

Challow

NEWS

~ May 2026 ~

Community Day Celebrations



Sunday 7th June

1.00 pm - 6.00 pm



Join us for an afternoon of Sport & Fun

~ The Main Event ~

The Community Amateur Cricket Match & Tug 'o' War

Children's Entertainment, Tombola, Refreshments, Stalls and more...

Drinks will be available from the Club House

~ FREE ENTRY ~

Challow & Childrey Cricket Club, Vicarage Hill, East Challow, OX12 9RR



Main Street, East Challow.
OX12 9SH

Churchwardens

Mrs Liz Belcher: 01235 763966
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



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/](http://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



The word means '50 days after Easter'. It's the celebration of the gift of the Holy Spirit as recorded in Acts Chapter 2, and it's the birthday of the Church. So far so good; but beyond this, things get a bit hazy for some of us. We are familiar with the idea of God the good Father, and we've heard and read of all that Jesus - God the Son - said and did. But the Holy Spirit? Who He?!

The images used of the Holy Spirit in scripture can be a bit of a barrier to understanding. Words like 'spirit' 'wind' 'flame' 'breath' are all a bit elusive, and they possibly leave us with a feeling that in trying to understand the Holy Spirit we're chasing rainbows. But if we dig a little deeper, we can see that these images speak of an unhindered force which can be powerful and yet gentle, cleansing and free.

The Bible is full of images of the Holy Spirit. There is 'dove', as seen on many Christmas cards and in stained glass windows. It's usually white. A white dove image speaks of gentleness and purity, unfettered as it wings its way across the sky.

Then there's the more difficult word 'advocate'. Someone who speaks up for us, comes alongside us, someone to aid us in times of need. We could go on with different images which tell us more of the character of the Holy Spirit, but there are two key things to remember. Firstly, this is the spirit of Jesus. All that Jesus was in earthly form, the Holy Spirit is to us now. Jesus is no longer among us as He was two thousand years ago, but the Holy Spirit makes Him available to us now.

Which brings us to the second point; the Holy Spirit is given by the good Father to us, His children - giving us, as it were, an injection of Jesus' personality, wisdom and holiness, enabling us to serve as Jesus did, enabling us, as Mother Teresa put it, 'to do little things with great love'.

The first Pentecost set the young Church in Jerusalem off on a great adventure which culminated in today's world where one in three people worldwide say they are Christians.

It could be a great adventure for us as we ask God, the good Father, to gift us with the Spirit of Jesus.

East Challow Parish Council

Next Parish Council Meeting

will be held in the Village Hall

Wednesday 13th May 2026 at 7.00pm

All villagers are invited to attend Parish Council meetings as observers and there is a 10 minute public discussion time early in the meeting where you can raise any matter you wish with the council.

The minutes of each meeting are available on the website.

www.eastchallowpc.co.uk

Parish Councillor Vacancy....

We have a vacancy for a Parish Councillor. The Parish Council represents and serves the whole community of East Challow and is responsible for maintaining the local environment and amenities. If you are interested in joining the team please contact the clerk for more information.

clerk@eastchallowpc.co.uk

Allotments available...

East Challow Parish Council have starter plots available for rent, these are located behind Reynolds Way on the recreation ground. The plots all require some preparation work as they have not been cultivated for some time.

The rent for a starter plot is £7.50 per year.

Newly planted hedgerow Recreation Ground...

Please can the Parish Council ask residents to respect the newly planted hedgerow on the recreation ground. Unfortunately, an incident recently occurred where tree guards/tubes had been removed and damaged.

MUGA opening times...

The MUGA (Multi use games area) is now open. The MUGA will be used by Challow Sports Netball for a weekly training session every Thursday from 5.30pm till 7.00pm. This is to provide a training area for school aged children year 3 and upwards in the village. During these times the MUGA will be closed to the public.

East Challow Parish Council apologise for any inconvenience this may cause.

Annual Parish Meeting



The Annual Parish Meeting will be held on
Wednesday 27th May 2026
at 8 pm in the Village Hall.

All parishioners are invited to come along.

Can you help to reduce speeding in our Village?

Community Speed Watch Volunteers needed...

Thank you to the residents who have volunteered to become part of the CSW team, this will be an important part of reducing speeding in East Challow. Training for the volunteers will be arranged in the coming weeks. We still need more volunteers please see below.

Community Speed Watch is a volunteer-led initiative where residents work with Thames Valley Police to monitor and report speeding in their areas.

