

Sonning Parish Magazine



**Serving the Communities
of Sonning and Charvil**



25p

January 2010

The Parish of Sonning

The ancient parish of Sonning, originally extending from Sonning Common to Sandhurst was one of the great blocks of land handed over to the Church in the 7th century. In 909 A.D. Sonning with Ramsbury, became a separate bishopric, the Bishop of Ramsbury/ Sonning maintaining a riverside Hall in the village. In 1075 the see was transferred to Old Sarum, ultimately Salisbury, whose bishops had their own Palace on the same site as the Saxon Hall until 1574, when the manor was transferred to the Crown.

St Andrew's Church in the heart of the village was founded in Saxon times - probably by Birinus, first bishop of Dorchester-on-Thames. It was largely rebuilt in 1852, during the incumbency of Canon Hugh Pearson; it was he who founded the Sonning Parish Magazine in 1869.

The White Hart Hotel, now known as The Great House, and partly 17th century, stands on the site of older buildings including the home of 'Elias the Ferryman' mentioned in a deed of 1100. The French Horn Hotel, in Sonning Eye, was built in the 1880s in front of the original old inn - now Bridge House - and its farm buildings. The Bull Inn, belonging to the Church, was originally known as Church House, a guesthouse for pilgrims to medieval St Sarik's Chapel in St Andrew's. Also adjoining the church is Deanery Garden one of Sir Edwin Lutyan's best-known country houses built at the turn of the century, just above the site of the ancient residence of the Deans of Salisbury who regularly visited Sonning, the parish being a 'Dean's Peculiar'.

Sonning Mill produced a regular supply of flour from Saxon time until 1969, after which it was converted into a 'Dinner Theatre', the first of its kind in Britain. The Pearson Hall is the principal venue for village functions

Within the village boundaries lie the Reading Blue Coat School at Holme Park (once the home of the Lord of the Manor) Sonning Church of England Primary School, King George's Field and other sports grounds, and Reading University Farm - all of which help to preserve the rural atmosphere of Sonning, the centre of which is now a conservation area.

The civil parish of Charvil is of relatively recent origin but the land on which it lies has long been part of the ecclesiastical parish of Sonning. In the 18th and 19th centuries it consisted of Charville Farm and a few cottages, which lay between the villages of Sonning and Twyford and adjacent to the London to Bath highway.

The development of Charvil began between the two World Wars, particularly after the new A4 road was constructed in the 1920s bypassing Twyford, and was accelerated after 1945. To meet the needs of this increasingly large community, St Patrick's dual-purpose Church and Hall was consecrated and opened in 1952; it remains within the ecclesiastical parish of Sonning. It was considerably extended and refurbished in 2001.

St Andrew's Sonning Contacts

Clergy: Vicar	Rev Jamie Taylor The Vicarage, Thames St, Sonning, RG4 6UR (day off Thursday)	969 3298
Associate Vicar	Rev Michael Forrer, 6 Park View Drive South, Charvil, RG10 9QX	934 1989
Licensed Lay Ministers	Mr D. G. Sims (Emeritus) Vine Cottage, Pound Lane, Sonning, RG4 6XE	969 3151
	Mr R. J. Peters, Elm Gables, Parkway Drive, Sonning, RG4 6XG	969 3589
Churchwardens:		
	Mr Mark Jordan. Email: mark.jordan@talktalk.net	940 1431
	Mrs Jan Hammond. Email: jan@jdhammond.com	926 2365
	Prof J. M. Stansfield (Emeritus) Email: Copynook1@aol.com	934 1762
Deputies:	Mrs Molly Woodley.	969 2773
	Kay Cohen.	901 7693
	Ruth Warms.	934 9218
	Charvil: TBA	
Parochial Church Council:		
Secretary:	Mrs Shirley Chard	969 8086
Treasurer:	Mr John Scoble,	926 5138
Gift Aid:	Mrs Pat Livesey, Email: pat.livesey@yahoo.co.uk	961 8017
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***Note: The change of email address for the Editor.
His old 'btinternet' address will not work any longer!***

