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73 Years of 'Chariot Racing'	1	<h2>Welcome to the Spring Issue!</h2> <p>Thank you to everyone who has sent in articles for this issue. The deadline for the July issue is Friday, 19 June 2026.</p> <p>If you want to send in any news stories before the next issue please email info@bamptonbeam.co.uk. It can be published on the Bampton Beam website: https://www.bamptonbeam.co.uk to cover dates between each issue of this newsletter.</p> <p>If anyone would like to help with the production or distribution of this newsletter, please get in touch. Email: info@bamptonbeam.co.uk</p>
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73 Years of 'Chariot Racing' in Bampton!

Come and support the 'SPAJERS Shirt Race 2026' on Bank Holiday Saturday 23rd May. You can either take part or just come and watch the fantastic spectacle of homemade contraptions whizzing around the village of Bampton!

If you would like to take part then there are three categories of entry:

Junior (10 and under), Intermediate (11-17) and Adults (18+). Fancy Dress Judging starts at 5.30pm and the first race begins at 6pm.

This great traditional event has been running for 73 years!

Please also help to support us by buying Raffle Tickets on sale outside the Co-Op in Bampton on Saturday 9th, 16th and 23rd May. 9am until 1pm.



Please use this QR code if you wish to download an application form to participate in the Shirt Race.

FUTURE DATE FOR YOUR DIARIES: Monday 31st August – DONKEY DERBY – Sandfords Field Bampton.

Deadline for all contributions for the next issue is: 19 June 2026

The Bampton Beam newsletter will be produced four times a year and is available free to all households in Bampton and surrounding villages. Every effort is made to provide accurate information and updates. No responsibility is accepted for any errors. The views expressed do not necessarily reflect the views of the editor or the Parish Council who are covering the costs of production. Please send any comments to: info@bamptonbeam.co.uk

Bampton Gardening Club

Tulip show 18 April 10am-4pm

This fabulous event will again take place at Ham Court. Bring your tulips along between 10-12am, entering is free for members. Doors will open again from 1-4 to see the glorious display and the prize-winning tulips.

Bunny Guinness will be the special guest judge.

Classes of tulips are: Single – Double – Lily Flowering – Parrot – Open Children's. Bring your tulips in a small bottle if you have one.

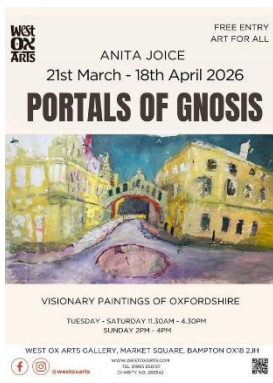
Tea and cake may be purchased in the afternoon. There is no parking available and dogs are not allowed.



Future Event:

- **Coffee Morning** on Saturday, 11 April from 10-12 at the Village Hall. Please bring plants, a posy and a garden-on-a-plate.
- **Outing to Wisley Gardens** on Saturday, 14th June. Visit one of our events to book a place.

West Ox Arts Spring and Summer Events



West Ox Arts(WOA) has a busy Spring/Summer ahead of us, with exhibitions, exciting events for members and a week of workshops in the gallery at the heart of Bampton.

Our next exhibition is 'The Portals Of Gnosis', visionary paintings of Oxfordshire by Anita Joice. From 21 March through to 18 April.

At the end of April, we open our 'Oxfordshire Artweeks 2026' exhibition, which will showcase the creations of thirteen talented artists from across the county. The exhibition runs from 25 April to 30 May at the WOA Gallery. It really promises to be another treat for the eyes. The participating WOA artists are: Gill Salway, Kirstie Grainger, Judith Harden, David Stone, Sally Middleton, Janet Lewendon, Melanie Phillips, Daphne O'Connell, Laura Hounam, Jan Fennelly, Keith Appleby, Andy's Metal and Liming Chen.



This exhibition offers a wonderful chance to experience an extensive array of work created using diverse materials, techniques and artistic styles by some of Oxfordshire's leading practising artists.

June brings our 'Arts & Crafts' exhibition opening on the 13 and running through to the 11 July. Another wealth of artwork from our talented members. We will be running our popular workshop week from Monday 1st June so look out for more information coming soon.

We are also continuing with our regular meet and chat art sessions at the Market Tavern so why not come along and find out about the gallery at the heart of the community. Dates for these are the first Thursday of every month at 7pm and the last Friday of each month at 11am.