- Volunteers are trained to use speed detection devices and report vehicles exceeding the limit.
- The training will be online via a link supplied and will involve watching a few short videos and answering some questions.
- You would become part of a team; we estimate the ongoing time commitment will be 2 hours per month.

The goal for drivers? Education, awareness, and long-term change – not punishment.

If you are interested and could be part of the CSW Team, please email

clerk@eastchallowpc.co.uk

Hello Everyone...

I hope you had a wonderful Easter; the weather certainly took a turn for the better I'm pleased to say, even if it was a bit cold at times. The countryside has come back to life with bright greens and beautiful flowers. A lot of the

blossoms have gone over; they don't last long but they do make an impact when they are in full bloom. We have been busy in the garden trying to regain some order, it is looking tidier and we have some seeds sown in the greenhouse and they are looking promising.

The birds have been very busy raising their families. I do like to listen to the bird song when walking with Roxy (my dog) I usually turn on the bird app on my phone, when we are out. On a circuit I can pick up about twenty different species, it is interesting. Along the canal towards Grove there are lots of chaff chaff, pheasants, wrens, woodpeckers, gold finch and magpies, with pigeons, robins and sparrows in the background. There are two pairs of mallard nesting so hopefully there will be ducklings soon. I don't think the males will stay about for long. The Moorhens are also in residence along the bank so they will have families soon, I hope.

Roxy is settling down very well with us, although she is still very scared of people. If you do run into us while we are out, please don't be offended if she is standoffish. She can make a lot of noise but wouldn't bite, I promise. Goodness knows what has happened to her in the past, but I hope with love and patience she will learn to trust people again at some point. It does get embarrassing when this pint-sized dog starts barking at people. She is very loving at home.

Saint Nicholas church looked wonderful for Easter day, it was decorated beautifully. I hope you had a chance to call in and see the displays. I would like to thank everyone who helped make it look so special. The Cubs and Beavers did a great display with rabbits they had made and decorated a tree with them, which was illuminated and it looked very effective.

Our Easter service is the most important in the church year celebrating the resurrection of Christ, and I'm pleased to say that it was well attended, and we had some new faces in the congregation which is always good news. The service was led by Miriam, and the children all received an Easter egg after the service as is the custom. As always, we were able to chat over tea and cake afterwards.

May is a beautiful month, and we have the May Bank holiday, as a child my family always attend the Grove May Day festivities even when we had moved to Hanney, because of family in Grove. It was held on the village green and had stalls and amusements. There was a May Queen crowned every year, and she had her attendants, they all looked beautiful, I believe she was chosen from the junior school. It was a colourful festival with maypole dancing being an important part of it. I remember it being organised by Mrs. Bourne the vicar's wife, and lots of the school children and adults did intricate dances holding the ribbons attached to the maypole, weaving in and out creating neat patterns on pole. I hope the skills have not been lost over the years. My aunt was the May Queen one year (that was before I was born) and my uncle was her page boy. Although I never saw it myself, my brother was a page boy one year, he must have been about five, and used to hate my mum showing anyone the picture of him wearing the velvet suit and buckled shoes. I thought the picture looked very sweet.

Ascension Day this year is on 14th May it is the day that commemorates Jesus Christ's ascension into heaven, forty days after Easter. When I went to junior school at Hanney the whole school went to the parish church of St James in the morning for the special Ascension Day service. The window above the altar, to me as a small child, depicted the Ascension, it has Christ in the centre, in a crimson robe wearing a crown, surrounded by angels. After the service we were allowed to go home and have the afternoon off school. A definite bonus.

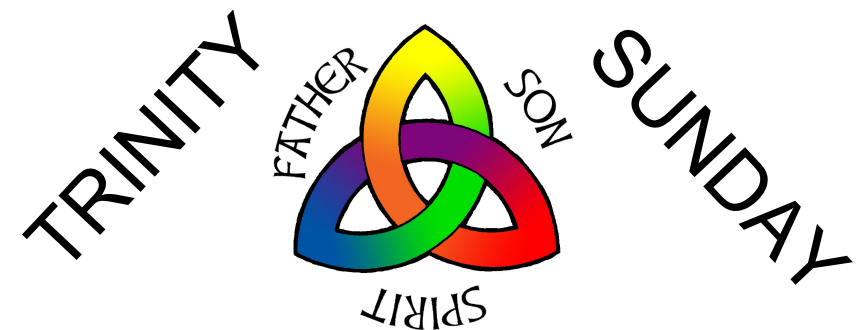
I am just going to remind people that East Challow Community Day at the Cricket Club is on June 7th It has grown and got better every year. There is of course the cricket match, which is always light-hearted, the Tug 'o' War, and all sorts of stalls, and refreshments. Mr. Wiggy will be there, and there are amusements to suit the whole family. It's a really good village event, and of course the bar will be open, what more could you ask for. I hope to see you there; it really is a good afternoon's entertainment.