Forthcoming Events

<i>Date</i>	<i>What's on?</i>	<i>Page</i>
12 Jan	'Footprints' coffee morning	20
13 Jan	Emmaus Nurture Course commences	
23 Jan	FoStAC; Reading Male Voice Choir concert, St Andrew's	21
5 Feb	An Evening with David Shepherd	22
6 Feb	Church Barn Dance, Charvil Village Hall	D
10 Feb	Scarecrows 2010; start-up meeting	23
27 Feb	RNLI Sonning music evening	22
13/14 Mar	St Patrick's Festival	21
8 May	Christian aid Concert	R
Notes:	Deadline, Feb magazine: 4.00 pm Friday, 22nd Jan 2010 R = Reminder from previous issue. D = Diary entry.	

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Regular Services
The Parish Church

Sundays	8 am	Holy Communion (Prayer Book)
	10.30 am	Family Service, first Sunday of the month Parish Eucharist, second, fourth and fifth Sundays. Matins, third Sunday.
	6.30 pm	Evensong, except third Sunday of the month, when it will be Holy Communion with the laying on of hands for those who wish it.
Wednesdays	10 am	Holy Communion at St Andrew's

St Patrick's Charvil

Sundays	9.30 am	Family Service, Third Sunday of the month Holy Communion, second and fourth Sundays Worship Service other Sundays. Sunday School 9.30 am except third Sunday of the month
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If you would like to arrange a Church Service in St. Andrew's Church you are asked to contact Sonia Boyles, the Parish Administrator for Baptisms. Sonia can also be contacted by email at: standrews.sonning@btinternet.com. For Weddings and funerals, contact the vicar on 0118 969 3298.

The Vicar's Letter

Dear friends,

Firstly, a very happy New Year and decade to you all.

There is a large depiction of Christ on the west window of my last church in Broadstairs, and, if you look closely it appears that he is wearing lipstick. I highlighted this in a sermon once, not because I felt it was intended to be some new twist in the Da Vinci Code saga, rather an attempt to illustrate something that has long confused me, and been a source of some irritation. The issue is this. Why is it that so often when Christ is depicted, he appears with a rather limp expression on his face, with pristine chiffon robes, beautifully shining hair and with a rather camp demeanour? Indeed, the model of Jesus in that church's Easter garden appeared to have a touch of the Larry Grayson about him. It's all rather a puzzle when one stops to think of the Jesus we learn about in the gospels. A carpenter from very humble origins in a rural backwater, choosing rough fishermen as travelling

companions as they wandered from village to village in the dry and dusty heat of Israel. Indeed, I find that I am not alone in my frustration. Dorothy Sayers wrote in exasperation in her book *The Greatest Drama Ever Staged*: “We have very efficiently pared the claws of the Lion of Judah, certified him ‘meek and mild,’ and recommended him as a fitting household pet for pale curates and pious old ladies.” This description of ‘pale curates’ also highlights the frequent comedic presentation of clergy on television as again rather limp-wristed and precious. Dad’s Army and All Gas and Gaiters spring immediately to mind. So in churches up and down the land, Jesus comes across more often than not as a bit of a sissy, who wouldn’t say boo to a goose, and our televisions tell us that many of his followers have followed suit. In an age obsessed with presentation and image, none of this does the church any favours.

One of the criticisms that is often levelled at the Bishops of the Church of England is that they don’t speak out on moral issues of the day, and the inference, particularly from the media, is that they don’t wish to rock the boat. This is sometimes unfair because Bishops do speak out, but the media often don’t pay attention. It was therefore particularly heartening some time ago to see reported the Archbishop of Canterbury and his colleagues’ contribution to the debate in the Lords on assisted dying. This bill had truly terrifying implications, and it was important for the church to speak up. There was also a vast petition signed by tens of thousands of Christians backing their stance.

