



The Window

October
2025



**A great day
for a great couple
in a great village**

The
weather
was
perfect, the
church was

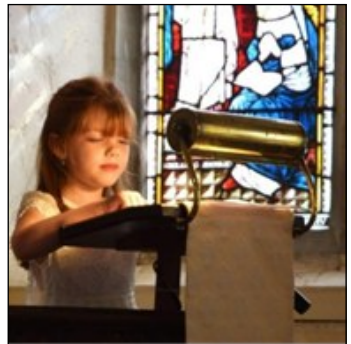


bedecked with beautiful flower
arrangements by Susie and her crew,
and an amazing crowd gathered to
witness and celebrate the marriage of the
beloved **Liz Yates and Damian Slack**,
in the Church of St Mary the Virgin in
Ipsden, on Saturday 6th September.

The Bride arrived with Bridesmaid Kate
and Puppy, the latter
joining
Groomsmen
George and
Alex to
present the
rings at the
appropriate
time in the
service.



It was magic!





The Choir assembled at the door to greet the bride with Viadana's *Exultate Justi in Domino*. They would sing other pieces during the service including the hymn, *God and Country*, written by William and Frank Porkess (Liz's great-uncles) in 1956. This was resurrected as a surprise piece for the Bride.

Anthony Gowing returned for the day to play the organ and Mary Daniels played the piano during the signing of the marriage documents.

There were readings in the service by Andrew Darke, Chistopher Yates, and Kate Slack, and the Vicar expressed the magnitude and weight of the commitment of marriage as Liz and Damian took their vows.

Afterwards we all gathered in the field for the party during, which we were entertained by Aaron

and Aitch and later danced to disco music. Christopher Yates, in his toast to the Bride and Groom, spoke eloquently and emotionally about Liz and Damian and of course Jill Yates.

An Argentinian barbecue ritual known as *asado* provided a magnificent and tasty attachment to a wide-ranging buffet.



Memories of North Stoke from Benson Care Home



We first visited North Stoke in the 1980s, on our way to South Stoke, to kill some time, as we were early for lunch with friends who lived nearby. At the time, we were planning to move from Gerrard's Cross and fell in love with North Stoke almost immediately and decided, on the spot, that we wanted to live there.

North Stoke retains an atmosphere all of its own. The village street forms part of the ancient Ridgeway Path, described as Britain's oldest road. There is a beautiful old church, St Mary the Virgin, dating from the 13th century, a delightful mix of houses, with some on the south side with large gardens leading down to the river, and an old water mill. There is no thoroughfare, with no access to the river by road, apart from a public footpath running through water meadows, down to the Thames.

(Continued on Page 3)

These qualities seem to attract a certain type of person, perhaps people seeking peace and quiet. Once people move into the village, they seldom leave and often pass on their houses to their families. People in North Stoke have always been very friendly and helpful in a non-intrusive way.

Michael Caine, who lived in the largest house next to the church, very much appreciated that the locals ignored him! Every summer, we always enjoyed the North Stoke Open Gardens scheme, in aid of the Village Hall, which gave us a chance to admire our friends' beautiful gardens. Roger was thrilled by all the kind comments he received when we opened our garden at Day's Cottage. Many of the plants he had grown from seed.



Most importantly, the church is the centre of the village and has an exceptional atmosphere.

It is the perfect size for a small village and has interesting Medieval wall paintings. It is open every day and has a charming wooden lych gate, next to the village pound, which was once used to round up stray farm animals. The gate was installed after the First World War carrying the inscription:

To the Glory of God and in loving and grateful memory of our dear son Roy Kennerley

Rumford 23 July 1904 – 23 Aug 1923

It also quotes Wisdom Chapter 4 on the other: *He being made perfect in a short time, fulfilled a long time.*

The sundial inside the gate has War Memorial to the fallen.

Dame Clara Butt-Rumford (1872-1936), one of Britain's most popular contralto concert singers in her day, lived worshipped and is buried here - her gravestone is inscribed 'With her whole heart she sang songs and loved him that made her'. Her husband, Robert Kennerley-Rumford, installed the electric lighting in the church in her memory in 1936.



Marigold Honey

Homer Autumn

Welcome rain has turned parched fields into green grass, a very welcome sight. Cattle were being fed silage but now prefer to graze the fields, only coming in for a top up, while our few black Welsh mountain sheep still expect their daily dry food when called, with a race to their troughs.



