THE OXHILL NEWS

December 2026 No. 625



Mira is a 10 year old female cat. She went missing from Blackford Way on Tuesday 27th October. If you see her please call Joanna Hunt on 07974268503

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Tysoe Bonfire Night. Photo by Nick Spencer



MERRY CHRISTMAS IN OXHILL



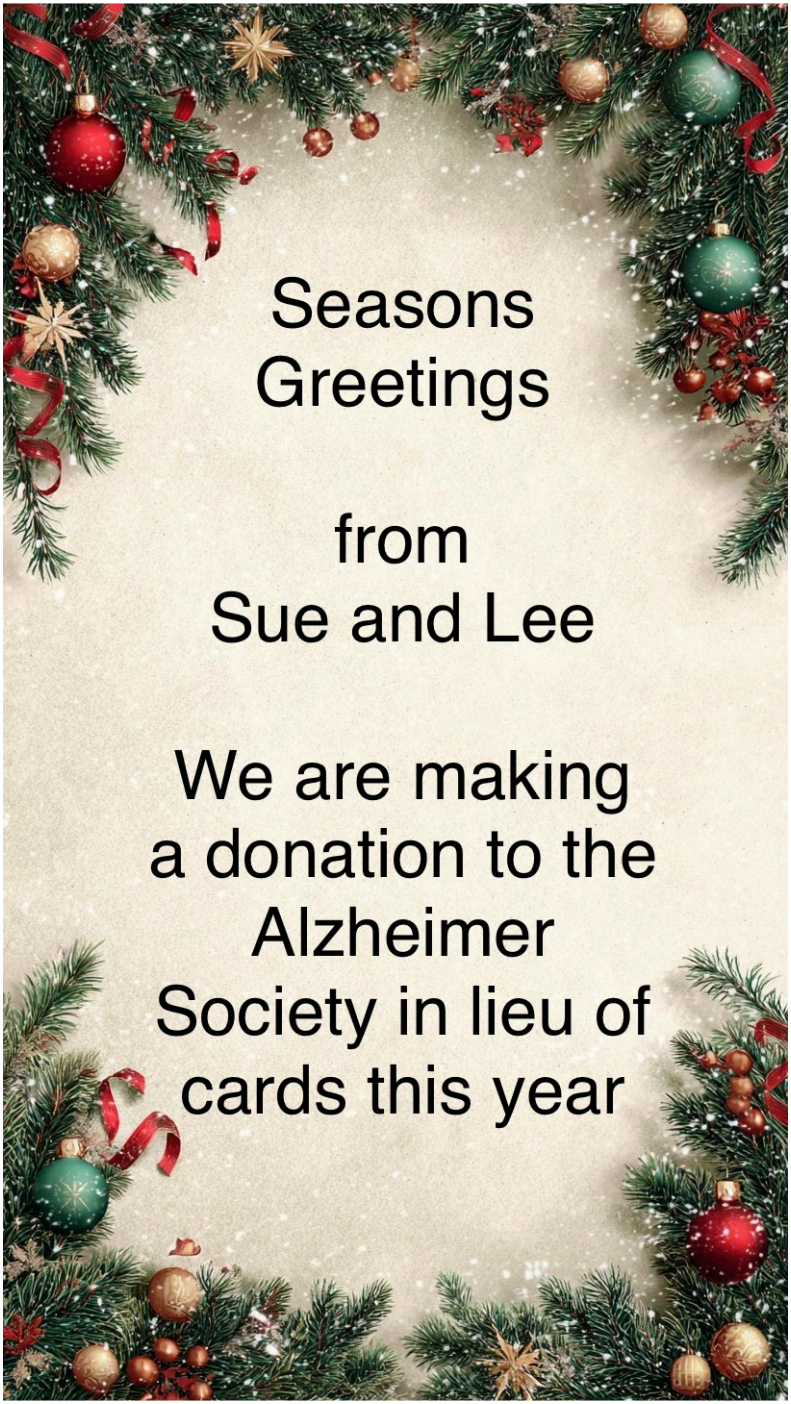
Warmest Christmas wishes to all our friends and neighbours in Oxhill.

This year instead of sending Christmas cards, we have decided to make a donatin to the **British Heart Foundation**, supporting for the wonderful work they do.

Wishing you all a magical Christmas filled with happiness, love and laughter, and a healthy and peaceful New Year.

