Woodnewton News

MAY 2026



Transition Oundle
TOwards a sustainable future

Home Energy Matters

Hear from and talk to those with experience of:

- *Making their home more energy efficient*
- *Using heat pumps, solar panels, batteries and related tech*
- *Upgrading historic properties*
- *Accessing public funding to make improvements*

The idea of a local group solar purchase will also be discussed

Thursday 21st May at 7pm
(doors open at 6.30pm)
Oundle Suite, Fletton House, Glapthorn Road, Oundle, PE8 4JA
Refreshments will be served afterwards.
Free entry
To attend, please register in advance here: http://bit.ly/41zlatU or by emailing info@transitionoundle.org.uk

VILLAGE FILM NIGHTS – ADVANCE NOTICE

The Village Hall are planning to screen films on 13th June and 12th September 2026. We are hoping to screen 'Sing Sung Blue' on the 13th June, which is based on a real-life married couple, Lightning and Thunder, who found fame as a Milwaukee-based Neil Diamond tribute band. The film explores their personal struggles, passion and musical journey.

See next month's newsletter for more details



Woodnewton Parish Council; Chairman's Message for April

Hi fellow villagers, I am writing my notes for the Woodnewton Newsletter before the minutes for the April Parish Council meeting (held on the 14th) are available. As these normally form the basis of my update, this month's report will be slightly different.

Some of you may be aware that we also held our Annual Village Meeting on 14th April. Unfortunately, despite efforts to encourage participation, only two residents attended. This was naturally disappointing for the council members who had prepared for the meeting. However, looking on the positive side, we can take it as a sign of confidence—people are often more vocal when unhappy.

Given the low attendance, I thought it useful to share the overview I presented with the wider newsletter audience:

The Annual Village Meeting is an opportunity to pause, reflect on the past year, and look ahead to upcoming priorities.

Parish Council work and achievements

Your Parish Council has had another busy year, dealing with a wide range of local matters—from planning applications and tree works to village maintenance. We continue to liaise with North Northamptonshire Council and our County Councillor to ensure Woodnewton's voice is heard on wider issues.

Among our highlights over the last year:

- Refurbishment, maintenance and repairs to our very popular playground facilities.
- Continued work on traffic speed and safety through the village
- Re wilding and conservation activities aimed at maintaining the character of our public spaces.
- Securing best value in grass-cutting contracts (our largest expense).
- The maintenance and enhancement of the through-fare and approaches to the village.

Finances and stewardship

The Parish Council remains in a sound financial position. We've kept the precept increase modest, balancing careful spending with maintaining assets and supporting improvements. My thanks to Amy Miller, our clerk, for her diligent financial management.

Community and volunteers

One of Woodnewton's strengths is its strong community spirit. Many people give their time freely—supporting events, litter picking, maintaining shared spaces, and helping neighbours. Thank you to everyone who has contributed this year.

I'd also like to acknowledge the ongoing work of the Village Hall Committee and other local groups, whose efforts help sustain the social fabric of our village.

Looking ahead

In the coming year, the Council will continue to focus on:

- Managing and improving local green spaces.
- Sourcing and installing a new notice board outside the village hall.
- Clearing the bonfire site and returning the area to grass
- Pursuing road safety and speed reduction measures.
- Supporting environmental and sustainability initiatives.
- Engaging with residents on village activities and priorities

We are keen to encourage more residents to get involved—by attending meetings, joining working groups, or sharing ideas. The Parish Council welcomes your participation and feedback.

Finally, I would like to thank my fellow councillors for their time, commitment, and good humour, and our clerk for keeping us organised and compliant.

Thank you for your continued support. You are always welcome to attend public time at our monthly meetings, and we value your thoughts and suggestions.

Paul Blackmore.

Next Parish Council Meeting; Monday 18th May, 8pm at the Village Hall.

St Mary's Church News

Services at St. Mary's Church Woodnewton May 2026

3rd May – 9.30 a.m. Holy Communion for Easter Day (Modern Language)

10th May – No service at Woodnewton. Services at Nassington at 9.30 am and Yarwell at 11 am.

