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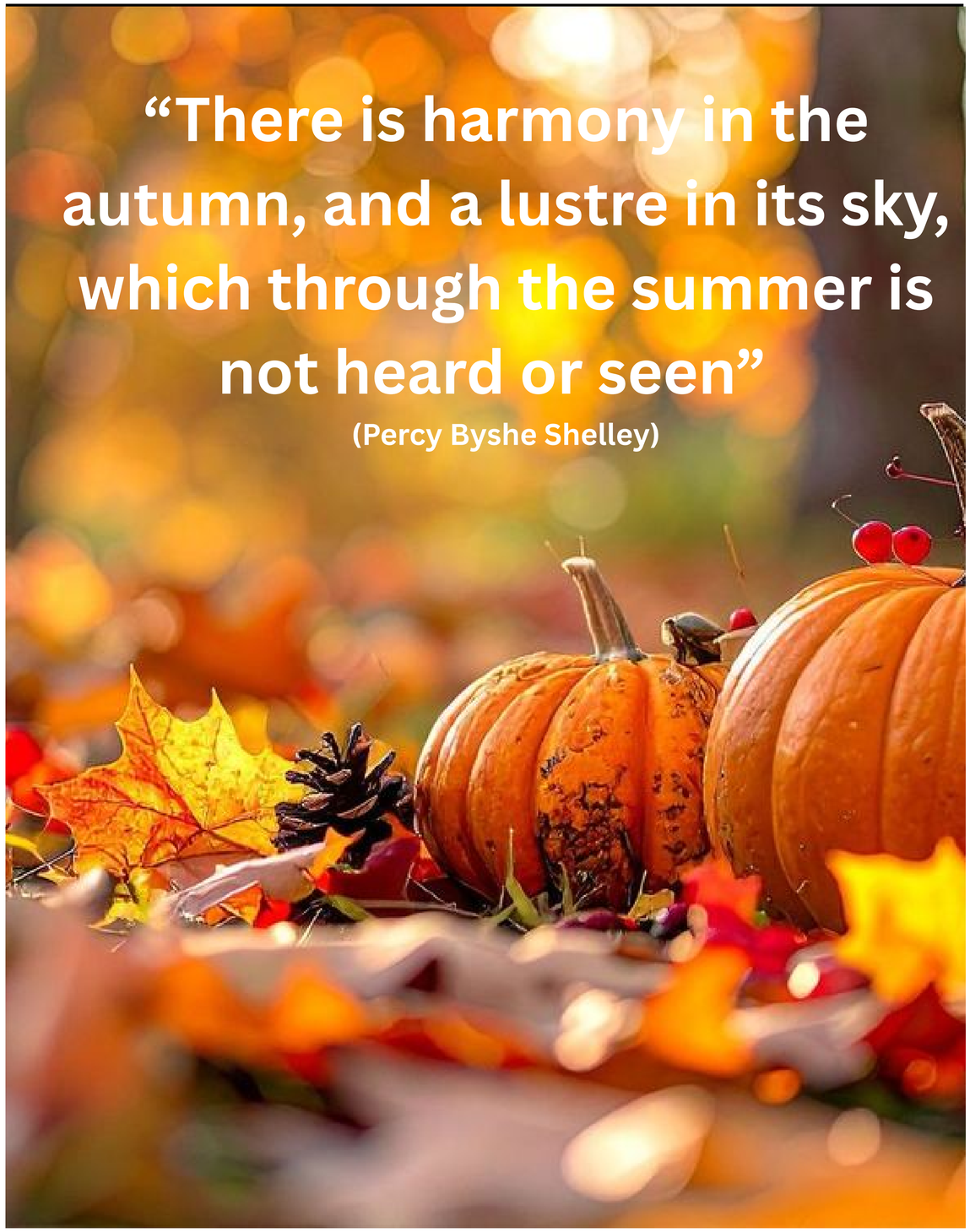
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Castlethorpe News

CASTLETHORPE PARISH COUNCIL

www.castlethorpe-pc.gov.uk September 2026



Over the Garden Wall

By Annie Handyside

Goodbye gloom, hello spring

After the disappointments of summer, autumn is a good time to tidy and prune, take stock, and start planning for next season.

September is the last chance to trim evergreen hedges such as privet, pyracantha, and lonicera. It's also the ideal time to order new fruit trees.

