life.

WODC has been working proactively to drive change:

- Meeting regularly with Thames Water to discuss issues of infrastructure shortfalls and sewage spills on land
- Pressing Thames Water for urgent infrastructure investments
- Introducing Council-controlled Grampian planning conditions so new homes cannot be occupied until sewage upgrades are completed and operational;
- Publishing the list of approved housing developments under the Grampian condition, to make sure all stakeholders are aware of the potential home delivery delays Engaging with national regulators, the Environment Agency and Ofwat for stronger oversight
- Lobbying the government to resolve the current scandalous sewage pollution crisis
- Working closely with WASP, catchment partnerships and community groups and pushing for accountability
- Hosting our annual Waterways Fair to bring residents, experts and campaigners together to raise awareness and strengthen the campaign to get our rivers clean.

Dirty Business is a powerful and deeply moving account of a national scandal. Thanks to the team at WASP for exposing what has been happening. The Council will continue pushing for the investment and action our communities and environment deserve.

Contributed by Cllr Lidia Arciszewska
WODC executive member for the Environment

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On **Thursday 2nd April** we will hear Dave Thornhill talk about 'Flooding and Climate Change'. David will speak about how climate change is affecting flooding in the UK and what it means for our communities. He will look at the different types of flooding we face and how planning infrastructure and nature-based solutions can help us respond. Visitors **£3.00** to include tea/coffee and biscuits.

The Walking Group went on an interesting historical walk in Oxford. We assembled at Gloucester Green Bus Station and walked up Walton Street, stopping for a quick look inside the beautiful St. Barnabus Church. Our next stop was the Schwarzman Centre for the Humanities, where we were able to see the amazing domed glass ceiling. The route then took us back into Oxford via Park Town and University Parks which was carpeted in spring flowers.

Book Group 1 finished reading "*Leanard and Hungry Paul*" by Ronan Hession. This was followed by a lively discussion about the book. Our book for March is "*Beautifully Ugly*" by Alice Feeney.

The first **Welsh Conversation Group** will meet on **Thursday 26th March at 10.30am**. If you are a Welsh speaker or would like to practice your Welsh, please get in touch with us. For more information, please go to: **www.woodstocku3a.uk**.



The Needlework Group

have been busy making blankets to send to The Hamblin Fistula Charity. This charity treats women who due to lack of maternity health care in Ethiopia are suffering from appalling childbirth injuries. Each women is given a homemade blanket on arrival in hospital. They become a treasured source of comfort to the women. Three full sized blankets and two baby blanket have been sent off. The group continues to knit blankets.

Sian Wallworth, Press Secretary

FREELAND GARDENING CLUB

The talk entitled '**Gardening with Wildlife in Mind**' given by Jo Worthy-Jones to the Club on 23rd February was such an informative one, with many suggestions we could follow. Using home produced compost to improve the soil it's importance, and an ideal way to recycle weeds and garden clippings. If you don't want a compost heap a bin bought from the council is a tidy way to get homemade compost. She encouraged us to go peat free and to have some untidy parts of the garden where insects can thrive. Her knowledge of insects was impressive. With new garden seasons soon upon us hopefully we will try to follow some of her advice.

On **Monday 23rd March** we have our Quiz and Raffle of Hampers evening. Members donate items for the hampers so many people go home with some interesting items they might not usually buy. June Counsell's Quiz is always challenging.

On **Monday 27th April at 7.30pm in Freeland Hall** the speaker is a local lady called Annie Thompson-Lynch who has a subject we have not covered before entitled 'Earthworms - the Unsung Heroes'. They are amazing at how they turn our garden waste into lovely compost which adds goodness and structure to the soil.

On **Thursday 25th June** we have a coach trip to Wisley. As the Club is now members of the RHS the entrance is free so the only cost will be **£25** for the coach. As we would like to fill the coach non Gardening Club members will be welcome to join us. More information on this outing nearer the time

We have a Plant and Gardening Items Sale at every Hall meeting as well as a time to socialise over a cup of tea or coffee. Visitors at **£5** a meeting and new members very welcome For any further information about the Club please contact me at **daltonjanet9@gmail.com**.

Janet Dalton

POEM FROM ONE OF OUR READERS

Friendship

Friendship is a golden chain the links are friends so dear,
And like a rare and precious jewel it's treasured more each year.
It's clasped together firmly, with love that's deep and true,
And it's rich with happy memories and fond recollections, too.