When we speak out on controversial issues we expose ourselves to those who would disagree with our stance, and that isn’t necessarily pleasant. We can be tempted to keep our thoughts to ourselves in the hope of a quiet life, and also not wanting to cause offence, and many Christians have done this over the related issue of abortion. I can imagine the Jesus Christ in that stained glass window would also steer well clear of the subject, opting for niceness over justice, politeness over truth. But as we well know, the real Jesus spoke out on all manner of issues, with no regard for the consequences, and I suspect he might just have had something to say about the termination of over 218,000 young lives, as happened in the United Kingdom last year. Sometimes it seems our leaders and indeed society as a whole are more concerned about eco light bulbs than the life of an unborn child.

Many people, of all faiths and none, question the fundamental principle of abortion, but equally, I perceive that there is a significant proportion of individuals who have never thought about the issue. At a time when so many couples are on adoption waiting lists, it is depressing to digest these figures. Indeed, Britain now has the highest rate in Europe of teenagers going for their second abortion. Surely, they were not all because of medical necessity?

The gift of life is God-given, and to be cherished. If nothing else it is surely time to reopen the debate on time limits. At present we can terminate a child's life up to 24 weeks into the pregnancy, and yet it has been proved that babies born prematurely at that stage, and slightly earlier, can and do survive. Seven hundred hours was spent in Parliament debating the issue of the extermination of foxes; where do our priorities lie?

Ann Widdecombe M.P. stood in the pulpit of my last church and memorably stated that the Church has been so busy bending over backwards accommodating everyone with different views and beliefs in our multicultural and rather irreligious society, that we have effectively surrendered our own faith. The implication is that the meek and mild, insipid and wholly ineffective Jesus, misguidedly depicted in so many of our Churches, has become our champion and guiding light. I know that it is something of a generalisation, but I wonder if she may just have a point?

With best wishes,

Jamie

Notices

Junior Choristers & new Vestments: On November 29th, at a special service for St. Andrew's day, our 12 new junior choristers were admitted into our choir, and the new robes for adults and children were dedicated. The junior choir sing at the first Sunday of the month family service, having attended a 7:00-7:40pm rehearsal the previous Friday, and have also joined in with big services such as Remembrance Sunday and at Christmas. New members are welcome, so please speak to the vicar or organist if interested.



Village meeting facilities: The PCC has recently been reviewing the facilities at St Andrew's church, particularly in relation to accommodation for our Sunday school/crèche/youth work and other groups. As part of this review we would very much welcome views from the wider village on the existing provision of meeting facilities in Sonning. If you have a view on whether the present provision is in need of expansion at some stage in the future, we would be very pleased to hear from you. Please could you email Mark Jordan the Churchwarden (mark.jordan@talktalk.net) or write to him care of the Vicarage, Thames St, Sonning RG4 6UR?

Christingle: As Candlemas falls on the last Sunday in January, this will be our Christingle service. There will be no family service on the first Sunday in February.

Emmaus Nurture Course: Would you like to come and have a refresher in the Christian faith? Would you like to have the opportunity to ask questions and learn from other Christians in an informal atmosphere? The Emmaus nurture course has just been used successfully for our Confirmation preparation, and we shall be starting another course on January 13th at 11am. This will run every two weeks for 15 sessions. An evening group will also be started a little later in the New Year. Please let the Vicar know if you would like to come to the Wednesday group.

Serving: We have a dedicated group of servers who assist at communion services, but I would like to increase the number of those who are available. The commitment would be no more than once a month, and it is a really valuable contribution to our church. Anyone from the age of 9 onwards would be very welcome. There would be an informal training session or two, and the possibility of shadowing an experienced server if necessary. Please do speak to the Vicar or Jean Collin if interested.

Christmas Music: Thank you to David Duvall and the choir for providing us with such a wonderful variety of Christmas music. Once again we were blessed with their contributions. Also, we are most grateful to the flower team for making the church look lovely, to those who put up and decorated the tree, and to the manager of the Bull, Dennis Mason for donating it.

