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VILLAGE MAGAZINE

June 2025



Photo by Debra Richardson



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Community Shop

—BLUNSDON— It's been a busy few weeks in the shop and cafe with all the Bank Holidays and Events. Huge thank you to Larry Banda for his VE Commemorative Tea and Talk on 8th May which was enjoyed by everyone that attended.



We are excited to welcome Sharon onto our paid staff team. She joined us on 12th May and has already mastered a good coffee and is fitting in really well. Please give her a warm welcome if you see her working in the shop/cafe. Sharon and her extended family all live in the village, so we're sure you will recognise her.

Father's Day

15th June is just around the corner and we have you covered gift wise, whether it's a card, his favourite wine or a gift from our selection of Crafter's items. You could even bring him into our cafe for a treat

on Sunday 15th for a coffee and a slice of his favourite cake or sausage roll. Spending quality time with loved ones is precious too.

Volunteer Week

Week commencing 2nd June is National Volunteer Week. We are very grateful for the hard work and support we receive from our many volunteers. With the holiday season approaching we are looking for more volunteers. If you enjoy meeting people, being part of a friendly team and want to give something back to our lovely community, please get in touch volunteering@blunsdoncommunityshop.co.uk or just pop in and speak to a member of our team. Whether you can give an hour a week or more we'd love to hear from you.

Blunsdon branded products

Our tea towels are very popular and now we have China mugs to match our range. They are reasonably priced at £10.00, so please pop in to get yours. They are so popular we have placed a second order!



Dates for your diary

- Tuesday 3rd June 2.30 pm Tea & Talk: Ridgeway and Ancient Tracks with David Mitchell
- Wednesday 4th June: Wiltshire Wildlife Trust (Stall)
- Wednesday 4th June 7 pm: Gin Tasting with Oude Distillery - Ticketed Event
- Saturday 14th June: St Leonard's New Joiners Social - see social media for more details

And finally... Have you spotted our new parasols kindly donated by Villa Sandi one of our wine suppliers through The Grape & Grain. We currently stock their Rose Prosecco, but we hope to expand the range over the coming months.

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

Blunsdon Village Garden Club

May has been a glorious month with lots of warm sunny weather and our gardens are now full of a variety of beautiful flowers. Much as we like the dry weather it appears that this Spring has been the driest on record and we are now in real need of some rain for our parched gardens. It must be becoming very difficult for those growing fruit and vegetables.

We have a varied programme of talks and activities throughout the year. If you are interested in finding out more about us, why not come along and join us at our next meeting at 7.30pm on Thursday 12th June 2025 in the small Village Hall.

Our speaker this month will be Paul Green who runs the highly successful specialist Green Leaves Plant Nursery in Newent. They are able to supply a wide range of choice, rare and unusual plants, all grown in the Gloucestershire nursery.

Paul will be giving us a "hands on" practical talk and demonstration, entitled "Plants for all seasons", using his wide range of plants. There will also be plants for sale.

To find out what else we have coming up in 2025, please visit our website at bvgc.freehostia.com where the full programme for this year can be found.

Visitors are very welcome for a small cost of £3, refundable if you later decide to become a member for the very reasonable cost of £15 per year. At each meeting there will be an interesting sociable evening with refreshments and an optional raffle.
Jenny 07949087317



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OUR REGULAR EVENTS AND SERVICES AT ST LEONARD'S

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



Everyone welcome!



St Leonard's Church, Blunsdon, Weekly Services

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

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

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

1st Sunday Holy Communion 10am

2nd Sunday Morning Worship

3rd Sunday Holy Communion 10am

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

5th Sunday This service will also be at 10am and will be informal in nature.

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

Obviously, services at Christmas and Easter will vary.

Please contact Helen griff9999@btinternet.com or Paul paulkmorris777@gmail.com

Parish Council News – June 2025

What a fantastic May we have had, unless you are a gardener, the weather has been beautiful. Let's hope Flaming June lives up to its name. SATS are over and exams are filling the lives of our children and we wish them success and as little stress as possible.



Community Allotment

It was lovely to see a report of the Pre-School getting stuck into using the Community Allotment during the lovely May weather. It is looking the best it ever has with a significant assistance from Parish Councilors, Martin Nash and Jim Tayler.