Time can't destroy it's beauty for as long as memory lives,
Years can't erase the pleasure, that the joy of friendship gives.
And the golden chain of friendship is a strong and blessed tie,
Binding kindred hearts together as the years go passing by.

Anon



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APRIL 'IN STEAM' THEMED EVENT: 'MILITARY VEHICLES'

Combe Mill, Blenheim Palace Sawmills, OX29 8ET, Sunday 19th April

April's Theme will be 'Military Vehicles', with support and displays from the North Oxford & Cotswold Military Vehicle Trust and Home Guard, among others. Interested in the military? This is the event for you - and children will love the Jeeps and Army Trucks. Not to be missed! The tea room will be open for refreshments, and enjoy the picnic area by the River Evenlode. There will be a BBQ; browse our Mini Market, Gift Shop and Tombola too.

Dogs Welcome and free parking. Adults £9.50. Seniors £8.50. Children are now FREE. More information at www.combemill.org. Enjoyed your visit? Why not enquire about volunteering - we would love to hear from you.

Combe Mill: Open every Wednesday from **18th March to end of October**. Self-guided tours and Tea Room open. £6.00 Adults, £5.00 Seniors, Children NOW Free.

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REVIEW: SPRING CONCERT (FREELAND ORCHESTRA & WOC)

The Freeland Orchestra and West Oxfordshire Clarinets (WOC), both conducted by villager Wendy Marks, produced a wonderful concert in front of a capacity audience at St Leonard's Church, Eynsham, on 7th March.

The orchestra's refreshing and engaging performance of Beethoven's Overture to the Creatures of Prometheus, followed by Haydn's beloved 'London Symphony' (no 104), exhibited balanced and at times captivating ensemble playing under Wendy Marks' crisp and generous direction.

In the Overture in particular, and in the Symphony's Minuet, the upper strings were well supported by the resonant double bass and cellos, while the entire section meshed seamlessly with the winds and brass. Both pieces alternate between mellow and energetic passages: the orchestra's ability to play subtle dynamics and to shape each phrase with care enhanced the tension and release inherent in Beethoven's and Haydn's works.

WOC's 14 players followed suit. Strauss' Overture to Die Fledermaus, arranged by Wendy, got us off to a brisk and entertaining start. The gentle, rich and sinuous arrangement of Weber's piano duet indirectly showcased the composer's love for the instrument. A highlight of their performance was Catozzi's piece for Solo Contrabass clarinet.

Mike Laidlaw, the Choir's contrabassist, gave an assured performance, demonstrating the instrument's extraordinary range.

Those three classical pieces were followed by a deeply affecting arrangement (by Patterson and Marks) of the American folk song Shenandoah. The concert ended with Richard Percival's Danzón and Charleston, in which the clarinet choir displayed a wonderful sense of rhythm without compromising on musicality.

It is often said that the clarinet is the closest to the human voice in range and expressiveness. Anyone listening to WOC's rich blend of warmth and playful energy would agree.

Cecile Fabre

TABLE TENNIS

If you are retired and would like to join a group playing Table Tennis each week, please contact Nick and Sue Rous **01993 883944** or email suerous47@gmail.com
Venue Freeland Village Hall Every Friday 3.15pm - 4.45pm