New Eucharistic Gold Vestments: The present gold chasuble (Eucharistic robe worn by the priest at communion) and burse and veil (coverings for the Chalice on the altar) have been in need of retirement for some years. They were threadbare and certainly not suitable for further use at our major festivals. We are therefore most grateful to the Friends of St. Andrew's for providing funding for a specially commissioned replacement chasuble and burse and veil which were first used at midnight mass. They have been made by Watts and Co. of Westminster and are of a Gothic revival design, and complement beautifully the magnificent setting in which they will be used. They are of the highest quality, and will be of use in the church for

many, many years to come. It is hoped that when funding allows, an altar frontal of the same design can be commissioned.

Jamie

Charvil with the year in prospect

Contrary to the fortune teller who was given a crystal ball for Christmas but threw it away because she could see no future in it, I do optimistically see a better year ahead than 2009. When everyone else only sees doom and gloom ahead it is only too easy to join in the foreboding of the pessimists of this world. This may be a pipe dream on my part, but as Goethe, the German equivalent of Shakespeare, wrote “If you can dream it you can do it”. We dreamed of a white Christmas and we got it.

If everyone dreams and hopes for the best, then there is a chance that the Copenhagen Climate Change conference will not have been a lot of hot air and a waste of time and money chasing an elusive hare. On the contrary, with good will on all sides, an elusive legally binding agreement will eventually be achieved in the best possible interest of planet earth. We pray for that. Then again we dream and hope that the economy will pick up to a greater extent than the current forecast, enabling the unemployed to get back to work. Further we hope and pray that the election in May will result in the best possible government being put in the hot seat of power with the wisdom to curb the negative greed of capitalism.

For the optimist “hope springs eternal”, with the best will in the world for 2010.

Love and Prayers,

Michael & Family

From the Registers

Baptisms

6th December: Charlotte Lucy Pizzey.

6th December: Emily Elizabeth Moores

Weddings

28th November: Joanne Carol Marie Goldsmith and Adam Baker

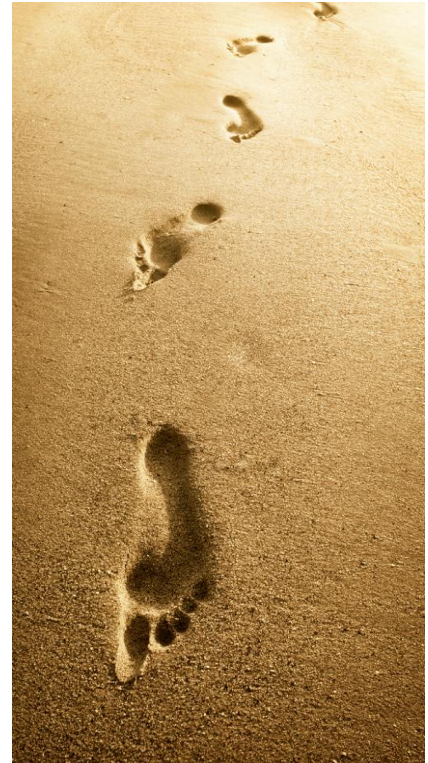
19th December: Alistair David Grunert and Patricia Joan Allen

Funerals

1st December: Michael David Mascard

8th December: Angela Smith

Footprints



**For all those
dealing with the
loss of a loved one**

**Come and join us at an informal coffee
morning**

**On the second Tuesday of the month at 11am
in**

the St Sarik Room of

St. Andrew's Sonning

(from January 12th 2010)

**An opportunity to meet with others facing the
many pressures of bereavement**

The Friends of St Andrew's Church, Sonning
Present

READING MALE VOICE CHOIR

Guest Vocalist: Lori Tingay-Webber

Saturday 23 January 2010 at 7.30pm

Doors open at 7.00pm

Ticket price £10, including a glass of wine

All proceeds to the Friends of St Andrew's

St Patrick's Festival 2010

Well folks that's Christmas done and dusted, my highlight was the Nine Lessons & Carols, never seen St Patrick's so full at Christmas and they nearly lifted the roof with the singing. So now we've survived the turkey, roast spuds, sprouts, brandy soaked Christmas pud all washed down with a bottle or two of plonk superieur, it's time to look forward to 2010.

