

Village News

in Swindon Village, Cheltenham

*Your local newsletter sponsored by the Parish
Council and delivered by volunteers.*

March 2025 Edition No.511

Upcoming Events



MARCH

- | | |
|-----------------------|---|
| Friday 7th | Allotment holders' skittles evening |
| Monday 10th | Parish Council Meeting
7:30pm in the Village Hall bar area |
| Wednesday 19th | Swindon Village Society. A talk on 'Trees'
by John Parker the CEO of the
Arboriculture Association.
Village Hall. 7.30pm.
Non members welcome £3 |
| Sunday 23rd | Litter pick
Meet 10:30am at the Village Hall car park |
| Saturday 29th | Bootlacers concert. see advert..
Swindon Village Hall 7.30 tickets £10. |

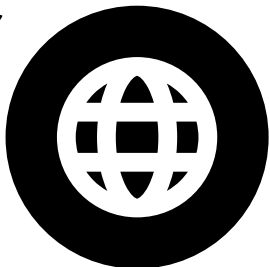
APRIL

- | | |
|----------------------|---|
| Saturday 5th | Family Easter Egg Hunt |
| Monday 14th | Parish Council Meeting
7:30pm in the Village Hall bar area |
| Saturday 26th | Swindon Village Society. Walk around the
village of Stanton. Details next month |
- 

A Connected Community!



Using your phone's camera to hover over each QR Code square below for direct link access.



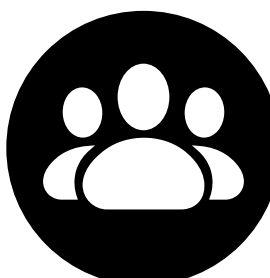
Parish Council Website

For full, detailed information from and about the Parish Council visit www.swindonparish.org.uk



Parish Council Facebook Page

A public page for live information and news updates from the council:
www.facebook.com/swindonparish



Swindon Village Facebook Community Group

A private group for the discussion of local issues, sharing and requesting help in the local community.



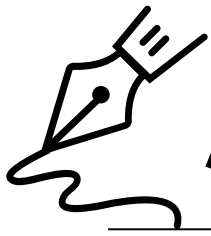
Anti-Social Behaviour

If you have any concerns about anti-social behaviour do not hesitate to contact the police.



Ring 101 (you may be charged for this phone call) or **email**
101@gloucestershire.police.uk

NB: Get an INCIDENT REPORT NUMBER and let the parish know about it. If the police are not made aware of the problem THERE ISN'T A PROBLEM.



A Note From The Editor

The eagle-eyed of you may have noticed that I snuck a poem into last month's Village News. The flower fairy poems were my favourite growing up and the illustrations are beautiful. Now that I am older (true) and wiser (maybe), I realise that they are not as childish as I thought and a good reminder of the seasons. I enjoy the change in season, particularly spring with it's spring bulbs, so I expect there will be more to come of the flower fairies.

Having not studied poetry since school I have a newfound pleasure in it, especially spoken word. I struggled at first with the lack of rhyming but now enjoy listening to the lyrical stanzas and am surprised at myself revelling in the almost rap like phrases. One of my favourites was recently featured on Woman's Hour on Radio 4. It would appear that I am in good company!

Thank you to Dawn for our new recipe page and I must apologise to Rev Jacqueline as she had some beautiful daffodils at the end of her article, but I couldn't make them fit on the page. I have put some in elsewhere to (hopefully) make up for this.



Karren



Swindon Parish Council

Swindon Parish and Community Website: <https://swindonparish.org.uk>

I know you all love to hear about Manor Road roadworks. Here is the latest. Manor Road will be closed on 17th March from its junction with Runnings Road to its junction with Manor Court. The closure will be in effect from 9:00am until 5:00pm to allow for resurfacing works.

As I write this, we are finalising our arrangements to plant two memorial trees in Old Mill Way. The trees will be a tribute to former Parish Councillors David Iliffe and Helen Wells. Many of you will have known David and Helen, two highly respected and well-liked councillors who worked tirelessly for their community.

Staying in Old Mill Way, the path is very muddy. This is a problem whenever we have wet weather (it is lucky it is such a rare occurrence in England!). We feel that the best solution is to lay down wood chippings. They are environmentally friendly, but the downside is that they do not last long and have to be refreshed. We sourced some from the tree works we had done recently. We are now trying to source some more.



As we anticipated, the closure of the Cheltenham recycling centre appears to be resulting in an increase in fly tipping. This was the scene outside the allotments; a sunny day defiled. Who does this? If you know please contact the police. You can do so anonymously if you prefer.