17th May – 9.30 a.m. Holy Communion (Modern Language)

24th May – 8.30 a.m. Holy Communion BCP (Traditional Language)

31st May – 10.00 a.m. BENEFICE SERVICE – location to be confirmed.

Every Sunday 5.00 p.m. A Service at Home by ZOOM (phone or online). Log-in details from Rev. Jane (01780 782271 – jdtailby@aol.com)

Even in these challenging times, we can be pretty certain that there will be food in our supermarkets and that our online orders will arrive, even if with a few (maybe frustrating!) substitutes. Those who grow their own vegetables around here usually do so for pleasure rather that necessity and we can supplement what we produce from elsewhere. That was not so, of course, for our predecessors, when the food produced in the fields around them and the health of the livestock they raised, made the difference between provision and hunger. Life felt vulnerable and uncertain and totally dependent upon what was happening on the land around them. From early times, prayers were said in late spring for the crops growing and the young livestock recently born and this became known as "Rogation-tide". Rogation comes from the Latin word rogare meaning to ask. Rogation services involved processions around the fields of the community, praying for God's blessing on the harvests to come, of crops and livestock. The procession would follow the boundary of the parish, hence the term "beating the bounds".

Although, as I say, we may not be so directly reliant upon the food grown at our door, so to speak, Rogation can still have a place in our thinking, particularly if we expand our boundaries to consider all the places and people upon whom we rely for the things we need day by day. We can ask for God's blessing upon those in the ever lengthening chains of provision of food and basic necessities from around the world, pray for our own farming community in ever-more challenging circumstances, and give thanks for the place where we live, reminding ourselves of the beauty and delight of what we see around us, in gardens and fields and rivers.

We are planning a Rogation-tide celebration in the churches of our group soon. The date isn't confirmed yet, but it'll be on our church noticeboard soon. Do come and join us to give thanks for all that we have in this lovely part of the world!

With every blessing,

Revd. Jane

Every 3rd Sunday, 3.00 – 4.00 p.m.

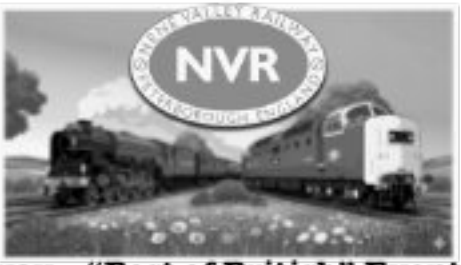
CRAFT CHURCH in NASSINGTON CHURCH

A time for everyone to join together from all the villages in our Watersmete Group, including WOODNEWTON. Come and join us for crafts and activities with prayers and songs.



ALL WELCOME!

Our next Craft Church is 17th May



Nene Valley Railway – "Best of British" Event

The Nene Valley Railway is hosting a special "Best of British" event this July, featuring two iconic locomotives: the steam engine LNER Class A1 No. 60163 Tornado and diesel BR Class 55 Deltic No. 55009 Alycidon.

Across early July, visitors can enjoy steam and diesel passenger services, driving experiences, and a full heritage railway atmosphere. Highlights include intensive steam services (4–5 July) and the "East Coast Legends" weekend (11–12 July), when both engines will run together. A popular fish & chips evening train also returns on 4 July.

Advance booking is recommended due to high demand. https://nvr.org.uk/



Woodnewton History Group

We have been asked by Oundle Museum to participate in their exhibition of 'Oundle Villages'. We have staged a display in one of their cabinets "Woodnewton People of Note" and also a display board of past and present photographs of Woodnewton village Street scenes. We have also been given a brilliant Applique of the 'Fields Map' around the village, which has been embroidered by a village resident and this is on display too with the corresponding legend. This exhibition runs through until 31st October, and the Museum is open on Saturdays and Sundays from 1 to 4pm.