With such a dry Spring, we read that fruit in hedgerows and gardens is at least a month early, the first time in two decades. Blackberries have been eagerly picked with elderberries weighing down the branches, various berries waiting as winter feed for birds, including a rowan tree on the farm which will be enjoyed.

We have noticed that ivy is starting to bloom the nectar from which is always enjoyed by bees, wasps, hoverflies and other tiny insects; also providing cover for birds and no doubt small mammals in the winter months.

A majestic horse chestnut laden with conkers which will fall in the next few weeks stands proudly at the back of farm buildings.

In May with the help of a friend, we ordered a dozen Maran eggs which duly arrived safely in the post.

Borrowing his reliable incubator, we popped them in and a couple of days before hatching, took them to a nursing home where the residents watched with great excitement as five of the eggs hatched.



The chicks were in their charge for a week, with much fuss being made over them as they were gently handed round and stroked.

Of the five, four are cockerels! We did not realise that Marans come in different colours and certainly they are beautiful birds, all different and not destined for the table. We add that the cockerels have been practicing their "crows" and they really are quite musical!



(Continued on Page 5)

One of our chicken decided to go broody so we placed some guinea fowl eggs under and she hatched five youngsters, two of which are male. They are still in a house being looked after by their foster mum, as they are too young to be let out yet.



Homer Lane is changing with trees beginning to take on their Autumnal colours. Soon we will be putting our clocks back an hour to reclaim the hour lost at the beginning of Spring. Already garden centres are selling Spring bulbs, so a chance to replace summer bedding as it begins to fade.

Diana Jackson

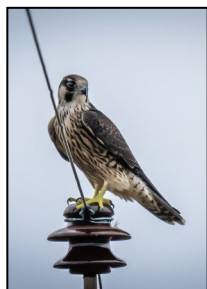
Peregrines of the Gap

Simon Booker

Its been three hours watching the same bird sit motionless on the same telegraph pole.

With a portable chair and the taste of coffee on my palette I was working hard to stay focused. "Hang on she's stretching her feathers, she's flying and coming back toward me from 200yds away, she might fly right over me! After a week of effort don't mess this up Simon".

My eyes flicked across the viewfinder and my fingers check for the function keys, fast shutter, 'Check', autofocus set... 'Check', exposure, 'Check', video settings, 'Check'!



With short shallow hunting wing beats she came. I grabbed a video as she came across the hillside and switched to stills. A few presses of the shutter gives me over 100 images ... Perfect!

She casts me a glance as she draws level and banks right up the hill. She soars high above Cameron's Copse and pivots, a flock of Crows take to the air. "I wonder if she's onto something?".

I switch to video and think 'Is this a stoop?'.....

(Continued on Page 6)

Suddenly, she starts to accelerate and the wings fold back like an F22 and I catch my breathe.

She hurtles toward the brow of the hill at 45 degrees. I struggle to follow and she plummets behind the brow on an unsuspecting Crow being hit by a set of steak knives doing 150 mph!

"Run boy run!" - I scampered up the hillside as fast as the lens and camera would allow but nothing, except my heart pounding and the surge of elation.

I'd just watched the fastest animal on earth do its thing— the stoop!

Capturing these moments was the culmination of patience, perseverance, learning and some teamwork.



Green 66



Looking closely at images of the adult females' leg, she is ringed. Chelsey wildlife flagged that this bird was ringed in Brighton in 2014 and nested on a pylon in Chelsey until recently. Green 66 and her two offspring were in our area for a week, offering fantastic views of their incredible cream/brown plumage and those fearsome talons.

Here's how the story unfolded...

Day 1 - Tuesday, 6pm - I got a call, "I'm up on Postmans Path watching a Peregrine roost on a telegraph pole you should get up here." I grabbed my binoculars and camera and headed out in the car, eventually seeing a raptor sitting on a telegraph pole 300yds away - sadly too far away. I wandered a little and was trudging on the road past Bullocks Farm when I heard the characteristic noisy calls. The peregrine mother and her two female juveniles flew over me, calling overhead and heading for Cameroon's Copse.