I recently saw another report of a fly tipper dumping lots of household waste, including old household bills with their name and address. Selfish and stupid! The result was a large fine.



Swindon Parish Council



The clothing recycling bins at Sainsbury's continue to be overflowing. We have pleaded that they should be emptied more frequently. The result at present is an eyesore that does no-one any credit.

Remember that the recycling bins behind the Salvation Army Donation Centre in Rutherford Way (off the roundabout near Sainsbury's) are close by.



Our war on graffiti continues. We are reporting the examples we find and hope that you will do the same. You can use Fix My Street (fixmystreet.com) to report this and many other problems.

We are in touch with Galliford Try, one of the house builders who are involved in the building out of Elms Park. They have a corporate responsibility to engage with the local community. Obviously it looks good for them but hopefully it will also bring benefits to us.



Swindon Parish Council

Lisa, our Chair, is expecting a baby. We are not sure how much more we will see of Lisa before she is “indisposed”. Her council colleagues are delighted for her, wish her all the best and look forward to seeing her whenever she is able to contribute. We’ll try not to mess up in your absence Lisa. I haven’t got masses of news this week so here is a bit of fun.

What do you make of this? The caption states that the “Simpler interface is friendly for the elderly and children.”



The items on the menu are:

- Network Config
- DLNA
- SAT2IP
- Online Movie
- STB name setting

Any senior citizens out there prepared to show me how to work this? I’ll ask my three-year-old grandson when I next see him.

Shaun Cullimore
Clerk to Swindon Parish Council



St. Lawrence's Church

RECTORY REFLECTIONS - REV JACQUELINE

Spring has sprung! The lighter mornings, the flower buds bursting open with vibrant colours and the sight of lambs skipping and jumping in the fields is enough to gladden any heart. The cold dark nights of winter will become a distant memory as we move into a new season which is enveloped in hope and new life. We celebrate Lent as a spiritual springtime. Derived from the Latin, *Lencten* meaning 'springtime', this season is one of rejuvenation and thankfulness.

Just as spring is a time of intense agricultural activity for farmers after the bareness and apparent death of winter, so Lent is a time of transition for our hearts, when God is bringing out a ripe and fruitful harvest.

Winter can sometimes seem to last forever but it allows for things to die back to make room for new growth. It is the assurance that new life will emerge which allows us to step forth courageously into the new life that spring invites and that Jesus offers to us in Easter.

Lent is a penitential season where we say sorry to God for the things we might have done wrong. This season is also an opportunity to face the challenges of each new day with anticipation and hope. We are facing difficult times in society and throughout the world, but we can be assured that God will not test us beyond what we can endure.

I encourage you to make some time to go outside and notice the signs of new life and enjoy the unfolding of spring. They are a sign of God's constancy, whatever is happening around us. Be reassured that wherever we are and whatever is going on in our lives, God's love will be steadfast and as recurring as the seasons.

“yet he has not left himself without a witness in doing good—giving you rains from heaven and fruitful seasons, and filling you with food and your hearts with joy. “

(Acts 14.17)



St. Lawrence's Church

Services and events in March

2nd Sunday	9.15am	All-age worship (Please note earlier time)
	6.30pm	Holy Communion
4th Tuesday	10.30am	Chatterbox Coffee Drop-In
5th Wednesday	10am-12noon	Church open for private prayer
Ash Wednesday	7.00pm	Holy Communion with Imposition of Ashes
9th Sunday	9.15am	Holy Communion
	6.30pm	Evensong
11th Tuesday	10.30am	Chatterbox Coffee Drop-In
12th Wednesday	10am - 12noon	Church open for private prayer
16th Sunday	9.15am	Holy Communion
	6.30pm	Evensong
18th Tuesday	10.30am	Chatterbox Coffee Drop-In
19th Wednesday	10am - 12noon	Church open for private prayer
23rd Sunday	9.15am	Holy Communion
	6.30pm	Evensong
25th Tuesday	10.30am	Chatterbox Coffee Drop-In
26th Wednesday	10am - 12noon	Church open for private prayer
30th Mothering Sunday		
	10.00am	All Age Communion Mothering Sunday Service
	6.30pm	Evensong



St. Lawrence's Church

Services and events in April

1st Tuesday	10.30am	Chatterbox Coffee Drop-In
2nd Wednesday	10am - 12noon	Church open for private prayer
6th Sunday	10.30am	Together @ Ten Thirty
	6.30pm	Holy Communion
8th Tuesday	10.30am	Chatterbox Coffee Drop-In
9th Wednesday	10am - 12noon	Church open for private prayer

St. Lawrence's Church

Chatterbox

Every Tuesday

10.30am to 12noon



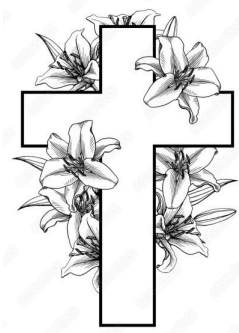
Pop in for coffee/tea and biscuits
and a good old chat about
anything and everything.