Linley Road Refurbishment

The project is forging ahead and we will soon have the much-needed car park in front of the School. The new playing surface inside the facility will be a sanded 3G surface suitable for a wide range of sports. The School will benefit

most from this fantastic provision to provide it with a safe and exciting space for physical activity, which is proven to help and support improved learning. The target completion of the facility is July when it will be available for the community to hire. It is planned to operate from 5pm to 9:30 pm enabled by some low-level LED lighting.

Allotments

Claire our Assistant Clerk has reminded me that there are still some allotments available so please call her on 01793 705617 or at Claireboles@blunsdon-pc.gov.uk to ask (she works Monday, Tuesday and Thursday)

Village Maps

What do you think of the new Village Maps, at the Village Shop, near the Cold Harbour pub, at the Village Hall and at the Broadbush end of Sams Lane? Let us know, it is always good to get feedback on investment in the Parish.

Planning Applications

S/25/0526 - Change of use of garage to Nail Salon (retrospective). 93 Ermin Street Blunsdon SN26 8AA. **PC had no objections – requested a condition to prevent use as a residence.**

S/25/0516 - Erection of 1 no. dwelling with associated external works including new driveway off the existing access, erection of garage with home office accommodation. Land Adjacent To Bluebells Kingsdown Lane Blunsdon. **PC raised several objections to this application**

S/25/0496 | Retention of single dwelling (class C3), garage and associated works. | Bluebells 17 Kingsdown Lane Blunsdon Swindon SN25 5DL. **PC had no objections**

Planning Decisions

S/TWC/25/0537 - Works to tree within Conservation area. Meadow Vale House Back Lane Blunsdon Swindon SN26 7BJ. **Application Granted**

S/TPO/25/0525 - Works to TPO 2019-03. 10 Beech Lea Blunsdon Swindon SN26 7DE.

Application Granted

S/LDP/25/0457 - Certificate of Lawfulness (Proposed) for the erection of a single storey rear extension. 22 Farrier Street Blunsdon Swindon SN26 7DD. **Application Granted**

S/HOU/25/0397 - Erection of two storey side, single storey front and rear extensions. 4 Manor Close Blunsdon Swindon SN26 7BD. **Application Granted**

S/HOU/25/0376 - Erection of a single storey side and part rear extension. 30 Thames View Blunsdon Swindon SN26 8AQ. **Application Granted**

S/HOU/25/0350 - Erection of single storey side extension. 29 Ceres Road SN26 8AF. **Application Granted**

S/HOU/25/0283 - Erection of a single storey side wraparound extension along the length of the current property with a hipped roof. 1 Ermin Street Blunsdon Swindon SN26 8EF.

Application Granted



Your Speedwatch Needs You!

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

Please contact me if you are interested in helping and I will arrange for someone to contact you.

Date	Location	Vehicles	Speeding	%	Max Speed	Speed Limit	Start	Finish	Where	
27/03/2025	Ermin St	100	19	19%	46	30	09:55	10:55	Minerva Heights	
01/05/2025	Ermin St	107	16	15%	47	30	10:00	11:00	Minerva Heights	
12/05/2025	High St	175	12	7%	30	20	15:55	16:55	Heart in Hand	
26/03/2025	High St	209	13	6%	33	20	15:50	16:55	Heart in Hand	
17/03/2025	Ermin St	150	9	6%	42	30	10:00	11:00	Minerva Heights	
09/05/2025	Ermin St	359	16	4%	48	30	08:30	09:30	Minerva Heights	
21/03/2025	Lady Lane	480	15	3%	43	30	15:58	17:00	Cycle Track	
25/03/2025	Sams Lane	102	3	3%	27	20	16:00	17:00	Junction with High St	
14/05/2025	Broadbush	174	3	2%	47	30	10:00	11:00	The Shrubbery	
24/03/2025	Broadbush	572	7	1%	36	30	16:00	17:00	The Shrubbery	
06/09/2025	Broadbush	600	7	1%	43	30	16:00	17:00	Junction with Sams La	
28/03/2025	Lady Lane	430	5	1%	48	30	15:30	16:30	Cycle Track	
19/03/2025	Broadbush	262	3	1%	39	30	15:30	16:30	The Shrubbery	
31/03/2025	Broadbush	263	3	1%	40	30	15:00	16:00	The Shrubbery	

Below is some follow-up work that Wiltshire Police have done as a result of our Speedwatch figures.