Dog Poo...

We would like to make a request as there has been quite a few incidents of finding dog poo in Saint Nicholas churchyard, this is not acceptable, and it's very disrespectful to allow your dog to do this on the graves of consecrated ground, without clearing it up after.

While we welcome visitors to our church, we would ask that you please treat the area with the respect that it holds for the families of those whose loved ones are interred here.

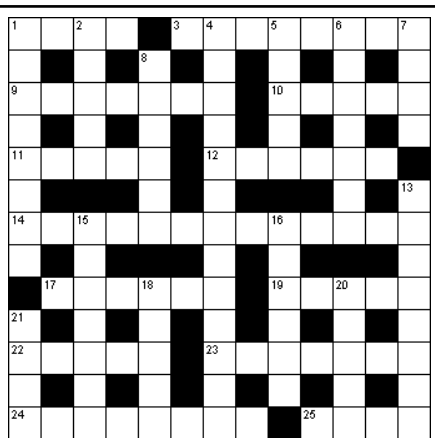
That's all for now I hope you didn't get caught in too many April showers last month.
I hope to see you when I'm out and about walking in the village,
so as always stay safe for yourself and others.



~ Service of Morning Worship ~

NON EUCHARIST

31st May ~ 11.00 am



Across

Down

- | | |
|---|--------------------------|
| 1 Mislaid (4) | 1 Digs (8) |
| 3 Final performance before retirement (4,4) | 2 Powdered tobacco (5) |
| 9 Eldest son of French king (7) | 4 RAF officer (4,9) |
| 10 Evade (5) | 5 Female relative (5) |
| 11 Deduce (5) | 6 Rich, luxurious (7) |
| 12 Ingenious (6) | 7 Scottish valley (4) |
| 14 Charitable giver of help (4,9) | 8 Financial holdings (6) |
| 17 Rupture (6) | 13 Continuous (8) |
| 19 Large striped cat (5) | 15 Coincide partly (7) |
| 22 More competent (5) | 16 Part of the eye (6) |
| 23 Scandinavian country (7) | 18 Compass bearing (5) |
| 24 Precious stone (8) | 20 Forest clearing (5) |
| 25 Average (4) | 21 Asian country (4) |



National Smile Month is 50 years old this year. It is the UK's largest and longest-running campaign to promote good oral health, aiming to encourage people to brush twice a day with fluoride toothpaste, to cut down on sugar, and to visit the dentist regularly. Organised by the British Dental Health Foundation, the website offers the following snippets:

www.dentalhealth.org/national-smile-month

Some fun facts about your teeth:

- It takes 43 muscles to frown, but only 17 to smile.
- Some people pick their teeth with keys, earrings, bank notes and even screwdrivers!
- The going rate given by the tooth fairy these days is £2 to £5
- 61% of us have been attracted to someone by their smile alone
- 24% of us would share our toothbrush with our partner, but only 6% of us would share our toothbrush with a celebrity (!)
- Two thirds of us have less respect for a boss with bad breath

RHS lifts its ban on gnomes for Chelsea

Good news for the gnomes of Britain: they are welcome at the Chelsea Flower Show this year. (19th to 23rd May)

It is only the second time in the history of the world's most famous gardening event that the RHS has allowed gnomes to appear at the show.

The reason is that the gnomes can help raise money for the next generation of gardeners.

The RHS is inviting celebrities to decorate gnomes to feature at the 2026 show, which will then be auctioned off to raise funds for its flagship 'Campaign for School Gardening'. The campaign inspires school children to learn through gardening. The hope is to boost their wellbeing, skills and environmental awareness.



So, if you visit Chelsea Flower Show this year, look out for The RHS and the King's Foundation Curious Garden. It encourages everyone (even gnomes) to be curious and have fun gardening. The appearance of a gnome or two in the Curious Garden (and elsewhere at the show) will reflect and celebrate a tradition at Highgrove, The King's residence in Gloucestershire, where a gnome is often to be found in the Stumpery.