If your soil is anything like mine, it looks depleted and worn out. Improving it will encourage beneficial organisms and strengthen soil structure. Feed the soil with homemade compost or farmyard manure, available from garden centres, and build up its depth with mulches.

Consider adding drought-tolerant plants as you refresh borders and fill gaps. Lavender, rosemary, echinacea, and ornamental grasses cope well with dry spells once established, especially in sunny, free-draining soil.



Choose plants to suit your soil and aspect and remember that even drought-tolerant plants need regular watering while they establish. Water them through their first season, then mulch around them to help retain moisture and reduce future watering.

Suitable perennials include salvias, agapanthus, crocosmia and one of my favourites, the ever-reliable hardy geraniums.

Give yourself a lift by sending off to mail order companies for spring bulbs to plant over the next three months. Early irises like Iris reticulata are miniature, vibrant flowers blooming from February through to March. Reaching just 10 to 15 cm tall, they display rich shades of blue, purple, violet, and yellow, often featuring contrasting ridges or spots. Pack them into terracotta pots and around October place in shelter like a cold frame to keep cool and dry.



If you have tender perennials, such as pelargoniums, then you can lift and pot them from the garden to indoors in September/October before the cooler nights and the risk of frost.

Wallflowers – plant now to replace burnt-out or lost summer bedding. Growing tulips in between will make a lovely display next April.



Personally, I love going through my seed packets in autumn and sorting out which hardy annuals I want to sew to get a clutch off to a good start for next year. I always sew sweet peas now, three to a pot [although I do experiment with toilet rolls from time to time]. They make such strong plants for placing outside from mid-March, ahead of later sown specimens. I'm also going to sow a few rows of spring onions for harvesting next spring.

Whether you're tending a small cottage courtyard or a sprawling lawn, your hard work adds to the collective beauty we all get to enjoy come spring. So, let's shake ourselves free of drought gloom, clear those final borders and share any good ideas on FB: *Castlethorpe Grass.* See you over the garden wall!

The Lounge

from the hatch

Coffee • Food • Drinks • Events

By Kirstie Johnston

We are delighted to introduce ourselves as the new team behind *The Lounge*, a cafe/bar that we hope will become a welcoming place at the heart of Castlethorpe village community.

Matt Johnston is the owner; he also runs the café at Fitness First Gym, *Café 25*, alongside a mobile bar service and his work as a personal trainer.

I'm Matt's wife, and I left my full-time corporate job to join the family business. We also have our little girl, Emmie, who I'm sure you'll see running around the café from time to time!



Michelle, Matt's mum, is the one who keeps things organised behind the scenes, but she's excited to step out and work her first bar shift. You're now more likely to spot her at one of our bar events, where she'll be getting stuck in and enjoying being part of the action.

James, Matt's younger brother, works on the bar alongside his best friend, Lorenzo. James has just finished university, where he studied Architecture.

During the week, we also have our auntie, Jeanette, who works with us and helps keep everything running smoothly, while our weekend team is made up of Megan, Evie and Daisi, who are a brilliant part of the set-up.

Of course, we can't forget our fantastic chefs: Jason, a long-time friend of Matt's, and Ethan, who keeps the kitchen running and the food coming.

And our newest friend, who already feels like family, is Charley from *Something Different*, who bakes all our delicious treats for the café. She really is amazing. She's been there to guide and support us from the very beginning, and she's always willing to jump in and help out in the kitchen whenever we're short-staffed. We honestly couldn't ask for a better person to have by our side.

We're very much a family-run business, and everyone plays an important part in making the café what it is and that is something we are incredibly proud of. Family has always been at the centre of everything we do, and we want that same welcoming, friendly atmosphere to be felt by everyone who walks through our doors. Whether you're stopping by for a drink, enjoying breakfast with your family or simply looking for somewhere else to work, we want *The Lounge* to feel like a place where everyone and their dogs belong.

Taking on *The Lounge* is an exciting new chapter for us. We recognise the important role it has played in the village over the years, and we are committed to building on that tradition while bringing fresh ideas and renewed energy. We know that a successful village cafe/bar is about much more than food and drink, it's about friendship, conversation, and creating lasting memories. Our ambition is to provide a warm, welcoming environment where people can meet and unwind, while offering the highest standards of hospitality.

We would like to thank everyone who has already welcomed and supported us. The encouragement we've received means a lot and we're excited to continue getting to know more of you in the weeks and months ahead.