Day 2 - Wednesday, 7am - I walk the $\frac{3}{4}$ mile walk to Postmans Path. Reaching the brow, a Peregrine was still sitting on top of pole. I carefully took pictures every 20yds and stopped well away. A Buzzard passes by and the Peregrine leapt, making a b-line right for it. They clashed in mid air and the Buzzard left!

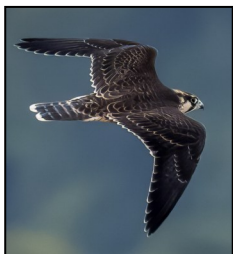
7.30am - She's back and roosts on a telegraph pole. The two juveniles are sitting side by side on pole four. At 7.44am, the two take to the air. As they wheel and joust, its so much more than a game. It's practice for the peregrine's real superpower - Hunting.

DAY 3 - Friday, 7.30am - I set off to Postmans Path early again. At 9:50am, the Juvenile sits in the high field. At 10am, it relocates to telegraph pole number three and at 10:20am the juvenile shifts to pole number two and I get some better shots. At 10:30am, she flies and I get my first image of the adolescent Peregrine, with a shot of her beautiful brown back and cream tipped wings and tail. I go home happy and excited.

Day 4 - Saturday, 7am - I'm in full camo gear, armed with a chair and flask of coffee, waiting it out. A Buzzard had taken residence on the central pole and this was not a good sign, but I waited.

8.20am - A Peregrine flies by at about 150yds and disappears heading toward Moultsford. At 9.30am my birder friend phones, "I'm up on the top of Grove road watching those Roe Deer". We chatted and with a panoramic view we observe birds scattering and lots of movement, we wonder if a predator is near?

10.34am - I adjust my seat and realise a Peregrine is on telegraph pole number four mutually out sight. We sit, we wait and we tolerate. At 11.18am, she launches flying close and that magnificent stoop maneuver. Capping off another fabulous morning and vindicating my patience and 4 days of persistence.



On Their Way

Green 66 has taught her offspring well. The skills she's given them and their incredible physical prowess will hold this family in good stead for the challenges of life ahead.

How marvellous that she allowed me into her world, sharing the magnificence of her family.

Peregrines - The Fastest Animal On Earth

At just over a metre wingspan, the Peregrine is the **7th largest UK Raptors**.

Streamlined sleek body - Reduced air resistance with dive speeds of over 200mph

Long, pointed wings - Less drag, great lift and maneuverability

Strong keel - The large breastbone anchors massive flight muscles for fast wingbeat and controlled stooping.

Specialised Nostrils - Tubercles inside slow and redirect rushing air, preventing their lungs from over-pressurizing during dives.

Rigid feathers and stiffened tail - Wings flutter at high speed, acting like a rudder for precise steering and braking.

Tomial tooth - A sharp notch on the upper beak that fits into a corresponding notch on the lower beak to sever the spinal cord or neck of their prey quickly for a rapid clean kill when striking prey in mid-air at extreme speeds.

Seasonal spotlight

As we enter Autumn, it can be tempting to cut back all the dead and dying vegetation in our gardens and green spaces. It's worth considering that many of these woody stems will become perfect winter homes for insects, as they enter hibernation and can create areas of architectural beauty in our homes and communities.



In Oxfordshire, the hedgerow species we generally recommend planting, for their capacity to provide for both people and wildlife year-round, and you're most likely to see in your local area, include Blackthorn, Spindle, Common Buckthorn, Guelder Rose, Wild Privet, Cherry Plum, Dog Rose and Hazel.

Fruiting season for many of these species starts from late summer to early autumn.

As such, by this time of year, most of the species listed above will be fruiting.

Hawthorn berries have traditional use in heart-strengthening natural medicines but also act as a vital source of food for caterpillars, moths, and migratory birds.

Keep your eyes peeled for spindle, which has vibrant autumnal colours with vibrant pinks, and the leaves turning from a deep green to a beautiful red.

To find out more

Hedgehogs: www.ptes.org

Wildlife and hedgehog friendly gardening:
www.wildoxfordshire.org.uk

Kirtlington's Hedgehog Street:
www.hedgehogstreet.org/

Riverside Trees

The native white, crack, pussy, osier and goat willows are a familiar sight along the Thames and its tributaries. Willows provide shelter for birds, mammals, including bats, otters and water voles.