With our very best wishes,

Jane & Grenville Moore


Seasons
Greetings
from
Sue and Lee
We are making
a donation to the
Alzheimer
Society in lieu of
cards this year



DONATIONS IN LIEU OF CHRISTMAS CARDS

The Morgans will not be sending out any Christmas cards this year to our friends and neighbours in Oxhill. Instead we will be donating to a charity very close to our hearts. **Ovarian Cancer Action**, is a charity that researches into this dreadful disease.

We would like to wish everyone a very Happy Christmas and a healthy and Happy 2027.

With love and hugs, Ed and Elaine 😘*XXXX*

Mike and Heather Bridgman would like to wish all friends and neighbours a wonderful Christmas & a very happy and healthy New Year. Once again, we won't be sending Christmas Cards this year and instead making a donation to **Cancer Research UK** and the **Migraine Trust**.

We're sending Christmas Greetings to all our lovely friends in Oxhill and looking forward to seeing you all at some point over the holiday period. As usual, we're sending a donation to **Warwickshire Air Ambulanc**e, a charity close to our hearts.

Roger and Gill

Best wishes and love for the festive season.

Brian and I are planning to donate to the fabulous, essential work carried out locally by '**Talk Dementia**' in lieu of cards this year. Special thanks to Paul and Heather who work tirelessly to raise the profile of dementia whilst caring for and supporting those who live with this illness and those who care for them.

Liz and Brian x

Instead of sending Christmas cards to our friends in the village, we will be making a donation to **Great Ormond Street Hospital** who continue to care for Milo. We wish you all a merry Christmas and best wishes for the new year.

Anne, Jo, Milo & Felix



ST LAWRENCE CHURCH FOR DECEMBER

We begin December looking ahead to the wonders of Christmas, and singing 'Longing for light, we wait in darkness…'. It feels like that for many folk this year, an unrelenting darkness which surround us. But God sees that, and into that darkness sends the brightest light of all – his Son, who was born into exactly the mess and muddle we experience, and yet brought God's light of hope, joy, comfort and new life to the world. That is why:

We join with the stars as they sing for joy;
our hearts echo the music of angels
which filled they skies on the night of your birth.

With outrageous humility you share our humanity;
you are our God made flesh,
revealed among us for all to see.
And it takes our breath away.

As we gather again to celebrate your birth
and proclaim your love,
may your peace fill our world
and joy transcend all fear.

And may we ever find you at one with your people,
sharing our pain,
making us whole. Louise Gough, Winter



CHURCH SERVICES IN DECEMBER

Note that some are in other churches.

Sunday, December 6th	2nd Sunday of Advent	
3.30 pm	Christingle	Jill Tucker
Sunday, December 13th	3rd Sunday of Advent	
9.30 am	Holy Communion	Jill Tucker
Sunday, December 20th	4th Sunday of Advent	
9.30 am	Morning Worship	George Heighton
Wednesday, December 23rd		
6. 30 pm	Carol Service	George Heighton/Jill Tucker
Thursday, December 24th	Christmas Eve	
11.30 pm	Midnight Mass in Tysoe	Susan Bowden-Pickstock
Friday, December 25th	Christmas Day	
9.30 am	Holy Communion for Christmas Day	George Heighton
Sunday, December 27th		
11.00 am	United Holy Communion Service at Sutton.	

Have a wonderful and blessed Christmas, Jill




OXHILL'S
CHRISTMAS
CRACKER
Coffee, cake, crafts & chat
SATURDAY
5TH DECEMBER
11AM–3PM
THE OLD CHAPEL
OXHILL
CRAFT ACTIVITIES FOR CHILDREN AND ADULTS
CARDS AND GIFT STALLS
JAMS, CHUTNEY, HONEY
HOMEMADE REFRESHMENTS INCLUDING SOUP AND CAKES
FRIENDS OF OXHILL CHURCH