We look forward to welcoming both familiar faces and new visitors to *The Lounge*, and we hope it becomes a place the whole village can be proud of.



Advance notice of Village Hall Christmas Events

Christmas Bingo Saturday 14th November
Door open @ 2pm
Eyes down @ 2.30pm
Lots of lovely prizes
Raffle & Refreshments
All proceeds to go to The Seniors of Castlethorpe Christmas Lunch

Seniors Christmas Lunch
Saturday 5th December, 1 - 4.30 pm
Any resident of our village over 65 years is invited to join us.
Christmas lunch, entertainment and raffle. Invites will be sent out in November, but if you haven't been before and would like to come, then please let me know and I will add you to our list.
Phone me on 07702 555206 or email:
karen.universal@hotmail.co.uk

CASTLETHORPE WI SPEAKERS

By Karen Russo

Our meetings are held every 2nd Thursday of the month in the Village Hall from 7.30pm.

We have a Speaker or Activity each month and also refreshments and a raffle.

Our next Meetings are:

September 10th - Stephen Barker: Warrior Women of the English Civil Wars, 1642-1651. This talk looks at the four women who took part in the fighting, undertook spying missions and negotiated deals with politicians.

October 8th - Pottery painting afternoon, 2pm @ Playful Pottery. The costs of the pottery range from £3 - £35. If you would like to join us, please give me call to put your name down - Karen 07702-555206

November 12th - Kevin Varty: Two Murders & A Ghost Story in Northamptonshire. An entertaining and rather scary evening

December 10th - Christmas Party

If you are interested in joining us just pop along and see what we are all about, or call me:
Karen Russo - 07702 555206 or
Yvonne Hands - 01908- 510474.

About *Castlethorpe News*

To share news, photos or suggestions, write for us, advertise, or join the delivery team contact castlethorpenews@gmail.com. The deadline for the December edition is 10th November. The editors reserve the right to edit all material. Adverts range from £8-£32 plus VAT for quarter, half or full pages. Prices are reviewed each year, and the deadline for inclusion is the 10th of the previous month. Email for further details.

Castlethorpe News is a quarterly publication edited by Annie & Nigel Handyside. It is delivered by Martin Eadon, Phil Ayles, Steve Bradbury, A & N Handyside, Dave Hinds, Faith Knight, Lucy Knowles, Trisha Prestidge, Tim Richards, Karen Russo and Kay Sawbridge. Copies are also available in the village shop. It is printed by NBR Printing. Every effort is made to ensure the accuracy of information in this publication. However, *Castlethorpe News* cannot be held liable for any inaccuracies or misinformation that may be inadvertently be published here.

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Chris Curtis, your MP

I wanted to take this opportunity to thank everyone who joined me in Hanslope, alongside Cllr Alison Andrew, to discuss the New Town development proposals for Milton Keynes North.

I know people hold a wide range of views on these proposals, and I have always tried to be the type of MP who can have open and honest conversations.

At the meeting, I set out my five tests that would need to be met before I could support any development proposals:



Firstly, infrastructure must come before new housing, not years afterwards. Secondly, plans must include meaningful measures to protect and enhance nature. Thirdly, new homes must be genuinely affordable for local people. Fourthly, green spaces must be a central part of the design, not an afterthought. Finally, development must not only mitigate flood risk, but actively improve local flood defences where possible.

In their current form, I am not convinced that these proposals meet my tests and I am therefore not supporting them. My priority remains in making use of empty office spaces in our urban centre, the expansion already underway at MK East and, where possible, unlocking brownfield sites, as the council has recently done with the Agora redevelopment in Wolverton.

However, that does not mean I would never support proposals for the north of Milton Keynes. If future proposals can demonstrate that they meet my tests, I would have to consider them on their merits. Currently, I am not persuaded that they will, but I also want to be honest with people that I am not the sort of politician who believes in opposing all development regardless - just as I do not believe in accepting proposals where developers fail to provide the infrastructure, protections and benefits our communities need.

I also recognise concerns about the confusing consultation process. I have therefore spoken with the Housing Minister to ask that the New Towns consultation is reopened, ensuring residents have both the information and the time needed to properly respond.