Hello Brian and Speedwatch Team Blunsdon! I carried out 3 sessions on 19/05/2025 on Ermin St junction with Minerva Heights, Sams Lane and outside the Heart in Hand in High Street and 10, 5 and 1, drivers respectively have been issued with notices of intended prosecution for excessive speeding.

The roads monitored are 30MPH and 20 MPH, the fastest vehicle was captured at **44 MPH**

Depending on previous convictions and history **15 Drivers will be offered a speed awareness course or face £100 fine and 3 Penalty points, 1 Driver will face £100 fine and get 3 Points.**

Proceedings will now be undertaken to ensure the most appropriate outcome for the offenders takes place, which includes checking for MOT, Insurance & Point Totters. Captured footage will be analysed for other offences like seat belts and mobile phone use.
Scott Garcia 9990 - Speed Enforcement Officer

Swindon Borough Council – Ward Councillors’ Surgery This month’s surgery will be in the Village Shop as usual, on 7th June between 11:30 and 12:30.

Parish Council Meetings – The regular Parish meetings will be on **Monday 2nd June** and **Monday 16th June 2025**, at 19:30 in the Village Hall. If you want to come along, please let us know, details are on the Parish Council, notice boards, Website in the Blog section and on our Facebook page.

Ian Jankinson – ianjankinson@blunsdon-pc.gov.uk – **07702 684281**

Parish contact details – Tel: **01793 705617** – clerk@blunsdon-pc.gov.uk



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From the Pen of the Rector

It seems crazy, only a few weeks ago we were celebrating Christmas, Easter has come and gone and Pentecost is just a few days away. Life seems to be either full on, or as they say in the army hurry up and wait.

For decades Sandra and I have taken our summer break during the school holidays as we have had either children or grandchildren living with us so it made sense. But now we are empty nesters and we have the freedom to holiday at a different time, however, we can't seem to break the habit of having time out in the summer.

Change in the Church of England (and I am sure other denominations) nationally and locally, moves at a glacial pace, which is rather ironic given that Jesus came into the world to change the way that we see things and to give us a bigger perspective on life, one that includes the Spiritual and not just our continuing mundane existence. Our lives are always a mixture of fast and slow, and trying to make a habit of doing new things is always an uphill battle.

Christians understand God as being the creator and sustainer of the world with all its natural flow of seasons, but also Jesus as part of God, who came into the world to bring us New Life not just as individuals but also within our families and communities. Changing our hearts and minds, enabling us to embrace a relationship with God through him and his sacrifice on the cross.

As we journey through this summer season, enjoying warmer weather, and hopefully with time to rest and recuperate. Let us take a moment to reflect on both the continuity and change that God inspires within his wonderful creation.

God Bless *Rev Phil Goodey*

Blunsdon Baby and Toddler Group

We meet every Wednesday morning in St Leonards church from 10 to 11.30am, term time and holidays.

The group includes foster carers, parents and grandparents, so a good mixture and plenty of experience if you wish to pick people's brains!

We ask £1 per session to cover costs; this includes hot drinks and biscuits.

There might be singing and craft sessions as well so come along and see who we are.



**Social Walking from
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Thursday 3rd & Thursday 17th July**

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grahamrowcliffe58@outlook.com or WhatsApp 07515 288414
Pre orders welcome by WhatsApp or text 07515 288414.**

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



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Swindon Arts Fringe Festival (SWAF) 16th–29th June 2025

Swindon Arts Fringe Festival (SWAF) returns to Swindon Town Centre for a second year and hopes to be even more successful as last year.

The Fringe Festival focuses on inclusivity for curators and artists: giving opportunities for artists to find their place in Swindon's vibrant creative scene and supporting them to freely exhibit, some for the first time. SWAF24 saw over 95 artists involved in the festival and drew over 1,000 visitors to the exhibitions.

The Fringe is a truly collaborative event created by Theatre Square-based Artsite. As well as exhibitions there will be events and workshops to bring the arts to a wider audience. 'As Time Goes by' exhibition at Artsite will feature a performance by Rinky Dink, the bicycle powered sound system, and a talk by artist Stephen Wright from The House of Dreams Museum will complement the 'Outsider Art' exhibition by SLART in Museum & Art Swindon.