So what have we got for you? Well apart from the regular Sunday services (at which I'll do my best to reduce the number of bum notes ad try to play it as written - New year resolution) we have a major event coming up in March. It's the **St Patrick's Festival**, runs from the **12th - 17th March**, includes a drama group concert, contributions from the hall users, and Irish stew & Guinness evening, Song's of Praise and culminates in a patronal festival Eucharist on St Patrick's day (17th Mar) led by Bishop Stephen. Watch this space for more details, but put the dates in your diaries.

Happy New Year to you all.

Joanna (the St Patrick's Pianner)

Spectacles

In 2009 we collected 281 pairs of spectacles for *Hope and Aid Direct* a local charity based in Charvil. The glasses will be cleaned, mended and graded ready for distribution to eye hospitals in Kosovo and India. With your help we hope to continue with this worthwhile cause therefore please be kind enough to put your old specs in the box in St Andrew's porch. Thank you.

Norma McGready

The Rotary Club of Loddon Vale

Invite you to

An Evening with David Shepherd

Friday, 5th February 2010

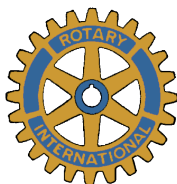
At

The Masonic Centre, Mole Rd, Sindlesham, RG41 5DB

Preview of prints and paintings 6.00 pm

Dinner (3 courses): 7.00 pm

Presentation and talk: After dinner, with an opportunity to buy.



*Tickets @£32.50 each from
Jack Cornwall on 0118 944 8022 or
Gordon Barnett on 0118 969 6693*

**All proceeds to the World Wildlife Fund &
Rotary Charities**

RNLI Sonning Branch

Sounds of Sonning

We are holding another of our very popular Music Evening's in February. Some familiar faces have already signed up to perform but the RNLI Committee is very keen to introduce new acts and to that end will be holding an 'open morning' at the beginning of February for you to show off your talents. If you are over 18 years old, can play ANY musical instrument, would like to take part and are available on 27th February 2010, please contact David Bates on 0118 969 7753 for further details.

The format of the evening, to be held in the Pearson Hall, will be similar to previous years and will consist of two sessions of assorted musical acts with supper in between.

Tickets costing £10 per head to include a meal can be obtained from David Bates in February.

Alison Russell

Scarecrows 2010!

Yes, it really is two years since you kindly did a Scarecrow for the Scarecrow Trail of 2008- doesn't time fly!! We would, once again, like to thank you for all your hard work which created such a splendid show, enabling the two days to be such a tremendous success - despite the rain!

So, now is the time we hope we can rely upon your support for 2010. Make a note of the date **Sunday and Monday 30th/31st May 2010.**



There will be an initial Scarecrow Meeting in Pearson Hall on **Wednesday 10th February 2010 at 7.45pm** and we would love to see you there - possibly with an idea for your scarecrow or just to find out what it's all about! We would like to thank the table tennis group for letting us use the hall on this evening! So, start planning - remember anything goes! Hope to see you at Pearson Hall on February 10th at 7.45pm.

Worzel Gummidge

P.S. The Flower Arrangers would be grateful for any brightly coloured gloss paint you may have for use in their Floral Display in the church!!

Royal British Legion, Sonning Branch



There will be a meeting of the committee and any members wishing to join us on Thursday, 14th January 2010 at 7.30 pm in the St Sarik Room. There is only one item on the agenda: To discuss what we are going to do for the celebratory evensong on Sunday, 9th May at St Andrew's for the 65th anniversary of VE Day.

You remember the service for the 60th anniversary and the way the church was decorated? Reverend Jamie Taylor has indicated that he would like something similar next May and that is what we will be talking about, with him, and arranging who can do what in order to achieve it. Do come along; you will almost certainly be able to help in some way. We will be delighted to see you then.