I'm here to help wherever I can, so please don't hesitate to get in touch via the email below, or you can follow what I'm doing:

@ChrisCurtisLabour



chris.curtis.mp@parliament.uk

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Jacqueline Gommon MICF

Funeral Celebrant

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Email: jacquelinegommon@hotmail.com

Website: www.selectceremonies.co.uk

Time for Tea

By Phil Ayles

Communi-Tea took a break over the summer school holidays and we restart on 9th September. We would like to thank everyone for their support, especially our volunteers Faith, Lisa, Nicky, Sophie, Sue and Trish and the muscle, Chris, Graham and Phil, who help set up the tables and chairs. And thank you to those who bring residents who might not be able to come by themselves.

Donations are appreciated but not expected and the volunteers do not take a penny for ingredients. As a result, in the last year we have been able to donate £450 to charities: The Camphill Bus Fundraiser, MK Swan Rescue and Thames Valley Air Ambulance.



CAMPHILL MK COMMUNITIES

Thank you all and remember that everyone is welcome, from parents collecting their children from school to those who cannot easily get out. Spread the word if you know someone who would like to attend and perhaps bring them if they aren't able to come by themselves.

Dates are 9th and 23rd September, 7th and 21st October, then 4th and 18th November.

MK Swan Rescue



The latest news from

Haversham 'New Town'

You may recall that the Government New Towns Proposal identified several places for 'new towns' including extending Milton Keynes. Most of the Milton Keynes extension is in the eastern expansion area between Newport Pagnell and Moulsoe and the 'densification' of central Milton Keynes, and is already included in the new MKCC Local Plan, currently going through its adoption process.

However, the Commission also included a 'developer-led' development on top of Haversham. This could be of the order of 21,500 houses and would come up to the Dips and up and around Hanslope Park. It would involve a new Junction 14a at Tathall End and a bridge across the wetlands arc of the Ouse Valley. To put the size into context, it would be about three times bigger than Newport Pagnell, four times bigger than the eastern expansion area and would take, at the current build rate of Milton Keynes which constructs about 2,000 houses a year, at least 10 years to complete, during which time there would be considerable disruption in the area between Castlethorpe and Wolverton.

Our Ward Cllr, Alison Andrew, put forward a motion at MKCC to object to this part of the proposal but the Labour / Liberal Democrat administration rejected it.

Our MP, Chris Curtis, held an Open Forum in Hanslope on 11th July, jointly organised with Alison, to answer questions. It was well attended. Chris expressed his doubt about the location and said he needed to be satisfied that five tests had been met, that: (1) Infrastructure is built before homes, (2) nature is enhanced, (3) genuinely affordable homes are built. (4) green spaces are a part of any designs proposed and (5) flood mitigation concerns are addressed and, where possible, that development infrastructure actually improves flood defences. At the moment, Chris does not feel these tests are met and he cannot currently give the scheme his support, however, he will remain engaged with all parties. He also stressed that this is not imminent, not least because of the likely unavailability of government funding for the infrastructure, and that any scheme would have to go through the Planning process which requires compliance with MKCC planning policies.

Highways

The Parish Council has asked MKCC to consider extending the 20mph speed limit to protect the corner into Bullington End Rd. We have requested that it is extended along Wolverton Rd beyond Fox Covert and up to the current 30mph limit on Bullington End Rd. We have also requested that Bullington End Rd be designated 40mph (instead of 50mph) from the current limit up to and including the junction with the Dips to Hanslope Park Road which is, as we all know, unsighted and where there was a fatal accident a few years ago. Finally, we have asked for bend arrows at the Dips as vehicles seem to go straight on with worrying regularity. MKCC are now evaluating our request.

Alison Andrew has coordinated a request from the local parish councils to write to West Northants to ask them to commit to the repairs on the bridges to *The Navigation* in September, as the date has slipped several times now.

Community SpeedWatch

Dave Hinds has now got the minimum number of volunteers necessary for Community SpeedWatch and has had the sites approved so we will be ready to go shortly. If you would still like to volunteer, please contact Dave.



Castlethorpe Cricket Club

As we draw towards the end of the season, we can proudly say that on the playing front it has overall been an undoubted success, with only one minor disappointment.

On the plus side, after being promoted this season to the top league of the South Northants Cricket League, we have seen consolidation in that as I write we currently lie in 4th position with two matches to go. Given that we are only one point behind Kings Sutton, who we play in the final match, we could finish 3rd, which is a positive result.