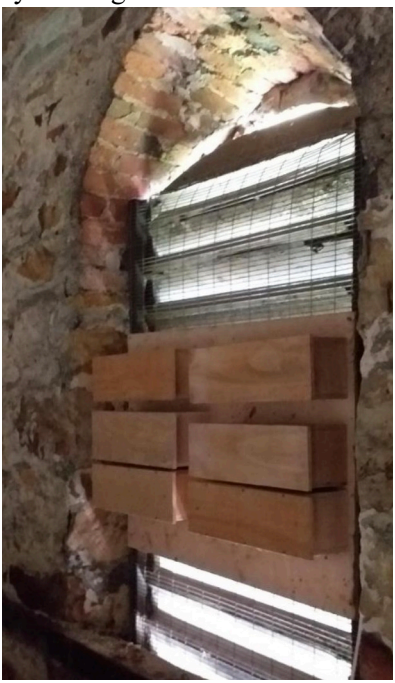
SAVE THE SWIFT



As many of you will know St Lawrence Church recently won a bronze award for biodiversity within the churchyard, this is almost entirely due to the hard work of Jane Smith with a little help from other individuals and OWLS. We would like to continue this work by tying to re establish the lost nesting site for SWIFTS in the fabric of the church.

The swift population in the UK has dropped by 66% - 70% between 1995 to 2024 they are now on the endangered list. There are two main reasons one is loss of habitat and the other is loss of insect food. We know within Oxhill the churchyard and other wildflower areas established have sustained and slightly increased our insect population but the only place where swifts used to nest has now been lost.

The plan is to construct swift nest boxes in the belfry of the church, and it looks almost certain that the PCC will obtain the correct permission for us to do this. The problem is that there is no more biodiversity funding available but if we can form a small group of able bodied individuals and source some timber we can accomplish this task ourselves and offer the wonderful swifts a home.



So here's the plea….I'm looking for volunteers, you'll need an head for heights and some average carpentry ability. It would be marvellous if we could achieve this for next spring. I've included here some photographs giving an idea of what we want to achieve.

If you feel you'd like to get involved in this project please contact me.

Grenville Moore





FRIENDS OF OXHILL CHURCH

Quiz Night

The Old Chapel was bursting at the seams with well over 70 people putting their memories to the test as fourteen teams took part in our annual Quiz on November 7th. Alongside the quiz, everyone enjoyed a generous and delicious hot meal, with plenty of cake to follow. The winning team, The Blow ins, had travelled all the way from Tysoe to join us for the evening. Hot on their heels, in a very close second place, were Kate and Dave Nash's team, Oxhill Mountain Rescue. Congratulations to all the teams for rising to the challenge and making it to the end! I had worried that the questions were too easy until I heard them read out. A big thank you to everyone who came along and supported our fundraising evening, some travelling from as far away as Somerset to join in. We raised over £1500, smashing our quiz record set last year.

Our Quiz Evening is always made extra special by the wonderful Iain, whose skills as an entertaining and professional Questionmaster bring the questions to life, keep the teams in order and ensure there is plenty of laughter along the way. We are so lucky to have him!

Events like this take a great deal of hard work and dedication, so I would like to extend a sincere thank you to Carol, Gaida, Jerry, Lis, Linda, Kay and Jon for all their help with planning, setting up the tables and chairs, preparing and serving the food, washing up and clearing away; to James and Linda for looking after the bar; to Carol, Lis, Gaida, Linda, Kay, Kate and Lucy for providing the delicious pasta dishes and home-baked cakes, generously donating the ingredients and their time. Without this wonderful team of



helpers, evenings like the quiz simply wouldn't be possible. Thank you all for everything you do throughout the year, too. Finally, a very special thank you to Iain Macpherson for being such a fantastic Quizmaster, giving up his Saturday evening and even bringing along his own PA equipment. We are incredibly fortunate that he is happy to return year after year. He really is a star, keeping everyone entertained and the evening running smoothly from start to finish. Thank you once again, Iain. Can we book you in for next year already?!

Ruth Mercer





Forthcoming Events

Oxhill's Christmas Cracker
The Old Chapel
Saturday 5th December
11am – 3pm

This is an exciting new addition to our fundraising programme, replacing the traditional annual Made in Oxhill event. There will be a lovely selection of locally made crafts and produce to buy, including jams, honey, chutney and fudge. Knit and Natter will also be joining us with a stall selling their beautiful knitted and handmade creations. There will be plenty more to enjoy, including a children's and a bottle Tombola, guess the weight of the cake, plus a crafting table where both adults and children can have fun making their own Christmas-themed decorations.

Above all, this is a social occasion where you can enjoy a drink, tuck into some homemade soup and cake, catch up with friends and neighbours and perhaps pick up a few Christmas gifts along the way. We very much hope you will come along and enjoy it!