Gordon Barnett

Sonning & Sonning Eye Society

Please make a note in your diaries that the *Village Voices* exhibition, which you may have enjoyed in September, is transferring to the Museum of English Life, Redlands Road, Reading, from 9th January to 25th April 2010. We are planning two group visits on 1) Friday 19th February and 2) Saturday

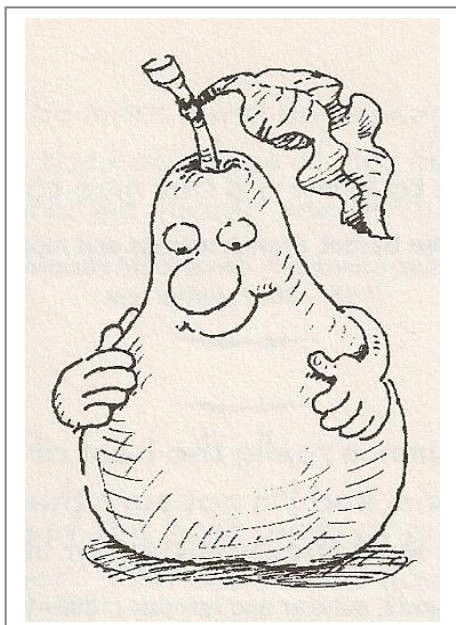
20th March, both at 2.00 pm, when we hope some of our contributors will be in attendance. To ensure sufficient space at these special sessions, please contact either Mary Chapman (969 7398) or Diana Coulter (969 2132) to reserve a place. This is because MERL needs to ‘keep an eye’ on numbers. If you are able to help with transport, either for those visits or generally in taking people to the Museum, please contact Mary Chapman.

An enthralled membership packed the Pearson Hall for the Society’s 6th Annual General Meeting held on 21st November 2009. Newer members participated at an event attended by our Vice President, Canon Chris Clarke, as well as our President, John Edmonds. The short business meeting opened with a well-deserved presentation to Mary Chapman, in recognition of her excellent planning and co-ordination of all the hard work that made the *Village Voices* exhibition so memorable.

After an excellent supper, as ever, Ali Driver provided an insight into “The life in a year of a tree-hugger”, a reminder of just how much more valued the role of environmental science has become. Peppered throughout Ali’s personal story, were images of success and some stark truths, none more so than the fact that as we approach 2010, we have already reached the degree of environmental deterioration predicted for 2050! What a pity Copenhagen failed to deliver the goods last month.

There are a few changes on the Executive Committee for 2009/10. Penny Feathers stepped down after so ably acting as Hon. Secretary since the formation of the Society in 2004. Andy Bell has been elected to take on the role, and we also welcome Mike Hart onto the Executive. In the meantime, members who joined before September 2009 are gently reminded that annual subscriptions fall due on 1 January 2010.

Diana Coulter



**2010: Another year
- another birthday**

We don't grow older, we grow riper
Pablo Picasso (1881 - 1973)