CLUES FOR CROSSWORD #9

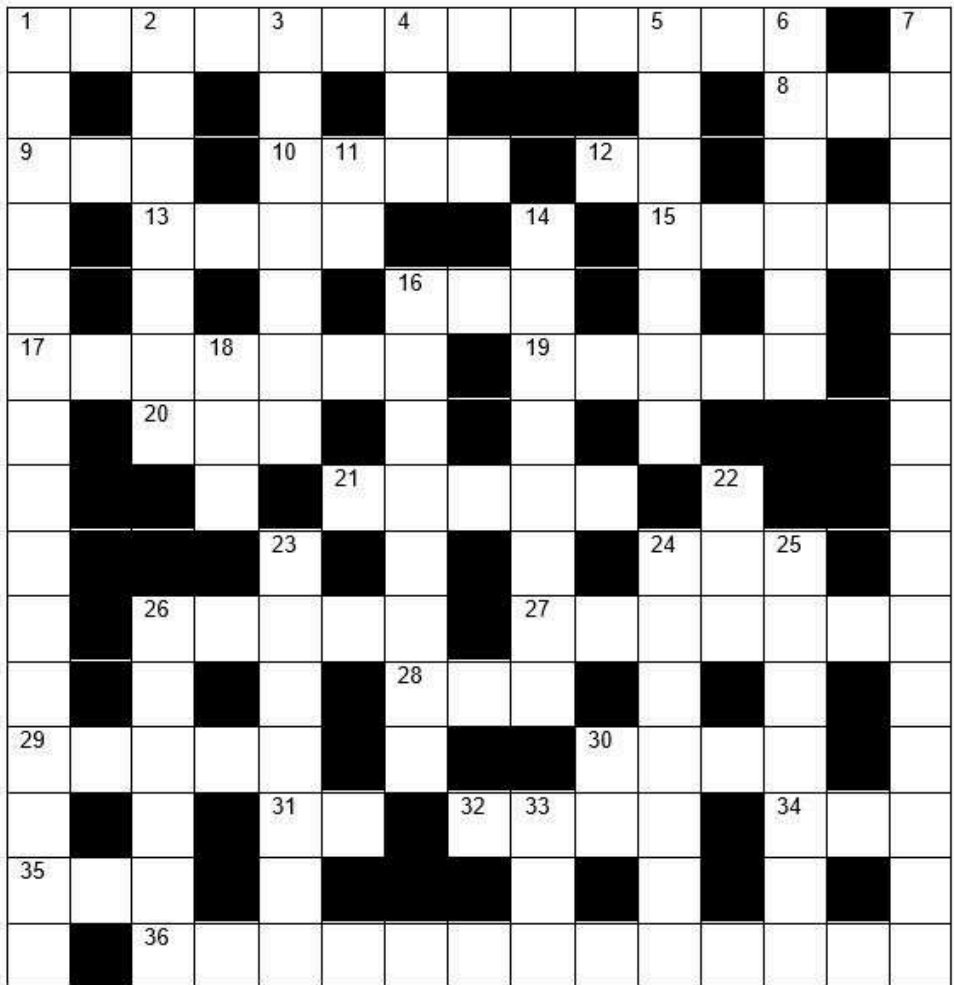
ACROSS

1. Elementary item in scragie plight confusion. (5,8)
8. Bright star issuing evenly. (3)
9. Figure figure figures in submission. (3)
10. sheep run with jug. (4)
12. Upkeep ends elevated. (2)
13. Sulk on rearless moped. (4)
15. Long look at step. (5)
16. Hear "C" and see the ocean. (3)
17. Part of eastern Elm replanted on primary elevated nutrient terrace. (7)
19. Yes, leave lilly for eastern city. (5)
20. Train leaves Thailand and Italy at speed. (3)
21. Six - nil, I hear, is a record. (5)
24. Preserve group claiming to be going underground. (3)
- 26 and 30. Swirling Loch Blake consumes all. (5,4)
27. Salad item floating around poles. (7)
28. Head evangelist watched every sheep. (3)
29. Watch rooster eat first lettuce. (5)
- 30 see 26 down. Icon ends are fashionable. (2)
32. 55 to 4 (it's a city!)
34. Wining notoriously big athletes establish club. (3)
35. Seed of odd pie-man! (3)
26. Popular program suggests how it all began. (3,4,6)

DOWN

1. ..., bubble, eyepiece and viewer of space. (6,9)
2. Flicker causes George initially to turn milk, lose weight and have unsettled dreamy sleep. (7)
- 3 and 23. Thoughtful fellow is a tramp with a fowl for peddling? (7,7)
4. Starstruck in Mentawai. (3)
5. Pill of Lithium consumed by little Susan under hat, for example. (7)
6. Break out by odd easy chappies. (6)
7. Nearest neighbour, relatively, Mr Dan O'Dae strangely loves stellar treat. (9,6)
11. Little wee on us. (2)
14. Soul conductor performances vary like ..? (8)
16. Road to right crossed by chicken leaving church is injured. (8)
18. Chap hiding in Kathmandu. (3)
22. Visit a doctor for one or get one from a boxer. (3)
23. see 3 down
24. God essentially judged everyone harshly over very average habits. (7)
25. Yours truly and chaps' toe, it is said, a reminder? (7)
26. Miss Windsor singularly follows serpent to tree. (6)
30. G'day said outside Hawaii. (2)
33. Laze about on greens. (3)