S. J. ACKRILL

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- LIVE - Super
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Hand Bell Ringers

10.30 am
Every Tuesday
New Members
Welcome
01235 763430
For more details

Challows Afternoon Club

for all over 60's
we meet every month
2.00 pm
on the 3rd Thursday
**Everyone
Welcome**

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

Saturday Night
Entertainment

~ ~ ~ ~ ~
May 16th
NIGHT RIDE
HOME

~ ~ ~ ~ ~
June 20th
Johnny Flinton

~ ~ ~ ~ ~
8.00 pm
Admission £10.00
[Cash on the door]

Opening Hours

Monday - Thursday

7.00 pm - Close

~ ~ ~

Friday - 6.00 pm - Close

Saturday 1.00 pm - Close

Sunday 1.00 pm - Close

Sunday Night Cash Bingo



(Eyes down at 8.00pm)

Monday Night Poker



Friday 1st May
Meat Raffle

8.30pm
£1 per ticket.

You and a goldfish's attention span

How long can you concentrate on any one thing? According to the now infamous study by Microsoft (back in 2015), our digital lifestyles have had such a detrimental impact on our concentration levels that our average attention span has fallen to below that of a goldfish.

Humans now stay focused for just eight seconds, before being distracted by news alerts, social media and so on – while even a goldfish can concentrate for nine seconds.

And it is not just the endless stream of information that hits us, but the type of information that is so distracting. Violence and endless conflict can leave you distressed and unsettled. Medical experts recommend regular non-digital breaks such as a walk, a chat, or even just staring out the window.

Meanwhile, try these tips to calm your mind:

1. In the evening, reverse the settings on your device, so that you have white writing on a black background. This reduces the blue light that affects your brain's cyclic rhythm, disrupting your sleep/wake cycle.
2. Get moving. Exercise takes time, but it also sharpens your mind and increases your concentration. So, in the end you will get more done in less time.
3. Eat well. Avoid sugar and too much caffeine which make your mind busier.
4. Seek company. Anxiety levels rise after six hours, due to the changes in your brain hormones caused by social isolation. So, if you work from home, take your laptop to a coffee shop for an hour, or see a friend for coffee.
5. Fill the final half hour of your day with one simple task, rather than flitting from task to task.

Looking for old metal and at least getting some exercise

Here is a hobby that will give you great outdoor exercise – and might, just might, make you rich! Metal detecting is simple to start, and the actual machine is very affordable and easy to master. You can do it anywhere, from your own back garden to local pathways, to fields and even the beach.

People who do metal detecting are called 'detectorists'. They hold on to the stem of a metal detecting machine which is in turn attached to the search head on the ground. This is swept from side to side in an arc as the detectorist walks along. When it passes over a buried metal object, a signal – a bleep – is relayed, usually via headphones, to the enthusiast. A hole is then dug to retrieve the treasure.

If you like the idea, but don't want to try it alone, you might consider joining one of a number of clubs.

Apparently Norfolk, Suffolk, Wiltshire and North Yorkshire are the best places to find treasure.

Beware bread for ducks

The Canal & River Trust, which looks after Britain's waterways, has warned that bread is 'junk food' for ducks. It can lead to excessive droppings, which spread disease. If bread is left to rot, it can trigger noxious odours which can kill fish and encourage algae, as well as rats and mice. So – what DO ducks eat? Try corn, peas, lettuce and seeds.

Small plates are better

How large are your dinner plates? If you replace 12" plates with 10" plates you could end up eating between 16 and 22 per cent less food. That could mean a loss of two stone over a year. The study at Cambridge University concluded: "Helping people to avoid 'over-serving' themselves or others with larger portions of food or drink is likely to ...help reduce their risk of overeating."

Club Membership is NOT a requirement to attend any events here

Parish Church of St. Nicholas - Service Information & Rotas

Sunday	1st Reading	2nd Reading	Gospel	Coverings
3rd May Eucharist Rev Alec Gill Easter 5	*Acts 7: 55 - 60	1 Peter 2: 2 - 10	John 14: 1 - 14	White
10th May Eucharist Rev Dr. Miriam Jones Easter 6	*Acts 17: 22 - 31	1 Peter 3: 13 - 22	John 14: 15 - 21	White
17th May Eucharist Rev Alec Gill Easter 7	*Acts 1: 6 - 14	1 Peter 4: 12 - 14, 5: 6 - 11	John 17: 1 - 11	White
24th May Eucharist Rev Dr. Miriam Jones Pentecost	*Acts 2: 1 - 21	1 Corinthians 12: 3b - 13	John 20: 19 - 23	Red
31st May Morning Worship Jeff Penfold Trinity Sunday	Isaiah 40: 12 - 17, 27 - end	2 Corinthians 13: 11 - 13	Matthew 28: 16 - 20	White Gold