We did extremely well to reach the final of the Premier Cup although we came up short against Great Northampton, a side from Cold Ashby. However, our opening bat, Nathan Orchard, got the Man of the Match award with a brilliant 54 runs. [Since then we have played the same side in the league and completed a double win. Revenge is sweet!]

Our Sunday side have performed with distinction and these matches are so important to give aspiring players a chance to groom their skills in a competitive sphere. No more so than in their last match when they completed their third win of the season, scoring ah massive 288 runs. Youngsters Kush Modhwadia (12) and Sam Richards (18) ran 93 and 79 respectively. This is very encouraging for the future of Castlethorpe cricket.





The only downside of the season has been the drought which has given our long-suffering Chairman and Groundsman a very difficult time in curating the square. Hopefully next year we will have some rain to help him prepare wickets that he is proud of, albeit that hot dry summers look likely to be the new norm.

We look forward to the President's match on the 20th September. This has always been a celebration of cricket in Castlethorpe. Hopefully we will see a good turnout from the village as this is our last match of the season.

Stewart Tate - President

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the Parish Council

Sports Ground Update

*The big news is of course that *The Lounge,* previously *The Pavilion*, opened in July at the Sports Ground. More details are given on page 3.

*The Parish Council has applied for a Community Infrastructure Grant form MKCC to put some more play equipment in the garden area of *The Lounge* and hopefully encourage children away from the adult exercise equipment.

*The Parish Council is also improving the lighting on the footpath with new solar powered bollard lights, particularly at the Lodge Farm Court end. We will look to install further lights, depending on their effectiveness, on the far side of the football pavilion and will keep the Thrupp side under review, given the installation of two bollard lights there last year.



*As well as the existing Youth Football teams, a Veterans' side is also being established. Anyone interested in taking part, please contact James Ryan on Jamestryan40@iCloud.com or 07304 122835.

*We have installed 44 solar panels capable of generating up to 20kW together with 23kWh of battery capacity on the roof of the cricket pavilion with the support of a National Lottery Community Fund grant.

COMMUNITY FUND

The electricity generated will be mostly sold at a small discount to *The Lounge* by the Parish Council and the money raised will be used for the benefit of the community. And, of course, it is green. We are currently enjoying a lot of sunshine and the solar panels are supplying about 80% of the electricity used at *The Lounge*.

Best Kept Village 2026

Castlethorpe achieved a total score of 184 out of 200 points in a very high-scoring category, placing us behind category winner Whitchurch, who took top marks with 197. Judges described Castlethorpe as a "lovely and inviting village with good amenities", awarding us maximum points for our vibrant floral displays and detailed competition entry map.

The report highlighted strong performances across community facilities and outdoor recreation areas, noting well-kept playing fields, excellent tennis courts, and welcoming local shop displays. However, minor issues - such as overgrown areas around council-owned play equipment, slightly weathered public benches, and overcrowded noticeboards - kept us from the top spot, leading judges to conclude that the village simply needs a gentle tidy-up.



(*Continued on p9*)

News from the pews

Everything you always wanted to know about church but were afraid to ask

By Nick Fearn

Coming to church can be a massive step for some people. A recent interaction between a member of our congregation and a non-church goer has really highlighted this for me. So much so, I felt compelled to draft this article! I hope it will be helpful to anyone who's contemplating coming to church but is anxious about walking through the door.

Our parishioners are all at different points in their journey of faith, so you'll fit in nicely. A common comment is that people who go to church consider themselves better than those who don't. If a church-goer does believe this, they couldn't be more wrong. The truth is that we go to church because we know we're flawed and need forgiveness. It's as simple as that.

Our church has been described as cosy and intimate. If you come to a service, a warm welcome awaits. We never want anyone to leave feeling that they've been ignored.



Concerned about your attire? As you're entering a place of worship, dress respectfully. Other than that, you can come dressed as smartly or as casually as you like. Men in shorts is not uncommon in the hot weather either. Unfortunately, you can even wear an Arsenal shirt if you must!



Feeling the heat this summer? So is our Paschal candle!

Worried about what to do? You'll be given a service booklet that guides you through the service. It's easy to follow and will show you when to stand, sit, what to say and when.

If you think you're beyond redemption, you are not, and if you think you'll self-combust as soon as you walk across the threshold of the church, you've been watching too many horror movies. You don't need to be baptised. You just need to be curious about Christ and how He can transform your life.