CROSSWORD #9 APRIL 2026 BY MR NATI



ANSWERS TO LAST MONTH'S CROSSWORD #8

ACROSS

1. EUROPEAN UNION, 8. SATURNALIAN, 10. LENA, 11. ROI, 12. PRET, 13. TITHE, 15. TAZ, 16. BUDAPEST, 17. REP, 18. PYRENEES, 19. LID, 21. FREDA, 22. RAKU, 23. NOR, 24. GENT, 26. DELETERIOUS, 27. MEDITERRANEAN

DOWN

2. OUTPATIENT, 3. EUROPE, 4. NEATEN UP, 5. ITAL, 6. CLARET, 7. CHALET, 8. SWITZERLAND, 9. NETHERLANDS, 14. MATTERHORN, 16. BES, 17. REPARTEE, 18. PRAGUE, 20. DORSET, 21. FUHRER, 25. TEND



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FORTHCOMING EVENTS

- | | | |
|-------------|-----------------|---|
| Weds | 1 April | Green Week: recycling + food waste + garden waste |
| Thurs | 2 April | U3A meeting, Woodstock 2.15 for 2.30pm |
| Thurs | 2 April | Seated Exercise Long Hanborough 1.45-2.30pm |
| Frid | 3 April | Good Friday |
| Sun | 5 April | Easter Day , UFR Ramble 10.00am from Bus Shelter opp Yeoman |
| Sun | 5 April | Bus Museum, Easter Chick hunt, Heritage Bus rides |
| Tues | 7 April | North Leigh History Society 7.30pm Memorial Hall |
| Tues | 7 April | Cake Cafe 9.00-11.30am Village Hall |
| Weds | 8 April | Grey Week: household rubbish + food waste collection |
| Sun | 12 April | Copy Deadline for May Freeland Grapevine |
| Mon | 13 April | Parish Council Meeting 7.30pm Newell Room |
| Mon | 13 April | WI meeting Village Hall 7.45pm |
| Weds | 15 April | Green Week: recycling + food waste + garden waste |
| Sat | 18 April | Folk Concert& Readings, Village Hall, 7.30pm in aid of Hub |
| Sat | 18 April | North Leigh Film night, Memorial Hall 7pm for 7.30 start 'Choral' |
| Sun | 19 April | Combe Mill in Steam Military Vehicles |
| Weds | 22 April | Grey Week: household rubbish + food waste collection |
| Mon | 27 April | Freeland Gardening Club, Village Hall 7.30pm "Earthworms" |
| Weds | 29 April | Green Week: recycling + food waste + garden waste |

ABOUT THE GRAPEVINE

The deadline for articles or adverts for the **MAY 2026** Grapevine is **SUNDAY 12th APRIL**. The edition should be online at <https://freelandparishcouncil.gov.uk> and www.stmaryfreeland.org.uk from about **Tuesday 21st April with the print copies in the church porch and elsewhere from Friday 24th April**.

We welcome handwritten or typed articles and adverts. However, if at all possible, please send by email, formatted to fit an A5 magazine-it will certainly help to reduce the number of our mistakes! The font we use is Gill Sans MT at 10 point. If submitting electronically please use Word, **not PDFs**. Photographs should be **JPGs or PNGs**, again **not PDFs**. The cost of a Small Advertisement **25p per word**. Payment for all advertising by BACS, details can be obtained from Jane Duff and any other costs for adverts. 1/3rd page size is 60mm high x 127mm wide, 1/2 page size is 90mm high x 127mm wide, and a full page is 190mm high x 128mm wide.

Adverts: grapevineadverts@gmail.com

Articles: freelandgrapevine@gmail.com

Or phone: **01993 880623 (Jane Duff)**

Note: Please put your name and telephone number on any submission in case we need to contact you. These will only be printed if requested by you.

The editor reserves the right to edit all copy.

Whilst every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of information, liability cannot be accepted for any errors or omissions in compiling this magazine.

Neither the Church, the Editor nor the Printer assume responsibility for any effects arising therefrom.

The presence of an advertisement in the Grapevine does not constitute a recommendation by the editors regarding the goods or services advertised.

We are not able to publish any correspondence between tradespersons or other organisations placing adverts in the Grapevine and their customers in the event of dispute. We do not endorse any articles, reports of suggestions in the Grapevine.

NEED EXTRA HELP TO SOLVE THIS MONTH'S CROSSWORD?

If you would like to find out how the questions to this month's cryptic crossword (see p42/43) are solved, this QR code takes you to a website that explains how to solve the clues. But beware - it also gives the answers!



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