Come & Chat



The 'Come and Chat' mornings are usually held on the last Thursday of every month from 10.30 to midday, the next date for your diary is the 28 May 2026.

Tea/Coffee and biscuits are available for a donation of £1 and everyone is welcome to pop in.

It's a good opportunity to meet with friends or to make new friends. If you are fairly new to the village do come along, you will be given a warm welcome.

Line Dancing Class



Woodnewton Village Hall every Monday 7-8pm

No experience necessary. The aim is to have fun and improve fitness along the way. No need to book. £4 a session. Ring/text/email Tasha for further details.

07789 230671 or nteall@btinternet.com

WOODNEWTON
ART GROUP

The Woodnewton Art Group led by John Russell now has a Website at https://woodnewton26.wixsite.com/mysite. **You can also get to it via the homepage of the Woodnewton Hub:** http://woodnewtonhub.co.uk/

WOODNEWTON PARISH COUNCIL



With the welcome return of the sunshine and longer days we would like to remind all residents to be mindful of their neighbours when carrying out activities at home and in the garden.

Simple considerations—such as avoiding bonfires when neighbours are likely to be affected by smoke or not using loud garden machinery at unsociable hours will make a significant difference to those living around you.

We are fortunate to live in a close and considerate community, and a little thoughtfulness helps ensure Woodnewton remains an enjoyable place for everyone.

Thank you for your cooperation.

To raise any issues please contact the Parish Council: clerk@woodnewtonparish.gov.uk

Useful Numbers and Information

Parish Council Clerk clerk@woodnewtonparish.gov.uk

Village Hall Booking Anne Hills 07399 359262
villagehallwoodnewton@gmail.com

Neighbourhood Watch woodnewtonnw@googlemail.com

Police 101 Ext 345306 for PCSO Artur Pereira
artur.pereira@northants.pnn.police.uk

Doctors Surgeries
Oundle 01832 273408
Wansford 01780 782342

Veterinary Surgeries
Oundle 01832 273521
Yarwell 01780 783910

Newsletter & Website Contacts

Newsletter Team:

Grant Neville, Ann Galloway, Jane Martin, June Moore, Ivan Walker.

Advertising: Ivan Walker, Tel 01780 470438

Contributions: We are always happy to receive articles for publication. Please send articles by email whenever possible to newswoodnewton@gmail.com.

We prefer pictures in jpg format and hi resolution whenever possible.

Handwritten / non-electronic contributions can be delivered or sent to:

June Moore, 5 Lindsey Close.

Closing date for all copy **14th** of previous month.

Recent issues available here: http://woodnewtonhub.co.uk/village-newsletter/

The Newsletter is edited and published by Grant Neville, 20 Orchard Lane, Woodnewton.

Any views expressed in the Newsletter are not necessarily those of the Parish Council unless otherwise stated.

Website : http://woodnewtonhub.co.uk

Submissions for material to be hosted on the Woodnewton Hub website should be emailed to newswoodnewton@gmail.com.

Woodnewton Village Hall

Hall bookings may be made with Anne Hills on 07399 359262 or villagehallwoodnewton@gmail.com.

Gigaclear

https://www.facebook.com/WoodnewtonVillageHall/.



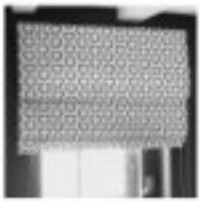
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Woodnewton Village Hall

Wednesday 6:30 pm - 8:00 pm

£10 per class or £54.00 for six week block



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Lost the Plot?

Two Things I Always Meant to Learn (and the Slightly Annoying Way AI Has Ruined My Excuses)

A few months ago, I found myself in the mildly bracing position of having to become useful again. The job I'd been doing—competently, if not thrillingly—went away. In its place came new work, new systems, and that familiar professional discomfort: the sense that you are once again a beginner, only this time with less patience and more to lose.

The systems weren't entirely alien. More like turning up in a country where you almost speak the language—enough to order a coffee, not enough to avoid accidentally asking for something embarrassing. Think standard German versus Swiss German: recognisable, but not interchangeable.