If you would like to get involved or find out more about becoming a member then pop into the gallery up the stairs. There is an access lift for those that find stairs a little tricky. We hope to see you soon. Email: gallery@westoxarts.com

Bampton Classical Opera

Beauty and the Beast

Fairytale magic meets glorious music – fall under the spell of Beauty and the Beast this summer!

Grétry's sparkling yet serious comedy-romance, *Zemira e Azor*, is based on the much-loved story of *Beauty and the Beast* and won over countless hearts (including that of Mozart) through the final decades of the 18th century. Bampton Classical Opera's new production will be in a lively English translation, semi-staged and costumed, with orchestra, appearing for the first time at Cokethorpe School, south of Witney, as well as at our regular venues in Westonbirt and London.

A virtuous and beautiful young woman, Zemira, takes her father's place as a prisoner in the magical castle of the monstrous Azor, whose beastly form results from a spell cast by a malevolent fairy. Zemira is horrified when she first encounters Azor but gradually learns to see past his hideous exterior and to recognise his inner dignity and nobility. Can her simple love transform a beast?

Bampton Classical Opera has an international reputation for its intriguing repertory of lesser-known opera from the late 18th century. Productions are accessible, affordable and always sung in English. If you're new to opera, then start here – *Zemira e Azor* is melodic and utterly enchanting!

Performances at Cokethorpe School (OX29 7PU, 6 miles from Bampton) are on Friday and Saturday, 17 and 18 July at 7pm. Tickets £45 (£25 for under 18s) are available at www.bamptonopera.org or by telephone (07968 801047). Book early as tickets are strictly limited.

We may be able to run a return minibus from Bampton to Cokethorpe for the performances for a charge and subject to demand. If you might be interested in this, please contact our administrator Joy Besse (joy@bamptonopera.org; telephone as above) as soon as possible and certainly by 1 June.

Why Cokethorpe?

Our change of venue is unavoidable but may not be permanent. We must emphasise that this is nothing to do with the Deanery owners, who have always been positive and warmly welcoming. The major reason is a shortage of volunteers to staff the site – if this might interest you another year (it is about a week of work onsite leading up to the performances) please do contact Joy Besse as above.

Another reason is the increasing challenge of performing outdoors, but we want you to be assured that the production will be as delightful and enthralling as ever, and that Cokethorpe has plenty of parkland for picnics, helping to add that special something.

Bampton
Classical Opera

Zemira e Azor

Beauty and the Beast

a fairytale opera
from 1771
by **ANDRÉ GRÉTRY**
(semi-staged and
sung in English)

Cokethorpe School 17 - 18 July

bamptonopera.org

Bampton Bush Club Celebrates its 40th Birthday

On 5th November Bampton Bush Club celebrated its 40th anniversary. We had a wonderful party enjoyed by members and volunteers, past and present. Bubbles, balloons and lots of memories, were the order of the day.

Stewart Traynor, landlord of The Talbot Inn in Eynsham, gave his time to prepare and cook a delicious lunch for members. Thank you Stewart! It was a very happy occasion, and we were absolutely delighted to have Mavis Newing, one of the founders, with us for the occasion.



The idea for the lunch Club for retired residents in Bampton and the immediate surrounding villages, was conceived and brought to life by Mavis, then a health visitor, along with local GP, Dr Matthew Perry and Social Worker, Nick Harding-Smith. The Club continues to meet each Wednesday during term-time for tea, coffee and biscuits with time for a chat, a variety of entertainments and a two course, freshly cooked lunch. We provide a special mini-bus to enable those within Bampton who have impaired mobility and would not otherwise be able to come, to attend each Wednesday.

We are happy to welcome new members and to hear from anyone who would like to join our large team of volunteers. There are various roles and commitment is on a rota basis so not every week.

If you would like to find out more about joining or volunteering, please contact Suzy, our chairman, on 07811 676078, for an informal chat.



Bell Ringers Wanted!

At the heart of Bampton stands the beautiful Parish Church of St. Mary the Virgin. Built on the site of an earlier Saxon Minster, St. Mary's has been a centre for Christian Worship for over 1000 years. Dominating the skyline is the massive central tower dating from Norman times topped by a majestic spire which was added in the 13th Century.



This tower houses a magnificent peal of 8 bells. The heaviest six were installed in 1629, probably the first 6 to exist in Oxfordshire. Two more were installed in 1906 giving us 8 in total ranging from the Treble weighing just over 5 cwt, 254 kgs, to the Tenor weighing just over 23 cwt, 1168 kgs.