SWAF24's collaboration with the Carriage Works was a huge success and the use of the building as an exhibition space prompted a lot of positive discussions and reactions. One visitor commented "Fantastic use of Armstrong's Carriage works. A wide range of works from Swindon's diverse and talented artistic pool. All showcased in an awesome venue. Well done to Artsite and everyone involved."

This year, 14 curators have come up with a variety of creative themes and have invited artists to submit work. 'Miniature Swindon' curated by Leah Bevan-Haines asked artists to create tiny items that represent things, places and people in Swindon; 'Broken Britannia' exhibition curator, invited artists to express their unique perspectives – good or bad – on life in Britain 2025.

Venues this year include the Wyvern Theatre, Artsite in Theatre Square, Swindon Central Library, Mams Gallery, Museum & Art Swindon, Bert's Books, Swindon Hub and the Carriage Works. Entrance to all exhibitions and events is free.

Lisa Lowe, who curated an exhibition based around the menopause for SWAF24, told us "Being part of the Swindon Arts Fringe Festival has been one of the best things for me creatively. Curating and exhibiting is something I've never done before so was completely out of my comfort zone, but I loved every minute. The Artsite team are so supportive and I'm very excited to be taking part again this year"

The Festival runs from 16th–29th June with the Launch event is Mam's Gallery, Eastcott Hill, on Friday 13th June at 7 o'clock. For more information and a full list of SWAF25 exhibitions and events visit

www.swindonartsfringe.co.uk

Instagram @swindonartsfringe

Facebook @artsitepostmodern



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*Concert and raffle to support refurbishment of our medieval
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Notes from the Editor

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

Blunsdon Village Magazine is available to read online at Blunsdon Parish Council website: blunsdonparishcouncil.co.uk

EDITOR: Please email all items for the magazine to blunsdonmagazine@gmail.com

Arlene tel. 01793 727306

ADVERTS: For advert enquiries please contact Penny on 01793 722073

Front Cover: Lower Village in the May sunshine (Odd Cott)

Your July Magazine will be delivered from: 27th June

Magazine issue	Deadline for items for inclusion
July	18th June 2025
August	16th July 2025

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Phone lines are open to book appointments from 8am Tues, Thurs and Frid and from 3pm on Mon and Weds. EMERGENCIES - Call NHS 111 (outside surgery hours)

OPENING HOURS

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Mon	3.10pm - 4.40pm	3pm-6.15pm
Tues	8.30am - 10.40am	8.45am - 12.15pm
Weds	4pm - 7.10pm	3pm - 7.15pm
Thurs	8.30am - 10.40am	8.45am - 12.15pm
Frid	8.30am - 10.40am	8.45am - 12.15pm



CREATE and CONNECT

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An opportunity to meet with others over a cuppa and cake to create. Whether you draw, paint, knit, crochet or simply colour, you can bring your own project, or you can use our materials. Or you can just come along for a chat!



CREATE • CONNECT



A Recipe from CookFoodFan

Delicious Bread

There used to be a flour mill in Wantage which sold amazing flours for baking, some of which were flavoured. For example, Mediterranean or basil and tomato, but my favourite was onion flour. Unfortunately, they don't sell from the mill now, were taken over and so produce a more limited range, although some good seeded flours. You can buy one of their seeded flours in

Blunsdon Village shop.

So, in my house we have mourned the loss of onion bread until I found this recipe which works so well. A warning though, it is so deliciously moreish that you just want another slice!

Onion Bread (makes 1 x 2lb loaf)

2 onions, finely chopped
500g strong bread flour
25ml rapeseed oil (olive or sunflower)
10g salt
300ml water
8g dried yeast

1. Heat the oven to 170C/150C fan/gas mark 3.5.
Spread out the chopped onion onto a baking tray and dry in the oven for 20mins, then cool.
2. Place the flour, oil, onion and salt in a bowl. Then add the dried yeast. (Always keep the salt and yeast on opposite sides of the bowl to start.)
3. Slowly add 250ml of the water and mix together to form a dough. (You can use a KitchenAid type mixer with a dough hook, or mix with a spoon and hands.)
Then, as needed, add the rest of the water until it is just sticking to the sides of the bowl.
4. Either mix in a mixer on medium for 6mins or turn out and knead lightly on a worktop for 10mins.
5. Place the dough into a lightly oiled bowl and cover with a damp T towel. Put somewhere warm until the dough is double in size.
6. Turn the dough out onto a lightly floured surface and knock it back, shape it to into a loaf shape and put on a baking sheet or shape and place in a 2lb loaf tin. Cover with a T towel and let it rise for about an hour.
7. Heat the oven to 200C/180C/gas mark 6. Bake for 30/35mins, turn out and cool.