Their leaves are the larval foodplant of the Purple Emperor, Large Tortoiseshell and Comma butterflies and their catkins the earliest sources of food for bees.

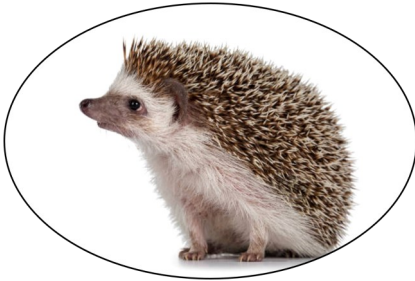
Both the male and female flowers (catkins) carry sugary nectar, and the male flowers also carry protein rich pollen, which is so important for developing bee larvae.

Willow nectar is also a major energy source for Blue Tits during early spring.

Traditionally managed by 'coppicing' and 'pollarding', mature trees can be cut to form a thick stump or 'coppice stool' that considerably extends the life of the tree and lets in light to the shrub layer.

Some Crack Willow pollards are known to have lived for 1,000 years. Willow is also a useful hedge plant in damp conditions.

Hedgehog Friendly things to do this autumn and winter



Food

Put out a shallow dish of water or make sure your ponds are easy to get out of for hedgehogs (shallow edges or a platform / ramp), so they have water to drink

If you want to put out food, cat or dog food is best.

If you find a sick or injured hedgehog, or one up and about during the middle of the day, call:

Tiggywinkles Wildlife Hospital on 01844 292292

Wild Patch

Leave a wild patch each year with piled up logs or leaves that you don't disturb

Always move your burn piles before you light them as hedgehogs and frogs often use them to sleep in them.

This is how hedgehogs were once upon a time cooked to be eaten. Thankfully it is now illegal to eat this endangered species.

Pesticides

Avoid using pesticides or herbicides as this will make hedgehogs very ill.

Find out more here:

www.hedgehogrescue.org.uk/hedgehog-friendly-slug-pellets/

Trees for bees

Trees are an important, stable long-term source of food for bees and other pollinators, providing thousands of flower heads all in one place.

Plant a variety of tree species, selected to benefit pollinators, with species that flower at different times of the year.

This will provide nectar, pollen and nesting sites, while also offering a haven for other wildlife, cleaning the air and water and storing carbon.

For guidance and more information, visit:

www.wildoxfordshire.org.uk/guidance/tree-planting-guidance

A season of thanksgiving

Autumn is the time of year when we are reminded of the change that is ever with us.

The apple trees give their fruit and then begin to lose their leaves. The cultivated blackberries swell and ripen, and when they are over, the stems that have fruited this year will be cut away and the new growth tied in and pruned ready to bear next year's harvest. For those with mowers, the cutting season comes to an end and the machine is cleaned and oiled, serviced if it is lucky, before being put away in the recesses of garage or shed. Fields, once bulging with cereals, are bare, some stubbled, some already ploughed, harrowed and drilled.

In the human cycle of times, autumn is also the season of change. Children start, move or go up into the next class at school. Parents settle into the routines of term time, where it feels like nothing has changed except everything. Now, design and technology has become home economics on Fridays and sport has moved to Monday, so you have to renegotiate an early exit from work in order to facilitate a later pick-up. In reality, everyone is a year older and your child is closer still to leaving home. What on earth will we do when that change is upon us?

For others, life has moved beyond retirement leisure into frailty and the worries of old age. Loved ones pass away, some are ready to move on and some are dying unprepared, leaving all kinds of loose ends to be discovered by the puzzled or horrified next of kin.

The churchyard awaits, as it has for centuries, for the final harvest of our life to be gathered in. Family and friends gather to remember us and wherever they do, there is normalcy amid the grief, something that can only be described as a thanksgiving.

We offer thanksgiving to God, the giver and the maker, for the life, the love, the sharing, the character, the person and the difference you made to those around you. Perhaps, also how things will be better for those who come after—All because you have lived.

We each trail behind us a harvest of memories and impressions in the lives of others. For good and ill, that is usually far more significant for them than we realise at the time.

This is more to do with how you were as a human being than with what you did or said. It is these footprints of love that will be your legacy and your harvest. Let us be good while we may and live in the light of Christ in the time that is left to us.



Revd Kevin Davies

October reflections from the Vicarage

Harvest is more than a season, it's a rhythm. A reminder of the deep connection between the land and our lives.