To help make our Christmas Cracker a success, we are urgently seeking donations of raffle prizes and bottles for the Tombola. If you have anything you could donate, please get in touch with Lis Stuart or me.

Thank you for your support!

Future Dates for your 2027 Diary

Winter Saturday Social
Saturday 16th January
2pm – 4.30pm
Escape from winter hibernation and come to the Old Chapel for tea, coffee, and cake plus a post-Christmas catch-up with your village friends and neighbours. More details in the next Oxhill News.

Games Night
Saturday 6th March
More details in the New Year.

Ruth Mercer
ruthc.mercer@btinternet.com
07400 615999










SOX
BIRRA MORETTI
RICETTA ORIGINALE







MEMORIES OF CHRISTMAS PAST IN OXHILL

Oxhillians, Tom Heritage, Ruth Mercer, Grenville Moore, Lis Stuart and Jill Tucker share memories of Christmases past in Oxhill.

EARLY CHRISTMASES

by Tom Heritage

Being born at the very start of the 2nd World War Christmas only got more commercial all my life. I remember having only home made toys from parents and uncles.

One was a battle ship made from a solid block of wood about 2ft 6inches long and beautifully shaped with a flat deck (air craft carrier) and the control room etc. and Guns shaped and fixed to one side of the flat deck. It was so heavy I struggled to carry it to the pool near the farm buildings to launch it, with a piece of string on a pole to tow it along. I kept it for years.

We did not have many toys but we were very happy making do with our imagination out of what we could find.

We lived outdoors a lot of the time, but not the winter of 1947. I did not go to school for nine weeks that term because of the snow and then the floods.



Fallow deer in the snow at Charlecote Park in the 1950s.

News got through that some supplies had reached Tysoe so my father and elder brother took a tractor and trailer directly to Tysoe, not keeping to the road because the snow was so hard, and brought much needed bread etc. for anyone in the village. Of coarse there were far fewer inhabitants in those days.

My 1st memory of tropical fruit was being laughed at by the grown ups for trying to eat an orange like an apple skin and all !! That must have been about Christmas 1947 or 8 it was quite common for my generation I should think.

We had rationing of some food until the the 1950's.

There was more self entertainment then with village variety shows, some parts were very good, but some were poor and excruciating, but we had a lot of home made fun in those days

With Whist drives in the 'School Room' etc. as the Village Hall was known.

Now the V.H. Committee put on much nicer events, and with central heating in homes as well

I do not want to go back, thank-you.

OXHILL VILLAGE HALL CHRISTMAS PARTY 1990

by Ruth Mercer

December 8th, 1990 was the date chosen by the Village Hall Committee for the annual Christmas Party. The theme for the party was a Caribbean evening, complete with limbo dancing and fancy dress, obviously. The Village Hall Committee had been practicing the Oxhill Calypso (Jon can't remember who wrote it) and were ready for their big performance when disaster struck: we woke up to a snowstorm and no electricity. Jon went down to Hoggins in Tysoe to stock up on solid fuel as we realised we would have to rely on our open fire. By lunchtime, the Village Hall Committee had cancelled the evening as plenty of electricity lines were down and repairs were being hampered by the snow. I had already prepared my share of Caribbean chicken the day before.

The following day was sunny and lots of the village were out playing in the snow, but there was still no power. Thoughts turned to the prepared Caribbean chicken that needed to be eaten before it went to waste. Unfortunately for me, Sheila Wilde also had a large amount to get rid of, so we were competing for people to come and help us eat it! After a few unsuccessful phone calls, I managed to find some hungry people and we had a candlelit meal of Caribbean Chicken heated over the open fire. As we were burning phurnacite on the open fire, my Le Creuset frying pan never really recovered.

We were in the fortunate position of having an open fire with a back boiler so had hot water and a warm radiator in the bathroom. Our eldest daughter, Charlotte, had just turned two years old and was very happy to share her warm bath with Marcus and Sam Robertson who didn't have hot water. (I'm sure I have a photo somewhere…)

As the power cut dragged on, we used our collection of old car batteries to power a light in the living room. By the time the power came back on, we were about to sacrifice the battery out of my car. In all, the power was off for 3.5 days.

I have not cooked that Caribbean Chicken recipe since.



