

UPDATE Newsletter - May 2026

WELCOME TO THE MAY NEWSLETTER

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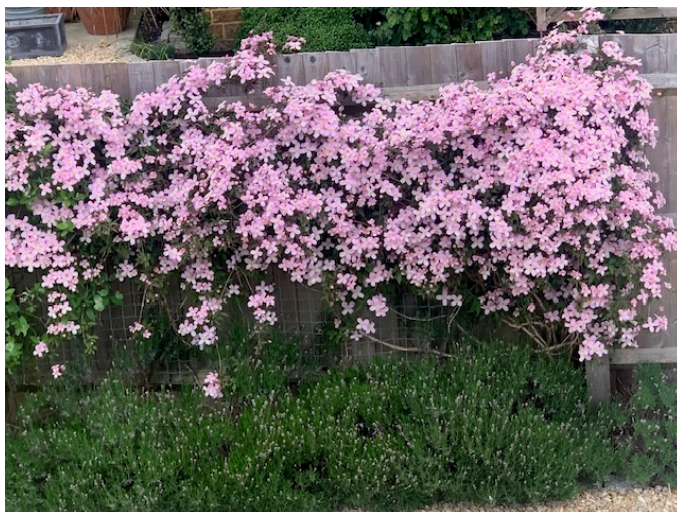
APRIL SHOWERS PLUS SOME GLORIOUS SUNSHINE

April has definitely been a mixed month for weather but, as always, it's just beautiful to see the blossom trees in people's gardens and the blackthorn and hawthorn blossoms adorning the hedgerows which are leafing up before our eyes.

The bird boxes in our garden have been thoroughly investigated as potential nesting sites, but so far remain empty as preference this year was given to a bushy bay tree by a pair of Great Tits.

If you are interested in nature maybe you've been watching the wonderful new series on BBC1 called "Secret Garden". If you haven't yet seen it, it's a treat, narrated by our national treasure David Attenborough, and the episodes showcase the wildlife that visits some large but ordinary gardens around Britain. One episode showed the following nocturnal visitors: a dormouse, rat, deer, badgers and wild boar - which were quite a surprise to the humans who work in and enjoy the garden.

In Tysoe we are encouraged to ensure that our boundaries have spaces low down, so that hedgehogs can navigate from garden to garden, in an attempt to improve their numbers. I think it's the least we can do for our prickly friends, who occasionally eat the slugs!



MONTHLY MEETINGS

NEXT MEETING

Tuesday 26th May 2026

2.00 pm at Townsend Hall, Shipston on Stour

Alain Rouveure

will be talking to us about his visits to Nepal and how he raises funds through his galleries, lovely gardens, and Himalayan coffee house at Todenham, to help essential social projects in Nepal.

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LAST MEETING - on 14th April it was a busy few hours at our annual OPEN DAY in the Townsend Hall, when many of the Interest Groups advertised the activities and interests they offer. Entertainment was kindly provided by the 'Misspent Ukes' and I understand that several new members, listed below, signed up to join us. Well done to all who helped make it a success.



Open Day 14th April 26



Open Day 14th April 26



Open Day 14th April 26

MEMBERS' NEWS

This month we welcome an impressive nineteen new members - Maggie Turner from Donnington; Christine Radcliffe, Arnold Hall, Heather Addy, John Smith, Clare Pashley, Sally Lewis, Stephanie Ross, Carol White, and Deborah Griggs all from Shipston; Iris Birch from Whichford; Valerie Ward from Barton on the Heath; Patricia Harbour from Oxhill; David Shell from Ilmington; Alison Allen from Halford; Richard Killick from Blackwell; Edna Baxter from Moreton in Marsh; Rosamond Warriner from Little Wolford; and Peter Bevan from Ebrington. We hope they will very much enjoy their membership and all it has to offer.

YOUR EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE are due to meet again on Wednesday 6th May, when they will:

- review the Open Day on 14th April
- continue preparation for the AGM to be held on 23rd June
- review 2026/27 membership
- conclude details of the publicity and communications advertising for 2026/27
- consider recruitment of a replacement for Richard Taylor, who is stepping down from organising meetings at Townsend Hall

Their next Committee meeting will be on Wednesday 1st July 2026.

OUR U3A FACEBOOK PAGE

Please take a look at our u3a Facebook page, which Christine Russel keeps up to date. You are welcome to add anything that you think may be of interest, or contact Christine who would be happy to add your item for you onto 'local events'. Christine's contact details follow:

<https://facebook.com/groups/396254028732509> or [Christine Russel](#)

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NEWS OF INTEREST GROUPS

FIVE MILERS WALKING GROUP

Walking Group Trip to Crete - April 2026

Thanks to Jane Hale's organisation, nine people from the First Thursday and the 5-Milers walking groups, had a most enjoyable week walking around the hills and olive groves of Crete.

They unfortunately had some rain, just to remind them of home, but it didn't dampen their spirits and they have returned with increased stamina for hill walking, but also with a little excess weight from the lovely Cretan food and wine!! Their Cretan walk leaders were a family of three who took it in turns to lead the walks, which were really well organised, on varied terrain with wonderful scenery. Their hotel accommodation was also good, so they are hoping to do more of the same next year!



Crete, steep hill climb



Crete, rainy cold day



Crete, on top of the hill

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Wednesday 8 April 2026

Rob Boyle planned this pleasant circular walk, which began and ended at the Ettington Community Centre car park, across fields surrounding Ettington, then into the countryside further west, with some beautiful views, before returning into Ettington on the old Warwick Road. The group walked approximately 7km with a total elevation of 80 metres.