Perfect for sandwiches, to go with soups or cheeses.

Enjoy



BLUNSDON CRICKET CLUB

Wiltshire Cricket League Division Six – Foxes are currently top of the league thanks to these results.

Nationwide House 2nds – won by 1 run in an epic finish with **Dean “Deano” Tomlin’s** brilliant caught and bowled winner – in a low scoring game, **Phil “The Welsh Wizard” Jones** captured four wickets, backed up with three wickets from **Harish “The Windmill” Kumar**.

Bathford – won by 115 runs – with a swashbuckling 64 from **Yadhunandan Thoppay Prabakaran** and three wickets apiece from **Harish “The Windmill” Kumar** and **Harry “Mystery” Roke**.

Royal Wootton Bassett 3rds – won by 2 wickets – in another low scoring game, with **Mitch “The Finisher” Dodson** top scoring with 32 and **Phil “The Welsh Wizard” Jones** taking 3 Bassett wickets. Bassett’s former Foxes all-rounder **Darren “Fish” Fisher** swelled the crowd at Sutton Park, when his mum and dad turned up, hoping to see to a repeat of his 182 back in 1990. Fish started well scoring a majestic single before charging down the wicket and being stumped.



Upcoming matches – Every Saturday. Play begins at 1 p.m.

31st May – home to Goatacre 3rds. 7th June – away to Keevil, at the picturesque Keevil Manor Ground

21st June – away to Lacock, at the Expelliarmus Ground.

28th June – home to Swindon Super Strikers 2

Jayden on the left ready to add to his new scoreboard



BLUNSDON FOOTBALL CLUB

Reserves – Finished 6th out of 10, Swindon & District Premier League

Recent Results

Challenge Cup Final - Bassett Bulldogs – lost 2 – 3

Old Town Athletic – lost 0 – 3

Despite a spirited display, Blunsdon Ressies lost out in the Cup Final to a clinical Bassett Bulldogs side. Blunny took the lead through **James Springall** and controlled the early exchanges. However, we then lost our midfield dynamo, **Zach Ockwell**, to injury and, as the first half wore on, Bulldogs started to get into the game and had some glorious chances before equalising just on half time.

A good crowd of over 150 at Supermarine's Webbs Wood Stadium were enjoying their half-time Bovril and hotdogs, when Bassett came out for the second half and scored again.

Blunny manager, **Franklin Murray**, who looked resplendent in his white shirt and amber and black club tie, turned to his bench for inspiration. It worked, with **Joshua Kaliroy** equalising. However, Bulldogs still had great energy. They re-imposed themselves and then won it with a spectacular overhead kick from the edge of the box. This goal proved a deserved winner, but Blunny never gave up and fought until the end.

The management and players can be proud of their achievements in their first season in the Premier League and can enjoy a summer break before returning in September.



BLUNSDON WI

The May meeting in the Village Hall, in our 60th year, took the form of the AGM plus an American Supper. Once the AGM was concluded a very sociable meal took place with a wide variety of food (and wine!)

Outings over the past few weeks have included the bluebells at Badbury Clump, and a tour of Cricklade which included the museum. Several of our members went to the Spirit of Water Flower Festival at Salisbury Cathedral last week. The flower festival was amazing, shown against the magnificent interior of the Cathedral. Salisbury Cathedral has Britain's tallest spire (now without scaffolding!). The Magna Carta Chapter House was also very informative. The Salisbury Cathedral clock was very interesting. Dating from 1386 it has no hands or face, but merely rang out the hours on a bell, which was all that people needed 640 years ago!

Future outings in the near future include a guided tour of the historical town of Malmesbury, and also to Kelmscott, plus a visit to Aston Pottery and Gardens.