The bells are rung for weddings and funerals but because they are so popular they are frequently rung by visiting bands of ringers from many parts of the country when they are on a day's outing. Sadly, over recent years, due to aging, health or ringers moving away, the number of active Bampton ringers has reduced so there is only one active Bampton ringer left. Ringing for Sunday services is done using our automated change ringing system, but it does not sound as good as bells rung by people.

Fortunately, thanks to ringers from other local towers who love our bells, we manage to maintain a weekly practice at St. Mary's on Monday evenings from 7.30 to 9pm.

However, it is very important that the ancient art of 'Change Bell Ringing' is carried on into the future by Bamptonians. If not, nearly 400 years of the sound of our beautiful bells will be lost.



If you live in the Bampton district and have rung before or you would like to learn to ring or you would be interested in watching a practice then please contact our Tower Captain, Steve McLaren on 07921 820 743.

Bampton Singers
jointly with
Sutton Singers
Spring Concert

Friday, 24th April 2026
Stanton Harcourt Village Hall
Blackditch OX29 5SB
Door and cash bar open 7pm
Raffle
Concert 7.30

**Tickets £8 (cash) from Bampton Community Shop,
Choir members and a limited number at the door**

Bampton Singers
Summer Concert

(with songs to join in)

Friday, 10th July 2026

Bampton Village Hall

Door and cash bar open 7pm Raffle

Concert 7.30

**Tickets £8 (cash) from Bampton Community
Shop, Choir members and a limited number at the
door from mid-June**

Bampton Methodist Church

Bampton Methodist Church is situated on Bridge Street and has been place of worship for over a hundred years. It was recently improved by adding a disabled toilet, new kitchen, vestry and meeting room.

Sunday morning worship takes places at 11 a.m. and is followed by a beverage and further fellowship. The service is streamed via TEAMS.

Each Monday (except Bank holidays) the Church is open for anyone to come along with their lunch. There is a fee of £1.00 to cover beverages. Church is open between noon and 2 p.m.

Every Tuesday in term time from 7p.m. to 8 p.m. Singing for Fun takes place for a moderate fee of £3.00. 50% of the monies raised go towards a charity and the other 50% to the Church Development Fund. All words provided in a lovely folder.

The first Thursday of the month – 'The Chosen' a film version of the life of Christ. The next showing will be April 2nd. Doors open at 7 p.m. for a cuppa.



The second Thursday of the month – Fellowship Group. Doors open at 7 p.m. for a cuppa. The third Thursday of the month – BEMA Bible study listening to a podcast. Doors open at 7 p.m. for a cuppa. All are followed by refreshments and a discussion. Coffee mornings are also a regular feature of the Church's life.

The Church is available for Baptisms, Weddings, Funerals and can be hired by anyone for a one-off event for free. All we ask is for a donation towards utilities and cleaning costs and that you have read the Safeguarding agreement.

Everyone is welcome to come along to any of the events mentioned and, of course, Sunday morning worship. Our current Minister is Rev. Sue Jacobs – revsuejacobs@gmail.com. Further details available from Linden Eley 01993702561 – lindenatthejoanna18@talktalk.net.

We look forward to meeting to you at some time in the future.

Rotary Club of Burford & Kingham



An Audience and Supper with David Lowe on Sat 18th April 2026

The highly acclaimed composer will be joining the Rotary Club of Burford and Kingham to talk about his career as an established composer, arranger, and producer working in television, radio, branding, idents and commercials.

David's music fronts some of the most popular shows on British TV today- including BBC News, The One Show, Countryfile, Panorama, and Grand Designs as well as special events such as the London 2012 Olympic Games.

Tickets, priced at £30 include a main course and an audience.

Doors open at Warwick Hall, Burford, at 6.30pm with dinner served at 7.00pm

For the programme, tickets or additional information please contact:

burfordandkinghamsecretary@gmail.com

Event tickets available from: <https://davidloweevening.eventbrite.co.uk>

Funds raised in support of: St Laurence Nurses and Debra



New Bus Service

A new once a week shopping bus is picking up in Bampton on a Thursday morning only - route 409.

Starting off in Faringdon it picks up in Bridge Street, Bampton and also at the bus shelter in Broad Street a few minutes after. It drops off in Market Square in Witney and goes on to Sainsbury's.

The return journey starts at Sainsbury's for pick up and then to Welch Way outside the NatWest Bank.

For more information, please visit the website:

<https://www.firstandlastmile.org.uk>



Bampton Thriving Together

Bampton DE Group has changed its name to Bampton Thriving Together. As our work has evolved, we've recognised that our name needs to reflect the purpose and values guiding us - connection, wellbeing and community action in Bampton. Doughnut Economics will continue to shape our thinking, but we felt that choosing a more immediately relatable name would help people understand who we are and what we do. We are delighted to share progress on several local wellbeing and community-building projects that have been gathering momentum.