Interested? Service times are 9.30am on a Sunday or 5.00pm on a Wednesday.

If you still feel nervous about attending a church service, feel free to give one of us a call. We're happy to discuss any of your concerns that may stop you taking that first step. Contact:
Nick Fearn – Churchwarden 07790 529454 or
Melissa King – Safeguarding Officer 07525 668446



Play & Stay: we would love to see you at our weekly children's Stay and Play sessions on Friday afternoons, 2 - 3.15 pm. These are for pre-school age children and babies. A lovely way to meet and make new friends.

Little Lambs: 2 - 3.15 pm Fridays in term time.

Lego Hour: 3.30 - 4.30 pm. We have lots of creative fun with our Lego hour. Open to accompanied children.

No need to book for any session , just come along to the church and have some fun! We begin on 11th September.

For information on any of the activities above, please call Melissa on 07525 668446





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Gary on 07976849886

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Parish Council News

(Continued from p7)

General Power of Competence

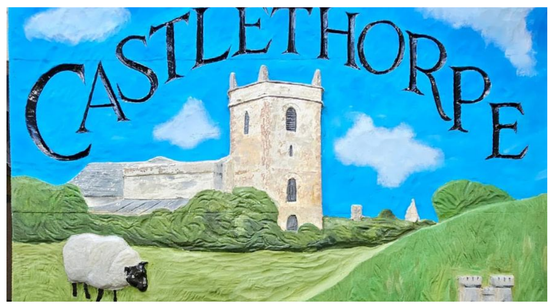
Jacquie Ladyman, our Clerk, has completed a CiLCA qualification. This was about a year's work, involving making several project submissions to the Bucks and Milton Keynes Association of Local Councils. It was a considerable amount of work. Congratulations are due to Jacquie.

Importantly, Jacquie now has a very firm understanding of the rules for parish councils and will keep us on the straight and narrow. For the Parish Council, it means we have a 'General Power of Competence', which broadens our powers on expenditure should that be necessary.

Public Art

We have gained some funding from the Carrington Grove development for Public Art which will be used to display artwork in the bus shelters. The first piece will be a montage of village characters past and present by local photographer, Matt Parry, and this will be installed with redecoration of the shelter next to the village hall by the Youth Club.

There will be two further pieces of artwork in the other shelters and a competition will be held to find the best contributions.



Communi-Tea

Please see page 5 for a full update.

Parish Council Meetings

Parish Council meetings are normally held on the first Monday of each month. Everyone is welcome to attend and there is an Open Forum before the meeting where residents can ask questions. Council meetings have moved to a new YouTube channel.

https://youtube.com/@CastlethorpeParishCouncil-m9u

Philip Ayles

Chair, Castlethorpe Parish Council

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Parish Council Clerk:
Jacquie Ladyman 07707 836973
clerk@castlethorpe-pc.gov.uk
Jo Clarke (PCSO C1562).07974 974005
joanne.clarke@thamesvalley.police.uk

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Gardening with a hose pipe ban

Heat Wave no. 4

By Heather Dundas

We love our garden, gardening is our hobby and as with most hobbies it can become expensive. A friend visiting last year said “your water bill must be phenomenal!” to which I replied that as it’s my hobby the money is well spent.

So what happens when global warming throws you a curve ball and the Water Companies slap on a hosepipe ban? There is no way we are letting the garden suffer after all our hard work, so every receptacle is gathered: watering cans, trugs, buckets, even a wheel barrow to distribute the containers to the right part of the garden. All “grey” water is collected from water used in the house, including the significant amount of run-off from the combi boiler when you need hot water to wash up in. It all gets used.



We don’t have a huge garden, so by watering the pots, hanging baskets and greenhouse one night and the flower beds the next night we are just about keeping up. We also tend the communal trough and water at least once a week. I believe, if we keep the garden watered, even to a small degree, when it does rain the ground will absorb it rather than it running off and evaporating. I just hope Fr Gary’s prayer for rain works.

The toll on my health is very noticeable. I have Rheumatoid Arthritis, or as it is now more accurately called, Rheumatoid Disease. I’ve been dealing with it since I was 21 and have many replacement joints and bone damage especially to hands and feet. I have to give myself a couple of injections each week nd it has also affected a my hearing/balance and mobility.

So, you can see why gardening is such a good hobby for someone like me because I can take as many rests as I need to recharge so I can get back to it. Tip: always take a fork with you round the garden as its very useful if you fall and can’t get up!