The June meeting will feature Hayley Scott talking about "Forensic Experience"

Blunsdon WI has a book club, which has been thriving for 18 years, and also a film club.

For more information, please contact Anna on tel: 01793 706392 or check out our website: jackie707.wixsite.com



Rock and Roll Bingo in Blunsdon Village Hall

Saturday 28 June – an exciting evening of fun and entertainment

Doors will open at 6:30pm for a prompt 7:00pm start.

Rock and Roll Bingo is a fun twist on the classic game of bingo, where instead of numbers, players mark off songs on their bingo cards as they hear them played.

In addition to the Rock and Roll Bingo there will be a Cryptic Music Quiz and Heads and Tails.

Organised by the Rotary Club of Swindon North it's a fundraising event in support of the *Swindon Food Collective (the Swindon Food Bank)* and other local charities chosen by the Club.

Drinks will be available from a cash bar

For tickets at £10 each, visit the Rotary Club's website:

www.rotaryswindonnorth@gmail.com or send an email to Rotarian Mike Helyer: mhelyer51@gmail.com

Don't miss out on this fantastic opportunity to have fun and support a great cause. We hope to see you there!

If joining a Rotary Club interests you, please get in touch.



Email: rotaryswindonnorth@gmail.com

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

The Chatterbox – Bragging Rights and Wrongs

I recently went to a funeral and didn't know many of the other mourners. After the service, at the wake I found some friendly-faced people to sit with and we enjoyed reminiscing about our dear, departed friend. Another gentleman joined us and sat next to me. After the initial polite introductions, I was almost battered by an unexpected barrage of bragging! Every sentence was filled with the cost of things, the destination of his luxurious holidays and his expensive, mohair suit. In the space of about twenty minutes, he'd told me how much profit he'd made on his house, how much his wife earned, how many cruises they'd been on, how much each of their cars cost and how much they did to the gallon! Be assured, I asked for none of this information and I offered no such details in return and, while I'm always interested in peoples' lives and interests, I don't want to know how much they earn or how much they pay for their possessions and lifestyle. To me, these are personal and I wouldn't necessarily ask the questions of a friend, never mind a stranger! As well as seeming inappropriate at a funeral wake, it came across as plain and simple bragging. It didn't make for an interesting conversation, I felt awkward and was relieved when he left.

Bragging is quite a strange personal trait and I haven't really come across that many adults who do it, in fairness. I may well have done it myself if I thought I'd achieved something special (like getting my 25m front crawl swimming badge) or perhaps had a birthday present I was very proud of (my first riding hat). I may have been a bit boastful, I'll admit. In my defence though, I was probably pre-teen and hadn't considered how I came across to the people I was showing off to. And, really, that's what bragging is – showing off, being excessively proud and boastful about your possessions or achievements in front of others.

Most of us have moments in life where we may be incredibly proud of something such as managing to secure a really good job, receiving an award or having a son or daughter who has passed their university degree. We may have worked hard and been able to buy a lovely house or worked hard physically and completed a marathon. These are all moments where we can feel hugely pleased with ourselves, or our family members, and that's perfectly understandable. However, bragging takes it that step further by expecting people to be impressed by our achievements or possessions, regardless of whether they want or need to know about them. There are many reasons for them to do this but most of them seem to be linked to a wish to impress, attract attention and feel superior. There are also occasions when people may be lacking in confidence and feel this is the way to impress others but, sadly, the opposite is usually true. Bragging can also set people up for a fall.

Bragging doesn't take into consideration the circumstances or feelings of the other person. What impresses someone will differ from person to person and our financial situations and personal tastes vary hugely. In short, I don't want to go on a cruise, I like my economical, little car and mohair makes me itch!

However, if you claim to make the best carrot cake in Blunsdon, do let me know!

Till next month.



Reading with Wine

Hello- and suddenly it's June. The sun has been out in full so I'm taking this opportunity to officially launch Rosé season!

I'm starting with the wines this month as a mark of this exciting launch. I am actually a year round rosé drinker but for the seasonal sippers amongst you,

here's a run down of some to try.