*** Acts ~ MUST BE READ**

	Date	Sacristan	Sidesperson	Prayers	Readings	Organist
1st Sunday	3rd May	Ruth	Frances / Nigel	Linda	Ruth	Ruth
2nd Sunday	10th May	Louise / Claire	Linda / Noel	Louise / Claire	Graham	Ruth
3rd Sunday	17th May	Jenny	Liz / Jeff	Jenny	Fiona	Graham
4th Sunday	24th May	Nigel	Trish / Sue	Nick / Paul	Claire / Nigel	Graham
5th Sunday	31st May	Morning Worship	Liz / Jeff	Paul / Nick	Jenny	Graham

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

Thursday	Sacristan
7th May	Mandy
14th May	Jenny
21st May	Heather
28th May	Mandy
	Nigel

	Coffee	Flowers	Cleaning
1st Sunday	Mandy	Heather	Linda
2nd Sunday	Jan / Hilary	Claire	Claire
3rd Sunday	Val / Barbara	Jenny	Savita
4th Sunday	Linda / Janet	Mandy	Mandy
5th Sunday	Sue / Trish / Frances	Linda	Sue / Trish

The Parish Church of
St Nicholas
Notices

Sunday 10th May

Charitable Offerings
will be taken in aid of



~ Thank you for your generosity ~



APCM

Annual Parochial
Church Meeting

Sunday 3rd May

12.30

[after morning service]

~ St Nicholas Churchyard ~



2nd - 15th May

Mr D. Roberts

16th - 29th May

Mr G. Parker

30th May - 13th June

Mr R. Godfrey

Thursday Coffee Mornings
at St Nicholas Church have been
suspended until further notice

St. Nicholas Church



April

£50 - N° 30 ~ Mrs H. Trimble

£20 - N° 10 ~ Mrs B. Huggins

£10 - N° 72 ~ Mrs J. Evans

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

Would you like to join?

For further information please contact

Tricia Shand - 01235 764222

the.shandies@btinternet.com

14th May - Ascension Day, 40 Days with the Risen Christ

40 days after Easter comes Ascension Day. These are the 40 days during which the Risen Christ appeared again and again to His disciples, following His death and resurrection. (Matthew 28; Mark 16; Luke 24; and John 20.)

The Gospels give us little of Christ's teachings and deeds during those 40 days. Jesus was seen by numerous of His disciples: on the road to Emmaus, by the Sea of Galilee, in houses, etc. He strengthened and encouraged His disciples, and at last opened their eyes to all that the Scriptures had promised about the Messiah. Jesus also told them that as the Father had sent Him, He was now going to send them - to all corners of the earth, as His witnesses.

Surely the most tender, moving 'farewell' in history took place on Ascension Day. Luke records the story with great poignancy: 'When Jesus had led them out to the vicinity of Bethany, He lifted up His hands - and blessed them.'

As Christmas began the story of Jesus' life on earth, so Ascension Day completes it, with His return to His Father in heaven. Jesus' last act on earth was to bless His disciples. He and they had a bond as close as could be: they had just lived through three tumultuous years of public ministry and miracles – persecution and death – and resurrection! Just as we part from our nearest and dearest by still looking at them with love and memories in our eyes, so exactly did Jesus: 'While He was blessing them, He left them and was taken up into heaven.' (Luke 24:50-1) He was not forsaking them, but merely going on ahead to a kingdom which would also be theirs one day: 'I am ascending to my Father and to your Father, to my God and your God...' (John 20:17)

The disciples were surely the most favoured folk in history. Imagine being one of the last few people on earth to be face to face with Jesus, and to have Him look on you with love. No wonder then that Luke goes on: 'they worshipped Him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy. And they stayed continually at the temple, praising God.' (Luke 24:52,53)

No wonder they praised God! They knew they would see Jesus again one day! 'I am going to prepare a place for you... I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am.' (John 14:2,3) In the meantime, Jesus had work for them to do: to take the Gospel to every nation on earth.

The Season Of
Eastertide
~ 50 Days of Easter ~
"Alleluia, Christ is Risen, He is Risen indeed"

Easter Sunday to Pentecost Sunday

5th April - Easter Sunday
12th April - 2nd Sunday of Easter
19th April - 3rd Sunday of Easter
26th April - 4th Sunday of Easter
3rd May - 5th Sunday of Easter
10th May - 6th Sunday of Easter
17th May - 7th Sunday of Easter

24th May - Pentecost Sunday

Grove & Wantage Extravaganza

The Grove & Wantage Extravaganza returns on Saturday 13th June 2026, this year as a collaboration between The Ray Collins Charitable Trust and Grove Rugby Club.