I must admit, my heart sinks every time a new heatwave is announced: back to hefting watering cans and walking up and down with damaged hands and hacked-about feet is taking its toll. Along with his constant battle with the rampant wisteria, my husband has had to take on a lot of what I once would have done.

I am eligible for exemptions from the hose pipe ban but want to do my best to support the water shortage and avoid any threatened stand pipe situations. I lost quite a lot of my resolve when I read in the Daily Mail (so it must be true!) that the Chief Executive of Anglian Water received £1.9 million, which included “a retention payment” of £500,000, despite the ban on bonuses.

To anyone who is battling to save their garden I wish you good luck and say keep the faith - and to those who have just given up in despair: chin up, there is always next year. Hopefully when you read this it will have cooled down a bit although I don’t expect the hosepipe ban will end much before Christmas.

For Information re Rheumatoid Disease :
“It’s a life shortening Autoimmune Disease where your own immune system turns against you, attacking your joints and creating inflammation that can affect your heart and lungs and every ounce of energy.”

The drought: thoughts from Avril Francombe, our village rewilding expert...

Don't get rid of plants that have died - while they are standing they are still providing shade. Or, if you really don't like to look at them like this, the 'cut and drop' method means to chop and lay them down, so they provide mulch and eventually compost where they are.

You could consider not mowing the lawn or cutting back the hedge; if you have fencing, letting ivy grow up it provides homes for insect life. All of this makes your garden lusher, greener, cooler.

We put shallow dishes of water all around the garden and the 'Nature reserve' in the paddock out the back. We place stones/gravel/sticks (depending on depth) in the dishes so that insects and birds don't drown. And we clean them regularly, which is vital so as not to spread



bird flu. P.S. We welcome visitors to see our many different habitats.

...and from Jayne Slee

I have put three dishes out, one on the ground which our local hedgehogs visit every day.

My garden isn't actually doing too badly. The trees and tall bushes offer a lot of shade so I'm only having to water the pots. Even the local cats are spending the day here under the Aucuba!



Not doing much gardening though - far too hot out there!

My only tip would be to plant more trees!



Youth Club: our journey continues

By Amy Randle

Since the Duck Race, we've enjoyed our awesome bike ride to New Bradwell chip shop, who were extremely grateful for the heads up phone call we made.... our kids LOVE a chippy 😊. We've had a games night, a few lovely sunny park nights, and a very funny and competitive sports tournament/rounders night. We've been very lucky with the weather and so have made the most of the outdoors wherever we can.



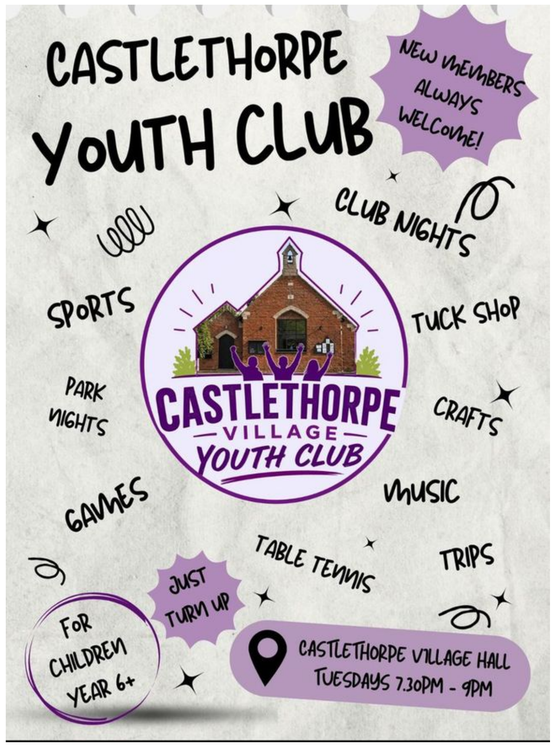
We had an extremely successful end of year summer BBQ and had 24 children who came along, including some of our new, soon to be yr6 members, who will join us fully in September. It was so lovely to see so many children there! A huge shout out to all the YC leaders who helped make the BBQ such a success, and help make YC a success week in, week out. You're all wonderful! Thank you!



We do have some sad news, as Nicola and Kevin McDermott will both be stepping down from leading in September. They have each helped keep YC up and running by volunteering their time over the past two years and we wish them all the best. Thank you both!