Local Organisations

St Andrew's: Sunday Club	Heather Hexter	946 1316
St Andrew's: Little Fishes	Mrs Sarah Turner	944 8154
St Andrew's: Tower Captain:	Mrs P. Elliston	969 5967
The Friends of St Andrew's	Sally Wilson	979 3328
St Patrick's: Sunday Club	Julie Easton	934 2590
1st Charvil Rainbows	Guider: Brenda Cowdery	934 5698
Charvil Art Club	Secretary: Mrs Joyce Wray	969 8098
Charvil Branch Conservatives	Mrs E. Hobbs	934 0528
Charvil Brownies	Tawny Owl: Claire Howells	934 5372
Charvil Caterpillar Club	Bridget Mundy	934 4253
Charvil Girls	Suzanne Newman	934 0589
Charvil Guides	Ruth Hulley	969 9431
Charvil Parish Council	Clerk: Mr I. Cohen	901 7693
Charvil Pre-School Playgroup	Nadine Doble	934 0418
Charvil Senior Residents Club	Miss C. Edwards	969 2114
Charvil Voices	Suzanne Newman	934 0589
Charvil Village Society	Margaret Gregory	934 5419
Charvil Women's Club	Shirley Newman	934 0589
Sonning & Charvil Baby-sitting Circle	Mrs Vanessa Jones	934 1185
	<i>E-mail</i> vanessalouisejones@hotmail.com	
Sonning & District Chernobyl	Maria Gee	962 7721
Children's Lifeline Link Group	maria.gee@ntlworld.com	
Sonning Art Group	Chairman: Mr G.B. Webster	944 0699
Sonning Book Club	Mrs Anne Webster	944 0699
Sonning Branch, British Legion	Chairman: Gordon Barnett	969 6693
Sonning C of E Primary School	Head Teacher: Mrs L. Green	969 3399
Sonning CE School PTA	Heather Hollingsworth	0779 934 5129
Sonning Charvil & Hurst N.A.G.	Contact: Bob Hulley	969 9431
Sonning & Warren Conservatives	Sec: Alison Russell	972 1495
Sonning Cricket Club	Membership: Ali Driver	969 2698
Sonning Flower Club	Sec: Ms S. Robinson	969 0748
Sonning Football Club	Tony Farmer	956 6536
Sonning Girlguiding (age 5 -14)	Diane Reeves	969 2987
Sonning Glebe Art Club	Julian Toms	969 0100
Sonning Glebe WI (eve mtgs)	Mrs D. Mouldsley	961 8829
Sonning Lawn Tennis Club	Membership: Ali Campbell	969 1101
Sonning Liberal Democrats	Coling Lawley	961 8536
Sonning Neighbourhood Watch	Sec: Sue Bell	969 6924
Sonning Parish Council	Clerk, Mrs L. Bates	969 7753

Sonning RNLI	Chairman: David Bates	969 7753
1st Sonning Scouts Group	GS Leader: Wendy Cherry	926 2363
1st Sonning Scouts Group	ASG Leader: Mike Watts	962 8388
1 st Sonning Scouts Group	Scout Leader: Colin Giles	969 5849
1st Sonning Scouts Group	Cub Scouts: Alison King	962 1675
1st Sonning Scouts Group	Beavers: Judy Ricketts	969 3279
Sonning Table Tennis Club	Alan Tinson	969 0782
Sonning Twinning Association	David Bates	969 7753
Sonning Toddler Group	Emma James	969 5538
Sonning Village Players	Sec: Mr S. Atkins	969 1134
Sonning & Sonning Eye Society	Sec: Mrs P. Feathers	934 3193
Sonning Village Show	Sec: Mrs Heather Hine	969 8653
Sonning Club	Sec: Mrs Penney Mackenzie	07730 871959
Friends of Ali's Pond	Alastair Driver	969 2698
Monday Club	Leader: Ken Trimmings	969 1072
Pearson Hall	Caretaker & Bookings: Mrs Jenny Adams	969 7692
Pearson Hall Mgmt Committee	Mrs Lesley Bates (interim)	969 7753
Badminton Club	Mrs P. Pardoe	934 5643
Longmead Bridge Club	Chairman: Tony Cowling	969 5181
Rotary Club of Loddon Vale	Sec: Richard Ward	966 9348
Short Mat Bowling Club	Mrs S. Newman	934 0589

Useful web sites:

Ali's Pond	E-mail: ali@sonningdrivers.plus.com www.sonning.net/alispond.html
Sonning & Charvil services	www.sonningparish.org.uk/docs.htm
Sonning Parish Council	www.sonning-pc.gov.uk
Sonning Working Men's Club	www.btinternet.com/~sonning_club/news.html
Sonning-on-Thames	archive.museophile.sbu.ac.uk/sonning www.sonning.net
Sonning & Sonning Eye Society	www.sonning.org.uk
Sonning Art Group	www.sonningartgroup.org.uk
Sonning School	www.sonning.wokingham.sch.uk