The Great Midland Blizzard on 9 December 1990. Photo from Canley, Coventry

CHRISTMAS AT THE PEACOCK IN THE SEVENTIES

by Grenville Moore

My mother always loved fresh flowers especially at Christmas where there would be vases of flowers, as well as all the usual Christmas decorations, all over the place, there was was a wonderful smell when you walked into the pub. Christmas Day they only opened for two hours 12 till 2pm, there would be customers literally on the doorstep on the dot of 12, dogs got priority there would usually be four or five and they would rush in and stand with their paws (if they could reach) on the bar counter and in turn my father would give each one a parsons nose (loads of chickens were roasted for chicken in the basket and the parson's noses were kept in a little bowl for occasions like this) . Bowls of chopped up cheddar cheese along with bowls of crisps were put on every table and the first drink was on the house. By 12.30 the pub was heaving with Oxhillians some in their Christmas jumpers and some in funny hats…talk about merriment! But on the dot of 2 o'clock my farther would call out " anybody would think it's bloody Christmas, you lot got no homes to go too, you're not on your daddy's yacht now" The pub would clear but more often than not there would be a few single customers who were going to be on their own so they were invited to stay for lunch, we would usually number about a dozen, bar tables were pulled into a line in front of the roaring fire in the inglenook and quickly laid up with candles and crackers. My wonderful mother made sure food was plentiful and usually there were two meats…roast rib of beef and a turkey or maybe a goose and all the trimmings… needless to say there was no shortage of drinks. Much laughter and jollity followed.

Fond memories I raise a glass to my dearly missed parents Bert and Eileen. 💕



Bert and Eileen Norton.

MEMORIES OF OXHILL IN THE WINTER

by Lis Stuart

I have fond memories of carol singing around the village as a child, no matter what the weather, sometimes cold and frosty and others getting soaked in the rain. It was a thrill to be out in the dark with a torch, meeting up with friends in the village and being allowed to knock on doors to announce the arrival of the group of carol singers. I cannot remember whether there was a collection of money or whether it was done for the tradition each year, marking the arrival of the festive season.

One very wet winter, I had been left alone at home while my parents visited my brother in hospital. It had been raining continuously all day and as it grew dark, I realised that not only were the Manor fields flooded more than usual so that the encroaching water was reaching the back of the garden, but the drains on Rouse Lane where we lived were blocked. (Rouse Lane and the other roads in village in those days the roads didn't have names, which caused confusion if two houses had the same name in different parts of the village particularly for the relief postman or visitors) Being at the end of the lane the where the water was rapidly accumulating and coming ever closer to the front of the house. I rang my Grandparents who lived on Green Lane, they arrived shortly afterwards but were unable to get through the water in their minivan. As my grandmother stepped out of the car and tried to wade through the water in went over the top of er wellies soaking her trousers and feet. They stayed with me until my parents returned, luckily the water did not reach the house from either direction.

Snow in Oxhill was an annual event, every winter we were guaranteed at least 3 or 4 snow days from school when the buses couldn't get through to Kineton. I remember one year in particular when the buses couldn't get through to the school to collect the children. I was fortunate enough to be offered a lift with Mr Blunt the art teacher, who lived in Oxhill. Unfortunately, there was no room in the car for my brother, but I reasoned that if I could get home and alert my parents (remembering that there were no mobile phones in those days) we could fetch him and others in the 4x4 vehicle that we ad as a family. As it was a bus did finally make it through to the school and after a detour of its route managed to get the other children including my brother back to the village.

There was only one year that my parents missed doing the milk round and this was one particularly deep snowy day when all the roads were completely impassable. My brother and I were around 10 years old and my parents decided that we would put the milk on the sledge and walk to Whatcote to deliver it so that at least the people there would not miss out. We set out into the freezing weather reaching the bottom of the hill on the road to Whatcote before a man in a land rover coming the other way stopped and asked if he could give us and the milk a lift. My parents accepted his kind offer, but by the time all the milk had been loaded into the vehicle there was no room for myself and my brother. My parents and the milk carried on their journey to Whatcote leaving my brother and I to walk the remaining distance with the sledge. On reaching Whatcote we found that the milk had been delivered and the crates where full of empty bottles ready for the return trip home. We

loaded up the sledge and made our way back as a family through the frozen landscape.