So, Youth Club is gearing up and getting ready for another fun year ahead. Luckily we have the summer holiday break to have a think about what we'd like to add into our weekly theme nights. One new addition to our fun will be Laser Tag night, which I'm sure everyone will love.

If you have a child who is yr6+ and would like to join our Youth Group, please come down to the village hall on Tuesdays, 7:30-9pm (term time only), and you can fill out a registration form. You can also get in touch via our Facebook page or contact myself or Laura Thomas, our YC secretary. We'd love to welcome some new faces to our leader group too, so if you would be interested, please get in touch... It's a very fun and rewarding group to be a part of.



Poster created by Ceri Camwell

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Duo Do Mar are coming to Castlethorpe

By Avril Francombe

We have two musician friends coming over from La Gomera (the Canaries) in September. They are staying with us for a week and we have organised a few gigs for them. They are fantastic musicians, playing acoustic Latin/flamenco tinged jazz (piano and Spanish guitar), and we would like to get as many people to come along to support them as possible. I don't think you will be disappointed.

The gigs are as follows:

- Saturday 12th September, 8 pm at the Lion and Sun Tavern, Stonebridge, Milton Keynes
- Thursday, 17th September, 8 pm at the HopScotch Taprooms, Crystal Palace, London
- Friday 18th September, 12.30pm (lunchtime concert) at Christ Church, Stantonbury, MK

Entry is free at all events, but donations are welcome.

Check out their bio and a video on Castlethorpe Facebook.

Hope to see some of you at one of these!

PIXIE'S YOGA MAT

Hatha Yoga
Mondays 5.30 - 6.30pm
Castlethorpe Village Hall
£8 per class or £27 for a 4-class pass **(online booking only)**

Chair Yoga
Saturdays 9.30 - 10.15am
Castlethorpe Village Hall
£6 per class
(book online or pay on the day)

Book your class by scanning the QR code on the right or visiting: https://bookwhen.com/pixiesyogamat

June 2026: the year of the Duck Race & Fun Dog Show

by Nikki Merrit



The Castlethorpe Duck Race and Fun Dog Show, held on 12th June, was a truly outstanding success this year, with a record number of attendees turning out to support this much-loved community event. The atmosphere throughout the day was fantastic, bringing together residents, visitors, families, and friends for a memorable celebration.

We would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to everyone who took part and contributed to the day. From our brilliant stall holders and delicious food vendors to the popular amusements, lively beer and tea tent, and all the attractions in between - each played an important role in making the event so special. And special thanks goes to Luke Stacey - without his generosity with the loan of his fields then the event wouldn't have a venue!



However, our biggest thanks go to our incredible team of volunteers. Their dedication, hard work, and commitment behind the scenes are what make this event possible. Organising something of this scale is no small task, and we are truly grateful to each and every one of them for their tireless efforts in bringing the community together every other year.



We are delighted to announce that this year's event raised an amazing total of over £17,000. The primary purpose of the Duck Race and Fun Dog Show is to support the ongoing costs of SS Simon and Jude Church in Castlethorpe, and this year's funds will make a significant difference.



In addition, the committee is pleased to announce that a portion of the proceeds will be donated towards a new village sign on the green, as well as supporting the Village Hall with its essential redecoration and upkeep.

Once again, thank you to everyone who supported us in 2026—your generosity and community spirit are what make Castlethorpe such a special place.



We look forward to seeing you all again in 2028! In the meantime, keep an eye on our Facebook and Instagram pages for updates and future news @castlethorpeduckrace





We've included here some fantastic photo memories of the event, courtesy of Matt Parry, a Castlethorpe local and incredible photographer. Do check out his profile @mattparryphoto

And thanks from the Youth Club

Firstly, and I know it seems an age ago now, we'd like to thank you all so much for the support you showed us at the very successful Duck Race this year. We raised over £300, and all that money goes back into keeping the YC equipment up to date and creating fun for the kids, so thank you!

Our winners were:

Angus (child category) from Hartwell, who threw 75ft, Isacc (teen category) from Castlethorpe, with a throw of 90ft, Alex (Ladies) from Hanslope, throwing 57ft and Nathan (Men) from Northampton who threw a whooping 102ft!!!

Well done all and hoping to see you back for the next Duck Race in a bid to hold on to your newly found wanger status.

Amy Randle