Therapy Garden Taking Shape: Work has begun on preparing the site for the new therapy garden at the surgery. *Melanie and Paul have been moving primroses to prepare the ground for the base of the pergola and plans are now in place to fence off the area so work can safely continue.* Local herbalist Jen Brampton and Lara Cowan from Botanic Shed have both expressed support for the project. A poster will soon be displayed in the surgery inviting residents to get involved, whether through volunteering time, sharing skills, or contributing materials.

Men's Shed – Exploring Possible Locations: The group continues to explore suitable sites for a Men's Shed in Bampton. There are some ideas in the pipeline, but nothing has been confirmed as yet. Anyone curious about what a Men's Shed looks like in practice is encouraged to visit the established project in Coleshill: [Highworth Community Shed | Men's Shed](#)



Youth Project – Planning a 'Have a Go Day': Plans are underway for a summer **Have a Go Day** at the recreation ground, inspired by a successful model used in Stonesfield. We hope the day will include a number of activities such as storytelling, parachute games, tennis, bushcraft, fitness circuits and more. The recreation ground hall is available on several dates during the school holidays, and the team is now awaiting confirmation from West Oxfordshire District Council's youth workers before finalising arrangements. Local groups and volunteers will be warmly welcomed to help shape the day and offer activities for children and young people.



If you'd like to get involved in any of these projects or stay updated, you can now reach the group at bamptonthrivingtogether@gmail.com

Bampton Baby and Toddler Group

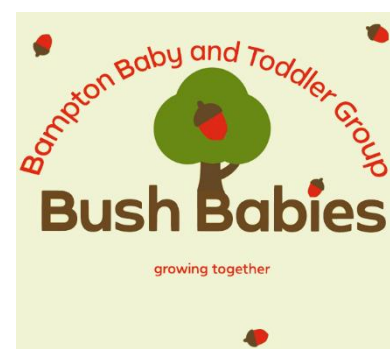


Bush Babies meet every Thursdays from 9:30am - 11:00am (term time) at St Mary the Virgin Church Bampton, OX18 2LZ



£2 per Family – tea/coffee and cake are included

Join the Facebook group:



Clive Carroll 2026 Tour – Live at Aston Pottery

Clive Carroll will be live at Aston Pottery on Saturday 18th April at 7.45pm

Tickets details: £20:00 per ticket.

To purchase please visit Aston Pottery Gift Shop, OX18 2BT or phone 01993 852031.

www.facebook.com/AstonPottery www.astonpottery.co.uk



Spring Crafting Fun at Bampton Library

Bampton Library is welcoming families into the Easter holidays with a wonderfully woolly crafting session designed especially for children aged 6–12.

Young makers are invited to come along and create their very own Woolly Sheep Wreath – a cheerful spring decoration that’s perfect for brightening up front doors or Easter displays at home.

The session will run on Friday 10 April from 2–4pm, and all materials will be provided.

Children simply need to bring an accompanying adult and plenty of imagination. Best of all, the workshop is completely free, thanks to the library’s commitment to offering creative, accessible activities for local families.

Spaces are limited, so booking is essential.

To reserve a place, contact Bampton Library, Church View, OX18 2NE or call 01985 815100.

It promises to be a relaxed, friendly afternoon of crafting, conversation and community – a lovely way to ease into spring.

Easter Crafting at Bampton Library

Make a Woolly Sheep Wreath
Friday 10th April
2pm - 4pm
Ages 6-12yrs
Children to be accompanied by an adult
FREE SESSION
but booking required !

The Library
Bampton

Bampton Library, Church View,
Bampton, OX18 2NE
Tel: 01865 815100

Upcoming Events

Scrabble Club for Adults monthly on a Monday night at Bampton Library 7pm – 8pm. Enjoy a sociable hour of Scrabble with friends or family at our Monday evening Scrabble Club. Scrabble boards provided or bring your own. To express an interest pop in or call 01865 815100! Future dates are: April 13th, May 11th, June 8th and July 13).

Blokes and a Brew A relaxed, men-only space where you can meet others, share stories and enjoy coffee, tea, cake and friendly conversation. All welcome – no need to book. Starting on 23 April 2026, 2:30 – 3:30pm at Bampton Library.



For more details of other upcoming talks, workshops, events etc please visit Bampton’s Community Hub website: <https://bamptoncommunityhub.org>