Here in our parishes, surrounded by farmland, the spirit of harvest touches us all. It's a time to gather, give thanks and remember that abundance is not measured only in bushels and baskets but in community, kindness, and care.



We celebrate Harvest Festival in our churches with floral displays and generous offerings. These gifts, humble and heartfelt, echo the ancient tradition of bringing the first fruits to God—a gesture of trust and gratitude.

In a world that often feels hurried and uncertain, harvest reminds us to pause and acknowledge the blessings we've received.

There's something deeply grounding about this time of year. The shortening days and cooling air invite us to draw inward and prepare for winter, not just with logs and preserves, but with intention.

What have we harvested in our own lives this year? Perhaps it's been a season of growth, new beginnings or challenge and change. Whatever the yield, October offers a moment to take stock and give thanks.

Nature, too, seems to be whispering wisdom with Autumn on the way. The squirrels are busy with their acorns, migrating birds will soon begin their long journeys and the garden, once bursting with colour, now rests in muted tones.

There's beauty in this quieting down, in the way the earth prepares itself for rest, echoing the divine rhythm set in motion from the beginning.

"By the seventh day God had finished the work he had been doing; so on the seventh day he rested from all his work." **(Genesis 2:2)**

Even the land was commanded to rest: *"But in the seventh year the land is to have a year of sabbath rest, a sabbath to the Lord."* **(Leviticus 25:4)**

Rest is not a pause from purpose, but part of it. Even creation itself follows this sacred pattern of work and rest and of fruitfulness and stillness. It's a lesson we do well to take to heart, that rest is not idleness but part of the cycle of renewal.

As we move through October, let us carry the spirit of harvest with us, not just in our pantries, but in our hearts.

Let us be generous with what we have, mindful of those who have less, and open to the grace that comes with giving.

Whether it's a jar of homemade jam shared with a neighbour, a warm coat donated to a shelter, or simply a kind word offered to someone in need, these are the fruits of a faithful life.

May this season bring you peace, purpose and plenty, not only in what you gather, but in what you give.

Canon John Blair



Watercolour Courses

Ipsden village hall —Materials and refreshments supplied.

Beginners foundation course (6 hours each) (£447)
Saturday 4th October, 8th November and 29th November



Day courses

Saturday 18th October (10am to 1pm) - *Easy monochrome* portraits (£57)
Saturday 25th October (10am to 1pm) - *Harvest hares* (£57)

Denny Webb

redkites1@gmailcom / 07827 581363

Harvest Thanksgiving Sunday on October 5th

A time to give thanks for and pray for our farmers and all who work in the food industry. We traditionally take time to share our produce with others who need a bit of help.

Our two churches, Ipsden and North Stoke, will be decorated in the traditional way on **Saturday 4th October**, so please bring your gifts!

North Stoke

After our **11am Holy Communion in St Mary's** all consumables will be auctioned (usually a jolly event!!) and the money given to the Food Bank.

Ipsden

After the **thanksgiving evening service at 6.30pm in St Mary's**, there will be a bring and share supper.

please bring a little something and join us. Gifts of tins and non-perishables will be donated to the Food bank.

The preacher will be Rev Jane Haslam, Associate Archdeacon of Dorchester)

The link for the Zoom Service on 14th September

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/188513761>



FRIDAY OCTOBER 31ST

IPSDEN VILLAGE HALL

6:30pm to 11pm

£30 per Ticket

Includes: Welcome Drink,
Dinner, Live Entertainment with

**KARL'S BAVARIAN BRASS
BAND**



Tickets available at Ipsden Post Office
Or Ticket Source or Scan the QR Code above



South Oxfordshire District Council updates

Waste service new number

Residents should use **01235 422 123** for waste and recycling enquiries.

Road closure for tree removal

Monday, 27th October to Wednesday 29th October, from 9am to 4pm each day

Oxfordshire County Council is removing a hazardous tree at the junction of Berrins Hill / Well Place Road and Urquhart Lane.