The collaboration brings together two pillars of the local community to deliver the biggest and most inclusive family event in the area.

Running from 12.00 to 22.00 at Grove Rugby Club, the Extravaganza will feature live music, arena displays, children's entertainment, community group showcases, fairground, inflatables, craft stalls, and a wide range of food and drink vendors. The collaboration aims to strengthen community spirit, support local families, and raise vital funds for those in need across OX12.

The collaboration marks a new chapter for the event, combining the Trust's long-standing commitment to supporting vulnerable residents with the Rugby Club's deep roots in local sport, youth development, and community engagement. The partnership is also supported by Grove Parish Council and Wantage Town Council, ensuring the event remains safe, accessible, and welcoming for all.

Shaun Galloway, Chair of Trustees at The Ray Collins Charitable Trust, said: *"The collaboration with Grove Rugby Club is a perfect example of what makes our community special. By working together, we can deliver an event that brings joy to thousands of people while raising essential funds for local families. We're incredibly grateful to the Rugby Club, our councils, volunteers, performers, and everyone who helps make the Extravaganza possible."*

Nigel Dixey, Chairman of Grove Rugby Club said: *"that he was proud that the club were working with the Trust to produce a community event where everyone would be welcome. Entry is free. The range of events and activities should be attractive to all age groups and demonstrates the importance of sport and charity working together for the benefit of the whole community."*

Proceeds from the Extravaganza will support the Trust's work providing emergency food, essential household items, mobility equipment, wellbeing support, and community events for residents across Grove and Wantage.

Local businesses, performers, charities, and community groups are invited to take part, host stalls, or volunteer on the day. Stallholder and sponsorship opportunities are now open.



National Biscuit Day – 29th May 2026

Did you know that Britain is the country with the highest biscuit consumption in the world?

According to industry research, we each eat about 500 biscuits a year. And the great biscuit dunking debate over which biscuit holds up best when dipped in tea – can spark surprisingly passionate discussion.

Biscuits have been part of our daily lives for centuries. Their dose of sweet, tasty comfort is loved by 2-year-olds and 90-year-olds, and every age in between.

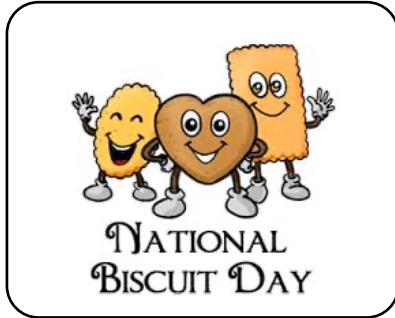
And so National Biscuit Day is held each year to honour this beloved snack. Our national favourite seems to be the chocolate digestive, followed by shortbread and chocolate fingers. But don't underestimate the appeal of custard creams, hobnobs, chocolate chip and oatmeal cookies!

The McVitie's Digestive, first produced in 1892, is one of the most iconic biscuits in British history. Today, it remains a bestseller alongside other classics like the Rich Tea, the Bourbon, and the Jammie Dodger.

The word 'biscuit' comes from the Latin panis biscotus, meaning 'twice-cooked bread'. In Roman times, flour-based provisions were baked twice, to remove moisture, making them durable enough for long journeys. Ancient Egyptian sailors and Roman soldiers relied on these early biscuits as a portable, long-lasting food source.

The transformation from practical sustenance to sweet treat began around the seventh century, when Persian bakers added eggs, butter, cream, and eventually sugar and honey to their recipes, creating some of the earliest cookies in history. By the Middle Ages, biscuits had spread across Europe, with each region developing its own favourite.

The Industrial Revolution brought mass production to the biscuit world. British firms like McVitie's, Huntley and Palmers, and Carr's produced biscuits on an unprecedented scale. In 1831, Huntley and Palmers even invented the decorative biscuit tin, which not only kept biscuits fresh but also made them an attractive gift item.



Thames Valley Police and Crime Commissioner

Keeping Mobile Phones out of the Classroom

Mobile phones are ubiquitous, and bring many benefits in life, but they also create real problems, particularly within schools. Most schools will have some kind of "phone free" policy; but how effectively these are enforced varies hugely.

Last month I met with teachers and governors from several schools at Aureus Secondary School to talk about their approach to banning phones in school.

They have adopted a particular system, using lockable pouches, but there are lots of those things used by schools, such as lock boxes. For most of us a mobile phone is a useful - sometimes indispensable - addition to our lives, but during the school day they distract pupils, disrupt classes, can lead to poor discipline and lower attainment.