Everyone's welcome, old or new. (It's free!)



St. Lawrence's Church

From the registers



Funerals

We commemorated the lives of

William Christopher Howard

20th January

Thomas Joseph Hawker

22nd January

Alfred Martin (Burial of Ashes)

23rd January

St. Lawrence's Church is part of the



Enquiries about baptisms or weddings

If you would like to enquire about baptism (also called christening) or would like to book a wedding in St Lawrence's church, please contact Karen in the Team Office on **01242 244373** or **admin@northchelt.org.uk**

You can contact the Team Vicar, **Revd. Jacqueline Henson**, by email: **revjacquelinehenson@gmail.com** or by phone: **01242 220053** or via the office as above.



St. Lawrence's Church

**The parish of St Lawrence, Swindon Village
with St Peter, Cheltenham**

Every 6 years the Church of England does an updated count of how many members it has. Currently St Lawrence, Swindon Village with St Peter, Cheltenham has 36 on the Church Electoral Roll (not to be confused with the Parliamentary Electoral Register).

Joining the Church Electoral Roll means that you can vote on Church matters, attend and vote at the Annual Parochial Church meeting and stand for election to the PCC. Being on the Church Electoral Roll is a way of demonstrating your willingness to help shape the future of the Church, not just locally, but nationally.

This year we have to ask everyone to register afresh. We cannot carry over any existing names, so even if you have previously registered you will need to register again.

**Deadline for applications for inclusion on the new roll 9th
April 2025**

The new roll comes into operation on 23rd April 2025

Applications forms can be obtained from:

Eileen Allen

23 Drayton Close

e-mail: emallen@blueyonder.co.uk

I will be contacting everyone on the existing Church Electoral Roll in the hope that they will re-register.



Swindon Parish Council

Broadband in Swindon Parish

Some time ago I wrote about the varying internet speeds people were experiencing in the area. Things have moved on. I have recently received more queries about the current broadband initiatives. I have done a bit of research in an attempt to clarify the players, their roles and the current state of affairs.

Starting with the basics, there are infrastructure companies that dig up the streets and there are internet service providers (ISPs) who use the buried cables to offer you access to the internet (and perhaps TV and telephone services). A few companies span both these roles.



In Gloucestershire there is a joint initiative with Herefordshire called Fastershire. The aim of the project is to bring broadband to areas that are not attractive to commercial developers.

On their website there is a good explanation of the different types (and speeds) of broadband connection. The slowest uses copper wires throughout. The next level uses fibre optic cables to the street cabinet (the ones with graffiti on them - another story!) then copper wires from the cabinet to your house. The best connections use fibre optic cables throughout.

Copper wires throughout might give you a speed of 20Mbps. Fibre to the cabinet will give you roughly 4 times the speed while full fibre (sounds like All Bran) might give you 50 times the speed or more.

The first fibre optic connections to homes were made by Telewest many years ago. The company became Virgin Media in 2007. Virgin Media is its own internet service provider but only covers certain areas. It doesn't make its infrastructure available to other companies.



Swindon Parish Council

Through the Fastershire initiative Openreach, Gigaclear and CityFibre have been digging up our streets installing fibre optic cables. None of these companies offer internet services to domestic subscribers. They provide the infrastructure through which internet service providers such as Plus Net and Talk Talk provide their services.

Netomnia is another company active in the area. They lay cables using existing ducting and telegraph poles. At present Netomnia has a single service provider - its sister company You Fibre. Other ISPs will be available shortly. I had a very useful chat with Netomnia. They were keen to answer my questions and were refreshingly transparent about their plans. They also highlighted that they offer social (reduced cost) tariffs for people on low incomes or on benefits. Other ISPs may do the same but they tend not to publicise it.

Annoyed that your road is being dug up multiple times?

I have received this explanation from Gloucestershire County Council.