Another winter which many of you will remember, Oxhill was cut off with no electricity for several days, this meant that no one had any heating or means of cooking unless you used the open fire. The snow drifts on the Whatcote Road were as high as the hedges and there was just a single track to walk down. Being in my late teens or early 20's with my friends decided that the best place to be was in the Royal Oak in Whatcote where they had a gas cooker and so could offer hot food as well as having a good supply of beer! I remember walking home through the snow drifts at 4am in the morning in a beautifully peaceful winter wonderland, with the snow sparking and the air being crisp and frosty.











Christmas Carols at St. Lawrence Church 2023

COVID CHRISTMAS

by Jill Tucker

During Covid, when we weren't allowed to have Christmas Services, we organised a walk through of the Christmas Story in the Church. There were scenes telling the story of the first Christmas, everyone came dressed up, and walked through the church, from one end to the other.










Ali 07970 922352
oxhillvh@gmail.com
OXHILL VILLAGE HALL
for our community
Seniors' Christmas Lunch
Had your invitation?
Please RSVP by the 1st
Invitation not arrived?
Please get in touch
Tuesday 8th December
12:30pm

OXHILL VILLAGE HALL

There's been a bit of a gap between our last event ("AI – Mind The Gap" - a talk by Paul Roebuck) and our next event being the always popular **CURRY NIGHT** on **27th November.**



We're excited for the **Xmas Tree** arrival on **Friday 4th December** when it'll be all hands on decs. to dress with lights and baubles for us all to enjoy. Thanks again to Mike & Suzy at Warwickshire Xmas Trees for another beautiful tree.

Other Upcoming Events:

Seniors Xmas Lunch
Tuesday 8th December at 12.30 pm. If you've had an invite but not got around to it yet, please do make sure to **RSVP by 1st December.**

Beer & Bubbles
Friday 18th December at 7.00 pm.
An event always extremely well attended and thoroughly enjoyed by all who do. A fabulous opportunity to start the week before Xmas with friends and family from our super friendly and welcoming Oxhill community. The **£17.50 ticket price** includes two drinks and canapes. Come along in your party gear and raise a glass of Prosecco, or whatever else you choose, to start the festive season.

AI: Mind the Gap, Part Two – A talk by Paul Roebuck. Safe, set up and hands on.
Tuesday 12th January - 7 to 9 pm
In October, Paul's evening at the village hall looked at what AI actually is, and what it isn't. Part Two is hands on. Bring your phone or tablet, and Paul will help you find the setting that stops your chats being used to train the AI, set your AI up so it knows how you like things done, and practise the habits that get better answers and catch it when it's wrong.

Whichever AI you use, whether it's ChatGPT, Gemini, Copilot or Claude, there'll be a table for it. Never used one? Download the free Claude app before you come, or arrive at 6.30 for help getting started. Every word is explained as we go.

Book early to avoid disappointment. **Tickets cost just £8. (Doors and bar open 6.30 pm)**


It's Bread Week
with Roger Goodman
Come along to watch our resident bread-expert, Roger, demonstrate how to make a dough before using what you have learnt to make focaccia or teacakes!
TUESDAY 26TH JANUARY.
DOORS OPEN AT 2PM.
TICKETS BY EMAIL REQUEST TO OXHILLVH@GMAIL.COM.
PRICE IS JUST £12.
ONLY 12 SPACES AVAILABLE.

Before the evening, please take two minutes to tell Paul which AI you use and what you'd like from the night: paulroebuck.co.uk/oxhill2, or scan the QR code on the poster. No name needed.

Paul Roebuck is a psychotherapist, author and AI coach, and has lived in Oxhill since 1998.

Tickets for the above events can be bought online at oxhillvh.co.uk or requested by email to oxhillvh@gmail.com.

"It's Bread Week" with Roger Goodman
Tuesday 26th January – doors open at 2.00 pm.
Following on from the very popular pasta making evening with Richard Parker, we'll be hosting a similar experience with Roger, our local bread making enthusiast.

Roger will demonstrate how a 'dough' is made, then participants will use a time saving dough previously made and proved by him, to make either focaccia or tea cakes to bake and take home.

All basic ingredients needed will be provided but if you want to add, say glace cherries to your Tea Cakes, bring along your extra ingredients to mix in before shaping, further proving and baking the dough.

This is an afternoon session lasting two to three hours.

Tea will be provided and Coffee or Prosecco can be purchased.