This is where artificial intelligence entered the picture. Like most people, I'd dabbled—treated it as a slightly more articulate search engine. But under pressure, I started using it properly: asking it to explain things, guide me, fill in the gaps between what I sort-of knew and what I actually needed to know. And something slightly unsettling happened. I got competent. Quickly. Tasks I would previously have circled for weeks—"I should really learn how to do that properly"—were suddenly just… done. Not perfectly, not magically, but well enough to be useful. Possibly even employable.

Which leads to an awkward question. If AI can help me do all this—things I never quite got round to learning properly—what else could it do? More to the point: what have I always meant to learn, but somehow never have?

Two things came to mind immediately. The first is a language. This used to be a noble ambition: becoming fluent, perhaps even charmingly so. Ordering food with confidence. Making small talk. Possibly becoming, in some vague way, a better person. But we are now uncomfortably close to the point where you don't actually need to learn a language at all. The late Douglas Adams came up with the idea years ago: the Babelfish, a small creature you place in your ear which translates anything, from any language, instantly. At the time, it was a joke. Now, it's essentially an app. You can already hold up your phone, have someone speak in Spanish (or Mandarin, or anything else), and watch subtitles appear in real time. You speak back, they see your words translated. It's not elegant, but it works. So the question becomes slightly uncomfortable: did I ever really want to learn a language—or did I just want the outcome of knowing one? AI, it turns out, is very good at giving you the outcome without the effort.

Which brings me to the second ambition: learning a musical instrument. This one feels different. More stubborn. Because while AI can help you understand music—explain theory, suggest practice routines, even generate something that sounds convincingly like music—it can't, at least for now, do the one thing that matters: make your fingers land in the right place at the right time, with the right feel. Playing an instrument is inconveniently physical. It requires repetition, coordination, judgement, and a tolerance for sounding quite bad for an extended period of time. There is no Babelfish for the piano, and that, oddly, makes it more appealing.

Because if AI is quietly removing the barriers to so many things—coding, writing, languages, entire professions—it is also removing the excuses we've relied on for not doing them. "I don't have time." "It's too difficult." "I wouldn't know where to start." All of those are, increasingly, untrue. Which leaves a more honest reason: I just haven't chosen to do it.

So perhaps the real question isn't what AI will enable us to learn. It's what we'll finally admit we're not going to. As for me, I suspect I'll continue happily using my pocket Babelfish for languages—it's efficient, requires no discipline whatsoever, and doesn't expose me as someone who still can't remember the past tense. But the piano might be harder to dodge. Because there's no shortcut there—no clever prompt, no discreet digital assistant quietly filling in the gaps while I nod along. Just practice, repetition, and the slow, unmistakable sound of getting it wrong in front of other people. Which is, when you think about it, probably the point.

Still, I may give it a go. And if, in a few months' time, I appear to have developed a surprisingly elegant writing style, perfect grammar, and the faint air of someone who knows what they're doing… well, you can draw your own conclusions.

The Grumpy Geek

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THE RETURN OF THE PROJECTIONIST

A retired projectionist's passion for film-making, and a teenager's enthusiasm in reviving it in the 21st century, come together to keep the spirit of cinema alive in their remote village in Azerbaijan.

WEDNESDAY, 13 MAY

7.30pm *(Doors open 7.00pm)*

Oundle Suite, Fletton House, Glapthorn Road, Oundle PE8 4JA

Pop-up Café 6.00 – 7.30pm

Tickets in advance online £7.00 plus 10% booking fee. Or £8.00 on the door (cash or card)

www.docsplus.org.uk

GAMES NIGHT!

Woodnewton Village Hall

Thursday 14th May



Tea, coffee & cakes will be served

(included in ticket price)

Bring your own drinks & snacks!

Bring your own board games, playing cards, dominoes, etc. and get together for a game!



Tickets £2.50 per person

7.30pm Start