“Cheltenham as a whole, has a range of different network operators who have publicly announced commercial plans to build rival gigabit capable networks across the town.

These include City Fibre, Openreach and Netomnia. These are all private companies, and they are using their own private capital to fund the delivery. Cheltenham is seen as quite an attractive area for suppliers to invest, hence why there is competition here. Moving forward, properties that aren't part of any commercial delivery plans, will be the responsibility of central government under Building Digital UK (BDUK), but it's likely most of Cheltenham will be done commercially.”

You can check your postcode on the various internet company websites to see if services are available to you. If you have any questions please get in touch.

Shaun Cullimore;
Clerk to Swindon Parish Council



The Swindon Village Society

The Society has not had a meeting since the last edition but not to worry. There must be something I can rabbit on about.

Now in that last report I did give much of this year's programme but there were two slots unfilled, so that gives me a starter. In May we now have Nicola Potter coming to give us a talk on 'Metal Detecting and Finds'. When I contacted Nicola I had no idea where she lived. However, I was soon made aware that she is actually from Wyman's Brook and her children either have been to or at our Village School. So not only is she very local but we don't have to pay any travel expenses. Apparently Nicola helps to run a local group of folk who undertake metal detecting and she will be bringing along some of their local finds. I may even be able to persuade her to organise a trawl of Swindon Hall grounds and find that pound coin I lost five years ago that has been on my mind ever since. That leaves only September empty but I do have a speaker available should he be needed and if nothing else cries out to be heard before then. So we have a full programme.

Now, although that is all the Society business I have to report, I will go on to mention something that many people may not be aware of. We all know that the First World War was a dreadful business. No nation was prepared for the trench warfare that took place. Britain suffered about one million casualties. Of those almost half a million have no known resting place. In the heat of battle many bodies were never recovered from the battlefield mud. Others were quickly buried near to where they were found and a cross constructed from whatever came to hand, wood from empty ammunition boxes, ruined buildings or fencing.



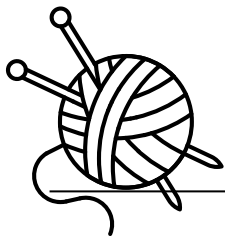
The Swindon Village Society

If the soldier's identity was known it would be marked on the cross and if not they would be 'A soldier known only unto God'. Later many such bodies were recovered and given a more appropriate resting place in one of the formal cemeteries over in France. What is more, some of the temporary crosses were kept and some of those relating to men local to Cheltenham have been collected, restored from their invariably poor condition and made available to be displayed in a small building in Cheltenham's cemetery in Prestbury.

Further, pupils from Pittville School have, where possible, researched the individual's history and their tales have been recorded on notices placed alongside the crosses. If you go to the cemetery there are signs directing you to the small building containing these memorials which is kept unlocked. You can park close by and go in to read the tales and see the crosses. There are good information notices inside and outside. I recommend a visit to pay remembrance to brave local men. It is both informative and touching.

I will now repeat a bit of the last newsletter notice. We are not increasing subscriptions this year. They will stay at £10 for a single and £20 for a couple or family. New members will be very welcome. If you are new to the area and want to know more of what we do, send me an e-mail at barry_simon@hotmail.com. Our aim is primarily to keep the Village a decent area to live in and support the Parish Council in their efforts to do the same. Our knowledge of local history has several times been helpful in fending off uncaring developers whose main motive is just profit.

Barry Simon



Marle Hill WI

Marle Hill WI met on Monday 3 February 2025. Our speaker this month was Nick King who gave a very interesting talk entitled "Goats of the Gorge". He talked about his involvement with having to take goats milk for health reasons to having his own goats and eventually running a very productive business.

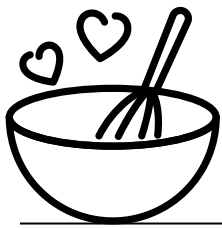
Members were reminded of the dates for the monthly meal out, knit and natter and the book club.

Our next meeting is on Monday 3 March 2025 at St Nicholas Church Hall at 7:30pm. and we will be having a quiz.

Visitors are very welcome to attend. Come and see what we have to offer and have some ME time.

Sue Davies
Marle Hill WI





Cook with us

Vegetables that are in season during MARCH are..

Artichoke, Beetroot, Carrots, Chicory, Leeks, Parsnip, Purple Sprouting Broccoli, Radishes, Rhubarb, Sorrel, Spring Greens, Spring Onions, Watercress

Nothing beats having homemade soup for a cold winters lunch... Now I have a soup maker... it's so much easier..