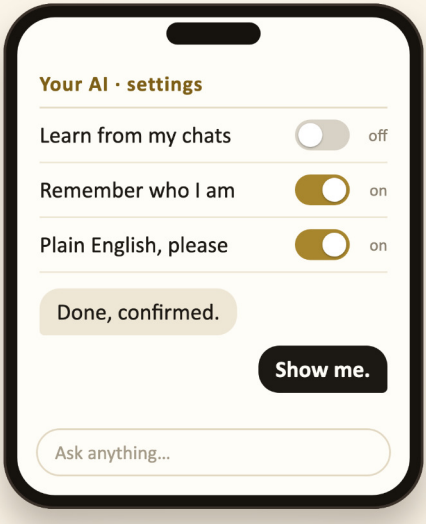
Tickets by email request to oxhillvh@gmail.com. Price is just £12. For those who just want to watch the demonstration a reduced price ticket is available at £6. There's a limited number of places available to participate (just 12) so make sure to book early. Cup of tea included, coffee and prosecco available to purchase from the bar.

100 Club

October's winners were Karen Barker(£60), Anonymous(£30) and Kim Copper(£10). Good luck to those in the draw in November. For those of you not, but who would like to be, you can join the 100 Club for an annual subscription of only £60 at oxhillvh.co.uk. Please join us for your chance to win while also supporting the village hall.

AI: MIND THE GAP · PART TWO

This time, bring your phone.



SAFE · SET UP · HANDS ON

New to AI? Start here.
Came in October? This is the next step.

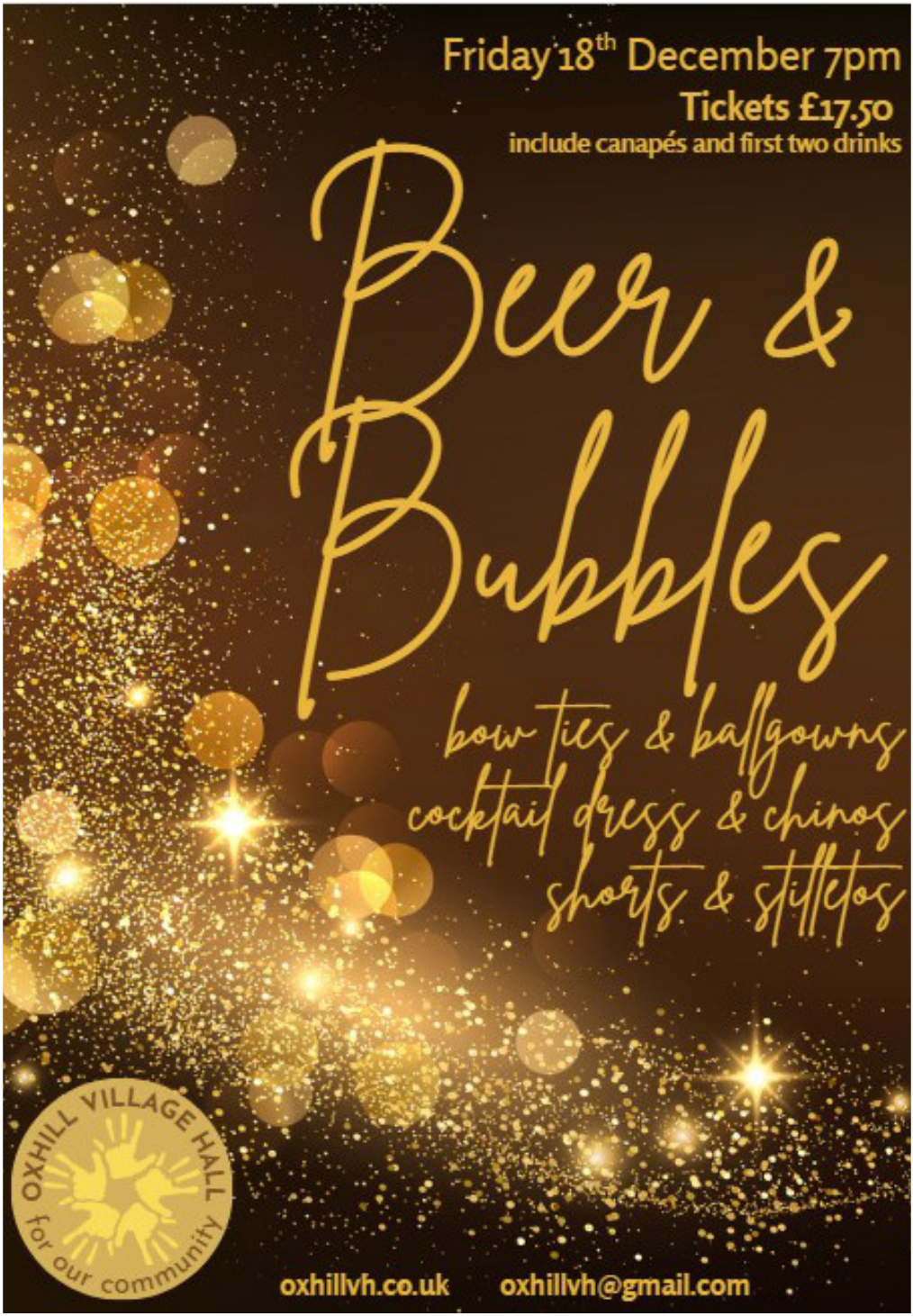
Tuesday 12 January 2027 · 7 to 9 pm
OXHILL VILLAGE HALL