There are a number of perceived barriers to implementing a proper phone free policy in school - phones connected to medical devices, and young carers for example - but the experience of schools that have embraced a proper ban shows that these problems can be overcome. The benefits of removing the distraction can hugely outweigh the costs, reducing disruption, truancy and bullying.

I've already been in touch with other schools and discussing how we can spread best practice to all schools in Thames Valley and will hopefully be launching a new project later this year.

As well as increasing the number of neighbourhood police officers locally, as part of my Education Strategy, every secondary school in Thames Valley now has a named schools police officer - and primary school also have access to local support. The important role these officers play can be both dealing with incidents involving children - as either victims or perpetrators; but also working with teachers to educate children - and parents - about some of the risks facing them.



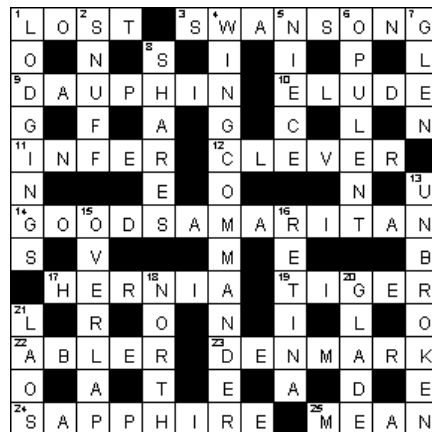
Matthew Barber
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Taking Action

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All entries for the **JUNE 2026** Issue of the Challow News

Must be submitted by

15th May 2026

Email: nigel.langford@me.com

CHALLOW & CHILDREY



CRICKET CLUB

IT'S ALL SYSTEMS GO!!!

With the Cricket Season in full swing, there's something on at the Club nearly every day!

Bar opening times will be as displayed on our website, but are generally

Monday	4pm - 9pm
Tuesday	4pm - 9pm
Wednesday	4pm - 9pm
Thursday	4pm - 9pm
Friday	4pm - 10pm
Saturday	Noon - 10pm
Sunday	11am - 6pm

Youth training takes place on Friday evenings

please see our website

www.challowcricket.co.uk for more information

Membership is £20 per person, and gives you all year round access to the club

www.challowcricket.co.uk
admin@challowcricket.co.uk

01235 763335

Dawn chorus

If you sleep with your bedroom window open, you will know all about the dawn chorus around now. The birds are busy establishing their territorial rights, and the 'early birds' have probably already selected a nest site and started building.

The blackbird builds a solid cup of twigs, plant stems and leaves, lined with a thick skin of mud covered with finer grasses and leaves. The long-tailed tit forms a soft hollow ball of mosses, hair and wool, with a tiny hole as entrance. The wrens do it differently, with the male wren sometimes building several nests before his finicky mate will accept one. He gets his revenge, though, because he sometimes installs a second wife in one of the rejected sites.



"Whilst I appreciate the thought, would whoever it is please stop tweeting, 'So far, so good...?'"

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Community Notices

KING ALFRED QUILTERS

Are you creative?

Do you like Hand Sewing or Machine Sewing?

Then come along to the King Alfred Patchwork and Quilting Group in East Challow. We don't just quilt we like to get involved in all sorts of needlecraft and are open to all age groups and all skill levels.

We meet on the 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 6th May, 19.00 hours we have Sally Ablett - You have fabrics so make Quilts, Irene & Lewis Designer

Wednesday 20th May 10.00am Sewing day.

Come along to see what we are about and join our friendly group.

Visitors are welcome at both events (fees apply).

For more information visit our website

www.kingalfredquilters.org.uk

Helen: 07763 923000 or Janice: 07786 333497



East Challow Community Warm Spaces

Join us for a Hot Drink and friendly conversation at Challow and Childrey Cricket Club from 11.00 am

on any of the following dates.

Friday 8th May

Friday 22nd May

Friday 5th June

Community Notices

Save the Date

> Community Day <

Sunday 7th June 2026



1.00 pm - 6.00 pm
~ FREE ENTRY ~
Cricket Club, Vicarage Hill OX12 9RR



2025-2026

East Challow Village hall committee meetings

18th May

Start at 8.30pm

AGM - 27th July @ 7.30pm



Christian Aid Week

10th - 16th May 2026

Who will Christian Aid support this year?

This Christian Aid Week, your support could help mothers in Nairobi, Kenya, facing the devastating reality of urban poverty and the daily struggle to feed their children.