One of our favourites is Broccoli and Stilton, Serves 4

Ingredients

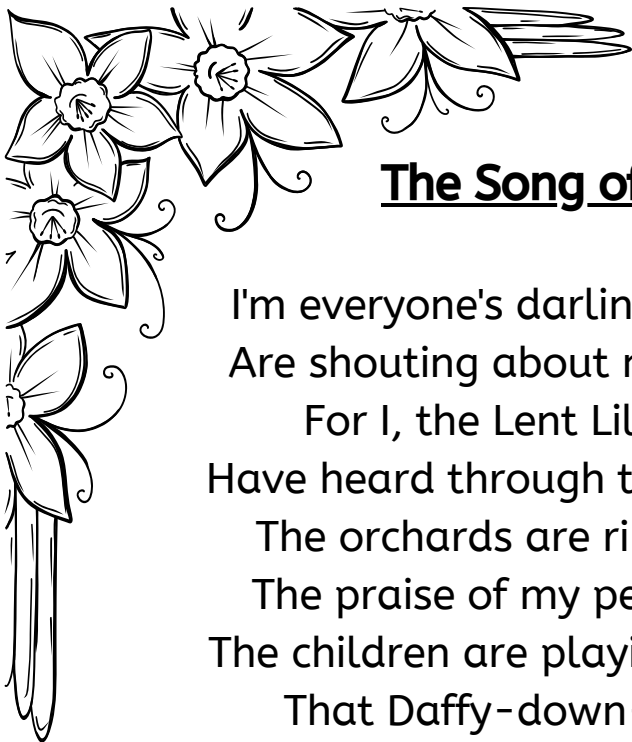
- Onion
- One Medium potato peeled
- Tenderstem broccoli (as much as you can chop up .. the more the tastier)
- 500ml Veggie stock (add more liquid if soup is a bit too thick)
- 40g Stilton cheese or cheddar.. (or as much as you like to your own taste)
- Seasoning salt & pepper

Method

- * Chop up onion, potato and tenderstem broccoli
- * Place in a saucepan, or soup maker, with stock and seasoning
- * Bring to a boil... simmer until veggies are tender (15-20 mins)
- * Blitz with a hand blender if not using a soup maker
- * Add cheese and give a quick blitz

Serve in bowls with chunks of your favourite bread, .. enjoy..

1. Who is Sweep's best friend?
2. Which mononymous magician works with Penn Jillette?
3. Rod Hull used what to create havoc, eg when being interviewed by Michael Parkinson?
4. Chico, Groucho, Gummo, Zeppo... who is missing?
5. Which dog lives at 62 West Wallaby Street?
6. Who wrote a composition named 4'33" in 1952?
7. Who had a hit with a song with the first line "Hello darkness, my old friend" in 1964?
8. At exactly what time and date is the first world war armistice recognised by the nation each year?
9. Who plays Dr Nikki Alexander in a long running BBC series?
10. What do the above answers have in common?



The Song of the Daffodil Fairy

I'm everyone's darling: the blackbird and starling
Are shouting about me from blossoming boughs;
For I, the Lent Lily, the Daffy-down-dilly,
Have heard through the country the call to arouse.
The orchards are ringing with voices a-singing
The praise of my petticoat, praise of my gown;
The children are playing, and hark! they are saying
That Daffy-down-dilly is come up to town!



Hello Village Gardeners! March is finally upon us, the start of the growing season for most.

This month I think it's a good idea to go back to basics and talk about how to get a head start on the growing season.

Growing from seed is by far the cheapest way to start your planting season, nowadays there are a variety of ways to get your seeds growing. Some newer methods I came across last year were Heated Propagators or heat mats, similar to those used for homebrew beer, that heat your seed trays slightly to really speed up germination and growth as much as 30%! Ideal if your windowsill space is limited or if your greenhouse is too cold this time of year. Generally these heat mats only use 20w of Electricity at most, so it would cost pennies to use.

One seedling investment I made last year were a few 30 cell rubber seed trays. Traditionally thin plastic ones are both easy to break and difficult to recycle. These rubber seed trays obviously cost a little more, around £10 each (I was lucky with a Webbs clearance bargain late last year for half that), but will last forever and are unbelievably easy to extract seedlings and attached soil from.

Lastly, something I learnt rather recently, seeds/seedlings in their first few weeks of life don't really care about soil nutrition. Hence it's a good idea to use some sieved spent compost as seed sowing mixture, just as long as it's pest/worm free! This saves paying for bags from the Garden Centre.