Church Services

The churches at Ipsden and North Stoke open daily for visits and private prayer

DATE	IPSDEN	NORTH STOKE
Wednesday 1st October	5pm Evening Prayer Zoom Meeting Id 410 935 129 (Please wait to be admitted)	
Sunday 5th October Harvest Thanksgiving	6.30pm Harvest Service followed by Bring-n-Share Supper	11am Holy Communion followed by auction of produce
Wednesday 8th October	5pm Evening Prayer Zoom Meeting Id 410 935 129 (Please wait to be admitted)	
Sunday 12th October Trinity 15 Zoom Sunday	10am Service of The Word Zoom Meeting Id 188 513 761 (Please wait to be admitted)	
Wednesday 15th October	5pm Evening Prayer Zoom Meeting Id 410 935 129 (Please wait to be admitted).	
Sunday 19th October Trinity 16	9.30am Holy Communion	11am Holy Communion
Wednesday 22nd October	5pm Evening Prayer Zoom Meeting Id 410 935 129 (Please wait to be admitted)	
Sunday 26th October Trinity 17	9.30am Morning Prayer	11am Morning Prayer
Wednesday 29th October	5pm Evening Prayer Zoom Meeting Id 410 935 129 (Please wait to be admitted)	
Sunday 2nd November Trinity 18	9.30am Holy Communion	11am Holy Communion
Wednesday 5th November	5pm Evening Prayer Zoom Meeting Id 410 935 129 (Please wait to be admitted)	
Sunday 9th November Remembrance Sunday	10.45am in North Stoke Joint service of remembrance Followed by curry lunch in North Stoke Village Hall (Wreath laying in North Stoke about midday)	

Dates for Your Diary

Saturday 4th October	Bingo night (See below)
Sunday 5th October	Harvest Thanksgiving (See page 12)
Friday 31st October	Oktoberfest (See page 13)
Sunday 9th November	Remembrance Sunday (See page 12)



Bingo Night in Ipsden village hall.

Coaching from 6pm. Evening starts at 7pm.

Books cost £10 for adults or £5 for half a book and £1 for children.

All proceeds towards the renovation project at St Mary the Virgin.

Ipsden Lottery

9th August	F Hayward
23rd August	W McConville
13th September	Shirley Merritt
2nd, 6th, 30th August and 6th September	No winner

There are **15** available for the Ipsden Lottery, which helps fund our Village Memorial Hall.

A ticket is £1 per week, payable in 10-week blocks, with the winning number worth £25 each week.

The winning number is the Saturday night bonus ball number in the National Lottery.

If you are interested in joining, please talk to Shirley in the shop to arrange payment and to choose your number.

Clare Davis

Distribution of the Window

The Window is available online on the Ipsden village website and some paper copies are held in the Ipsden shop for individual collection.

The copy deadline for the next issue will be **Friday 17th October**

Email: revjwblair@gmail.com

Ipsden war memorial



In March 1919, in common with approximately forty thousand other communities across the country, the residents of Ipsden resolved to erect a war memorial.

The initial idea was that this would take the form of a lych-gate together with improvements to the churchyard and an architect was retained.

As fund raising commenced, further meetings were held and it became apparent that public opinion was split between a lych-gate and a cross. Whilst further public meetings were scheduled the churchyard improvements were carried out separately with new shrubs planted and gravel laid.

By June, a decision had been made abandoning the idea of a lych-gate in favour of a modified copy of the celebrated Cross of St Martin on the Isle of Iona.

It would be made of granite, at a cost of approximately £91 14s and erected on the Mere. A balance of £17 was left over in the original fund, which went towards a brass tablet, bearing the names of the fallen, to be placed in the Church.

On Sunday 14th September, the Dedication of the Memorial Cross at 5:30pm was to have taken place but a thunderstorm and drenching rain made this impossible.

However, after Evensong the weather had cleared and in the presence of a smaller congregation the dedication took place.

A picture of the cross was published in the Reading Standard, with details that it was erected by Messrs Heelas Ltd, Monumental Masons, Reading.

The observant amongst you will have noted that the memorial looked a little different than it does today. This is because in January 1920, it was decided that at 9ft tall, it was not as conspicuous as it might be.

Mr Glynne Williams generously offered to bear the full expense of adding another base on which would be inscribed the names of all that served in the War.

In July 1920, it was reported that the new base was nearing completion. Unfortunately, I don't know the date it was complete, but it was quite possibly in September, as that edition of the parish magazine is missing from the archive.

The image including the new base comes from a postcard in Juliet Noel's family archive.

Mark Hughesdon