The Jolie by Juliet is a new one from Aldi and I can already see it being the hit of the season. Starting with its simply stunning but elegant bottle, there is no label and the pink tones shimmer directly through the glass. The Côte du Provence wine, as you would expect, is fresh and light and to be enjoyed in late afternoon sunshine with friends, or a good book! The flavours of peach blossom and roses combined with just a hint of passion fruit will make the perfect pairing to any summer read.

If you'd like to try something a little different, try the Malbec Rosé from Asda. The solid depth that you'd expect from a Malbec but with the summer twist of watermelon, raspberries and the childhood flavour of parma violets. It's part of the Extra Special Range and it is just that.

Finally, let's talk about Chicken Wine- 'the' current rosé leader- the name is based on its French title, La Veillie Ferme Rosé and the rooster on the label. It is pale, almost a blush and such a smooth taste it will be perfect for summer afternoon picnics.

I'll stick with the theme for the book choices too- my first pink pick is *Seven Summers* by Paige Toon; what says summer like a Rosé? It's a love story but it's also much more than that. Liv and Finn meet and fall for each other hard; life has other plans and tears them apart; the only way they can see to move forward is to promise to spend the summers together providing they are both still single. I loved Liv for everything she stood for and the way she truly cared for Finn, Tom and her special brother, Micheal too. When it comes to difficult decisions of the heart, they are only really work if you are truly invested in the characters and I felt as though I should be giving advice to Liv...what that advice would be I can't say, when your past and present collides how do you know which direction to take... do our heads and hearts always agree?

Secondly, *How to Age Disgracefully* by Clare Pooley; based on a story around Daphne and her turning 70 being full of life but not living a life of fullness. In an effort to rectify this, she joins a local elderly citizens social group. They are an eclectic, eccentric bunch and as a result the story is indeed heartwarming but also hilarious. So many stand out moments, right up until the last sentence. The spirit, the age span, the adventures and misadventures ensured that I flew through this and it inspired me to very much Age Disgracefully with a glass of Rosé in hand!

If you like something a little darker, try *The Murder After the Night Before* by Katy Brent- two best friends share a flat, after one very heavy night out, Molly wakes up with a hangover like no other and she knows the only person that can help her is Posy. But for once, Posy cannot come to her rescue and it is down to Molly to solve her best friends' final problem of; who killed her? This one will get you right to the end with an epic twist, I love Katy's writing, and the cover is nothing short of perfect for launching Rosé season. Cheers, to a pink summer; as always read as much pink as you like, but please drink responsibly.



Police and Crime Commissioner Philip Wilkinson's June Parish Column

In the last few weeks, there has been some encouraging news following the publication of the latest crime figures by the Office of National Statistics. It shows that in the period ending in December 2024, recorded crime in Wiltshire and Swindon fell by 5.6% compared to the previous year (from 41,903 to 39,627) and that Wiltshire has the lowest number of reported crimes in the country per 1,000 of population.

As a headline figure, these are good results and reflect the improvements being made by Chief Constable Roper, her senior leadership team, and the frontline officers who continue to strive to provide you with the best possible service with the resources they have available to them.

That said, I have always maintained that statistics only give you part of the overall picture, and whilst the figures tell us Wiltshire is a safe county to live in, there is a marked difference between being safe and feeling safe.

Two of the key issues members of the public speak to me about concern police visibility where they live, and the ability to contact Wiltshire Police directly either by calling 101 or 999 or contacting them online.

I support the Chief Constable's commitment to enhancing the visibility of our Neighbourhood Policing Teams by using the two new Mobile Police Stations funded by my office. From their introduction last June until the end of March 2025, they have been out in communities across Wiltshire and Swindon 226 times.

I have challenged Wiltshire Police to create a more consistent schedule, so you are fully aware of when you can speak to your local police officers about the issues affecting you.

We have made significant improvements when you're calling either 999 or 101. 90% of all 999 calls are now answered in under ten seconds and I want to make further investment in the Crime and Communications Centre to improve response times and provide a more effective and timely investigative service with enhanced victim support.

Wiltshire Police is continuing to work hard to build trust and confidence with you, but we know we see under-reporting of several different crime types for a variety of reasons.

I need you to report crime when and where you see it, so I can be confident that when crime statistics are published, it gives an accurate reflection of how you feel in your community and shows that as well as Wiltshire being a safer place to live and work, you are feeling safer.

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