I can't wait to start growing this year and I hope some of the above inspires you to grow more from seed this year!

Thanks for reading.
Dale.

Announcing a very special show....

THE BOOTLACERS

Swindon Village Community Hall, Cheltenham

Saturday 29th March 2025

Doors open 7pm, Show 7.45pm



RAISING FUNDS FOR

MND ASSOCIATION GLOUCESTERSHIRE &

EMILY'S GIFT (supporting children with cancer)

Hear classic songs from legendary acts – Queen, The Beatles,
Billy Joel, The Who, Toto and many more...!

TICKETS £10.00

CONTACT SVCH COMMITTEE TO RESERVE

BAR, RAFFLE, MERCH, FREE PARKING



Swindon Village Hall – What's on

29th March

The Bootlacers – another chance to see this brilliant band. Tickets £10 available from: swindonvillagehall@gmail.com. Over 18s only.

5th April

Family Easter event. Look out for posters around Village and Facebook soon.

17th May

Retro night – The excellent Lighter Thieves are back with music from the last four decades

14th June

Summer Fair on the park. Stalls, games and refreshments from the bar.

Answers to Quiz

- | | |
|-----------|------------------------|
| 1. Sooty | 5. Gromit |
| 2. Teller | 6. John Cage |
| 3. Emu | 7. Simon and Garfunkel |
| 4. Harpo | 8. 11am on 11 Nov |
| | 9. Emilia Fox |

10. They are all related to "silence". Character 1-5 do not speak. 4'33" is silence. The Simon and Garfunkel song is "the Sound of Silence". Armistice is marked by 2 minutes silence. Nikki Alexander is a character in Silent Witness.



P. White. Dip SAC FHP, RGN, BSc (Hons)

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SWINDON PARISH COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS

Footpaths	John Heathcott	527753
Scouts, Cubs, Beavers		info@ 1sv-scouts.co.uk
Rainbow Guider	Hannah Butler	07464 784155
Village Hall Chair	Jana Bridger	07913 911930 swindonvillagehall@gmail.com
Village Hall Bookings	Jana Bridger	swindonvillagehall@gmail.com
Village News Distribution	Hugh Evans	241678
Play Group	(Playgroup hours) For Sept 24 admission	690479 07949 352507
School Headteacher	Geraint Mills	690016
Friends of the School		chairfosvps@gmail.com
Art & Crafts Club	Lynne Mumford	07515 461876
Swindon Village Society	Barry Simon	521723
Mary Godwin Under 5s	(Playgroup hours)	mgu5@hotmail.co.uk
Marle Hill W.L.	Sara Jefferies	07477894639 / 692500

Please inform the editors of any changes to the contact details for village organisations.

Deadline for the next issue of the Village News is the 16th March 2025

Please send contributions to the editors via Karren Parsons
at 29 Dark Lane or e-mail village-news@swindonparish.org.uk

SWINDON PARISH COUNCIL

Cllr. Lisa Whitaker (Chair)	07715 470842
Cllr. James Cornish	07950 196709
Cllr. Sharon Collicutt	07884 184423
Cllr. Natalie Blankley	07725 948935
Cllr. Alison Berry	07754 006634
Cllr. Lynne Allen	07979 890134
Cllr. Tom Harcourt	07963 581371

There are currently TWO vacancies. Please get in touch if you would be interested in joining

Mr Shaun Cullimore (Clerk to the Council)	07833 089435 parish.clerk@swindonparish.org.uk
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Cheltenham Borough Councillors

Springbank Ward (south of Tewkesbury Road)

Cllr. Peter Jeffries	07717 493686
Cllr. Suzanne Williams	01242 230648

Swindon Village Ward (north of Tewkesbury Road)

Cllr. Flo Clucas	01242 255844
Cllr. Frank Allen	07402 011272

County Councillor

Cllr. Bernard Fisher	07523 421012
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ST.LAWRENCE'S CHURCH

Part of the North Cheltenham Team Ministry

Team Vicar: Revd. Jacqueline Henson revjacquelinehenson@gmail.com
220053

Churchwarden: Hugh Evans,241678

Tower Captain: Hugh Evans,241678

Organist: John Collins511950

North Cheltenham Team Ministry Office 244373

admin@northchelt.org.uk

The office is open on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday from 9.00am to 1.30pm, and on Friday from 1.30pm to 4.00pm.

Outside these hours please leave a message on the answer-phone.

The contents of this newsletter do not necessarily reflect the views of the Editors or the Parish Council.