BEFORE YOU COME · TWO MINUTES

Tell me which AI you use and what you want from the evening.

paulroebuck.co.uk/oxhill2

Paul Roebuck · psychotherapist · author · AI coach · in Oxhill since 1998


Friday 18th December 7pm
Tickets £17.50
include canapés and first two drinks
Beer & Bubbles
bow ties & ballgowns
cocktail dress & chinos
shorts & stilletos
OXHILL VILLAGE HALL
for our community
oxhillvh.co.uk
oxhillvh@gmail.com

FUNCTIONAL FITNESS WITH CAMILLA

WEDNESDAY'S 9.15am in OXHILL VILLAGE HALL

Functional Fitness with Camilla - a feel good full body session, combining controlled pilates inspired movements with resistance bands, small balls and light weights.

Build core strength, improve stability and balance, and strengthen your whole body in a low impact class designed to leave you feeling stronger & more energised.

Suitable for a range of fitness levels.

Sign up to 6 weeks £60 starting on Wednesday 4th November, or drop in £15 a class. Please message Camilla on 07940 525 609 to book in.



WOT2GROW COMMUNITY ORCHARD

This month we have our Annual General Meeting and will be expressing our grateful thanks to Mike Sanderson who has been chairman for the past fifteen years and is now retiring. He is also passing over the management of the bee hives to two other members and they hope to restore honey bees to the orchard as the two existing hives were sadly lost in the spring this year.

Membership of the orchard continues to grow and members volunteer their time to look after the trees and fruit bushes, as well as picking produce. Over the year fruit has been shared between members (including their grandchildren!),Tysoe School, River Meadows and Low Furlong care homes and Shipston Lunch Club.

The orchard is next to the allotments on the Shenington Road in Tysoe. For more information about membership please email: mirandawot2grow@gmail.com.

Allie Aves



WHAT'S ON IN & AROUND OXHILL

December

Sat 5th	11:00-15:00	Oxhill's Christmas Cracker, the Old Chapel
Tues 8th	12:30	Senior's Lunch, Village Hall
Sat 12th	10:00-13:00	Holly Tree Fayre, St. Mary's Church, Tysoe
Tues 16th	14:30-14:50	Mobile Library, outside Village Hall
Fri 18th	19:00	Beer & Bubbles, Village Hall

January

Tues 12th	19:00	AI: Mind the Gap, Part Two, Village Hall
Sat 16th	14:00-16:30	Winter Saturday Social, the Old Chapel
Tues 20th	14:30-14:50	Mobile Library, outside Village Hall
Tues 26th	14:00	'It's Bread Week' with Roger Goodman, Village Hall

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE OXHILL NEWS

The editors welcome articles, photographs, drawings, poems, puzzles, recipes or notices for inclusion in the Oxhill News. Submissions need to be received by the 20th of each month to be included in the following month's issue.

Please email us at: oxhill.news.editor@gmail.com

RUBBISH COLLECTION DATES FOR DECEMBER

Your collection dates

	Food waste (food waste caddy)	Recycling (blue-lidded bin)	Refuse (grey bin)	Garden waste (green / green-lidded b n)
Friday, 04/12/2026	✔	✔		✔
Friday, 11/12/2026	✔		✔	
Friday, 18/12/2026	✔	✔		✔
Monday, 28/12/2026	✔			