By funding urban farming projects alongside specialist training from our partner Beacon of Hope, we can help parents fight food insecurity, grow fresh vegetables in small city spaces and earn an income to support their families.

This May, we invite you to help mothers like Fridah Moraa and Belinda Kasudi living in crowded informal settlements so they can protect their children from hunger and grow a more hopeful future.

The cash collection from our charitable giving at our service on 10th May 2026 will be donated to Christian Aid. If you forget on this day please put your contribution into an envelope marked Christian Aid collection the following week so that it can be added to the donations already collected the previous week at St Nicholas .

Thank you for your generosity.

SlimmingWorld

Monday - Wantage

5:30pm & 7:00pm
Comrades Club,
OX12 8DJ

Tuesday - Grove

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

Saturday - East Challow

7:30am & 9:00am
Challow & Childrey
Cricket Club, OX12 9RR

Would you love to feel slimmer, fitter, healthier without going on a diet? or compromising on your favourites? with a famous eating plan backed by over 55years of science...? with proven results - my own included.....

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~ Serving persecuted Christians worldwide ~

“With God all things are possible.”- Matthew 19:26

How do you think the women felt on that first Easter Sunday when they went to the tomb and found Jesus’ body missing? Gradually, sorrow, anger, confusion, was able to give way to incredible excitement and joy - but it didn’t happen all at once.

“The message of Easter is so extraordinary that we, too, can find it difficult to fully take it in,” says Fr Patrick van der Vorst of the Diocese of Westminster, commenting on a painting of the resurrection on his website, Christian Art. “And perhaps this is why the Church gives us Eastertide, a season giving us time to grow into this reality. Seven weeks to the Ascension to try and take in the resurrection.”

Christians persecuted in other parts of the world can witness to Jesus’ resurrection life and hope in their own lives and their stories are shared through Open Doors’ website. Here’s one that I was drawn to, from an article called ‘Five women sharing Jesus’ resurrection power today’:

Meet Beatriz* in central Mexico’s ‘Circle of Silence’, a region where less than two percent of the population is Christian. In this region, believers must live their faith in secret. Despite violent persecution that almost killed her daughter, Beatriz continues to share the gospel in this dangerous place. In her rural community, she leads a group of women, walking with them through the daily challenges of persecution and womanhood.

Behind closed doors, they study the Bible, pray and encourage each other. Together, they’re learning to restore their dignity, reaffirm their identity in Christ and find the strength to raise their children amid fear – trusting that God is transforming their pain into hope.

“Every meeting is a victory – not because we are strong, but because God sustains us,” Beatriz says.

Slowly but surely, Beatriz is leading women to rewrite the story of what it means to be a woman of faith in this land. One of them – the first in her group to receive Jesus – now helps lead part of the meeting, a small but powerful sign of the faith spreading across the region.

Beatriz’s dream for this region is also a prayer: “In ten years, I hope there will be more followers of Christ here – that God’s kingdom will expand, that believers will live without fear and that faith can be practised openly.”

I wonder how you reflect on this story. If you were to meet Beatriz, what kind of conversation would you have? Whilst working for Open Doors, I have sometimes heard from and met persecuted Christians, and whenever I read a story from the persecuted church, this is the question I ask myself. Because one day, it is possible that we might meet. They are not fictional characters. They are real people – often lively, witty, wise people – who have retained their individuality despite experiencing great pressure from corrupt systems or shocking events.

It’s a reality check for me, as a Christian in this culture, to be confronted with the brave, living faith of others who are part of the same church worldwide. But that’s what Jesus’ resurrection does. It makes men and women braver and stronger than they thought possible – because God sustains them. How about us?

For the latest reports and stories from the persecuted church go to [Home - Open Doors UK & Ireland](#) or ask Nick or Claire Page for more details.

Waste & Recycling Information



*Wednesday 6th May	Green + Brown + Food
Tuesday 12th May	Black + Food
Tuesday 19th May	Green + Brown + Food
*Wednesday 27th May	Black + Food
Tuesday 2nd June	Green + Brown + Food



*Change of collection day due to BANK HOLIDAY

Please ensure your Waste & Recycling Bins are placed on the kerbside before

06.00 am to ensure your bins are emptied

* * * * *

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

From 14 January 2026 you will need to **book a time slot** before every visit to our Household Waste Recycling Centres.

You can book up to **two weeks** in advance or **30 minutes*** before you visit.

*Subject to availability



The booking system will help manage demand and make your visit quicker and easier.

Scan me 

oxfordshire.gov.uk/hwrcbooking

Unable to book online?
Call 01865 519800 Monday to Friday.

 OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

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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