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Wednesday 29th April 2026

An impressive 28 people enjoyed a lovely walk around the Sibford area led by David Lamb. It was a beautiful sunny day, with a light breeze, which must have influenced the number of people walking.

The walk of just under 5 miles started from the Wykham Arms car park in Sibford Gower and progressed along quiet roads, farm-tracks and footpaths. There were no stiles but there was a very small stream to cross. As the walk was hilly in places, it afforded lovely views. It ended by walking a footpath through Sibford School, arriving at the bottom end of Sibford Ferris, which meant a final push up the hill back to the pub car park.



Sibford (hills) 29th April 26



Sibford 29th April 26

Please contact Interest Group Leader [Chris Shepperd](#) if you are interested in joining the Five Milers Group

FIRST THURSDAY WALKING GROUP met on Thursday 2nd April

Richard Moyle led 12 walkers from the Marlstone Tavern car park in Milton, across country, on a beautiful sunny and cloudless day. They walked towards West Adderbury, on to Bodicote and eventually into Bloxham. They saw high wide open spaces between the villages and for many of them it was previously unvisited landscapes. After Bloxham they followed farm tracks back into Milton.



Milton Styles 2nd April 26



Milton Coffee break 2nd April 26

There was a gain of 300 feet in total over the 6.3 mile walk. The bonus was a choice from 20 varieties of pies with a pint!

Please contact Interest Group Leader [Jane Hale](#) if you would like to join this group.

GARDEN VISIT GROUP

24 members of the Garden Visit Group enjoyed their outing on Wednesday 15th April to Cedar House Garden, at Wasperton near Warwick, despite the rain and, after viewing the garden, were welcomed into the owner's kitchen for a glass of wine and cheese and biscuits, which nicely rounded off the afternoon.



Interest Group Leader Shirley noted that a few new members had signed up to join the group at the recent Open Day, and she looks forward to welcoming them on future visits.

Please contact the Group Leader Shirley if you are interested in joining this group: [Shirley Wynn](#)

HISTORY GROUP

Thanks go to member - Maggie Witherick, who on 22nd April gave an illustrated talk on the Etruscan civilisation, which was the first 'superpower' of the Mediterranean.

The Etruscans, together with the Greeks, developed the earliest cities in Europe. They occupied modern-day Tuscany and other areas of central Italy between c900-100 BC, before the rise of the Roman Empire.

This was the last meeting of their winter programme and at the next meeting, on 27th May, the group will be visiting Broadway Museum and Art Gallery.



If you are interested in joining this Group, please contact the Group Leader: [Maggie Wood](#)

TIMETABLE FOR INTEREST GROUPS

Please note that the schedule giving relevant details for all Interest Groups is available on the Groups' webpage.

Please contact the Interest Group Co-ordinator if you have any queries: [Jenny Shepperd](#)

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YOU MAY ALSO BE INTERESTED IN

MESSAGE IN A BOTTLE

This is a Lions Club Initiative, sent to me by Margaret Moorse, which I thought you might find helpful, particularly if you live alone.

The concept is to keep a plastic bottle in your fridge, which contains all those details which would be needed in case of an emergency, medication, doctor's details and contact details of family or friends to be informed should an emergency arise. The information is recorded by the

home-owner, and is to accompany the patient, to hospital. Meaning there is no need to panic in an emergency. A green sticker is displayed on the fridge door and on the inside of the front door in order to alert the emergency services. Bottles can be obtained free of charge by Lions Club International.

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The 2026 Shipston Proms is scheduled from June 19th to July 4th

It concludes with the ever-popular street party in the town square on the final Saturday, featuring several local bands.


This is a community-driven celebration of live music featuring 40 plus events which brings the Stour Valley to life every summer. It covers every genre of music from opera to rock, pop, folk, jazz, R&B, techno, classical.

From humble beginnings in 1998 it is now a two-week festival with over 40 events around the town and surrounding villages. Whether you are a musician, music lover, local business or someone who just wants to keep music live, the Proms committee would love for you to get involved. Or just come along and enjoy the music, with many events being completely free of charge.

There are three outstanding bands on The Last Night of the Proms, voted for by the local community. The bands are Orange River Remedy, The Texan Peacocks, and The DropOuts. All local, and all incredibly talented musicians playing set lists to keep the audience on their feet from start to finish.

The Proms loves to hear from musicians of all styles and backgrounds, so please contact the organisers on shipstonproms@gmail.com and fill out an application form if you are interested in performing at any of the events.

The Proms is also looking for sponsors to add to the generous support from local businesses such as Sheldon Bosley Knight, Ryse 3D, and many others. Sponsoring the Proms is a great way to showcase your business whilst supporting a much-loved community event with an audience of over



STOWE HOUSE

Sir John Vanbrugh Lecture Series

Hear from leading academics, authors, historians and presenters throughout the year as they deliver talks and discussion panels. Each session explores shared themes through the individual perspectives of our speakers, reflecting the ongoing debates that make Stowe so compelling. These events offer fresh insights into Vanbrugh's world, his collaborators, and his enduring cultural impact.



14 May – *Richard Wheeler*
"Vanbrugh's Garden Legacy at Stowe"

11 June – *Ophelia Field and Rory Fraser*
"The most honest-hearted, real good men": Sir John Vanbrugh and the Kit-Cat Club

17 September – *Francis Terry*
"Vanbrugh's Alterations and Additions to Stowe House"

15 October – *Michael Bevington*
"Sir John Vanbrugh and the Making of Stowe"

To book & find more info, visit stowehouse.org



1,500 people at key performances, plus a strong social media reach.

For keeping up to date with what is happening please go to the website www.shipstonproms.com or check the social media sites on Facebook,

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