

THE APPLETON WITH EATON

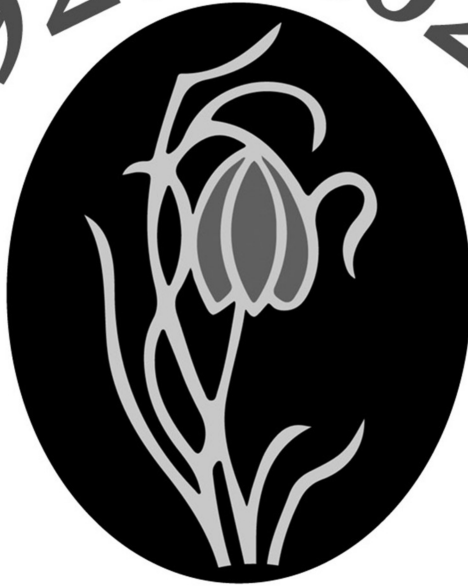
MARCH 2026

NUMBER 703

# Advertiser

PRODUCED BY THE CHURCH FOR THE COMMUNITY

1926-2026



## APPLETON WI CENTENARY

theWI  
INSPIRING WOMEN

FOR FURTHER DETAILS SEE INSIDE



## A LITTLE PRUNING TO WELCOME LENT

*by Canon Wealands Bell, Rector of Appleton and Eaton with Besselsleigh*

The apple trees in the Long Close are being pruned. Their lanky branches, sticking up like quills on an anxious porcupine, are being tamed into tidy, obedient shapes, like gnarled little hands, with finger-nails of clean new wood at the end of every stem, showing where the new growth will shoot out during the next six or seven months into an unknown future, with only the hope of an abundant sweet harvest to sustain us all in the weeks of waiting.

This is the Lent I like: the Lent of Lengthening days and shiny-bright mornings; of daffodil and crocus bulbs pushing their way into the light, like Bright Young Things in a ballroom, heading confidently for the dance-floor. It sounds so much more appealing than forty days of self-denial – the fasting and the giving-up, the looking-in-vain for the currant-bun at elevenses, or for the slice of cake at three. Dinner can seem bleak without a ‘beaker full of the warm South’, with its ‘beaded bubbles winking at the brim;’ and with florets of broccoli suddenly usurping the place of the sturdy chop, or of whatever else it is you that you have decided to renounce, as you engage in your own spiritual discipline.

Times change, of course, and it may be many a long year since you gave things up for Lent, or even knew when it was, or were dragged off compliantly to church to find out. The nation that once gathered at altars to feast on bread and wine, is now more likely to be found digging into IKEA’s best meatballs on a Sunday morning, or whizzing round Sainsbury’s, or sucking on half-time oranges at the football. People attend to their personal pruning in a variety of ways: mindfulness, yoga, meditation, with a side-order of dietary and exercise regimes; all promise their own pathway to enlightenment and happiness.

Christian spirituality is focused more on practical steps than esoteric matters. A traditional Lenten programme seeks to unite the Christian with Christ in his temptation, suffering and death. So along with prayer, fasting and Bible-reading, a standard Lent would invite alms-giving and perhaps other acts of service in the community. But the name of the game is neither heroism, nor the development of an iron will, or ramrod pride. Far rather, one hopes to develop a growing reliance on God’s grace which is as critical to growth (to becoming wholly oneself) as the Spring rain reviving the dead wintry earth. With Lent and Ramadan running side-by-side this year, it is a good opportunity to join in the great wave of communal self-control, and see what your own harvest ends up being in consequence.

Don’t forget two things in church: **MOTHERS’ DAY** – 15th March, 9.40 for 10am. Family-friendly worship to celebrate Motherhood, but not Apple Pie. **ALSO ‘MESSY CHURCH’** on 29th March from 3.30pm. Holy Week and Easter Special. Fun and Faith for all the Family.

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before 19 March

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**Appleton Village Hall**  
**Saturday 21 March**

**Doors: 6.30<sup>pm</sup> Film: 7.30<sup>pm</sup>**

## **News from Appleton with Eaton Parish Council (AWEPC):**

### **2026/2027 Budget**

#### **The Parish Council Precept – How does it work?**

The Precept is a tax, included within the local Council Tax, which enables the Parish Council to perform its functions. Parish Councils can apply for some other funding such as grants and funding awards, generally for specific projects, but they do not receive funds directly from central government. The Parish Council is legally required to agree a budget before it can set its Precept, and both must be agreed by the full Parish Council. Once the Parish Council has forecast its budget requirements for the following financial year, it requests this funding from its 'local billing authority' – in our case, Vale of White Horse District Council (VoWHDC) – in the form of the Precept. VoWHDC then converts the Precept into an amount per Council Tax payer that is added to the Council Tax bill (according to the property band) for all the dwellings within the Parish area.

The Council resolved that in 26/27 some essential work would need to be done at the Pavilion in order to make it safe and viable for use. The Council will ensure that any works undertaken are in line with refurbishment plans as the Council is keen to plan work in a cost effective and efficient manner. This will start with the moving of the oil tank from inside to outside based on modern regulations. In addition, the Council is working to ensure that the Pavilion is connected to a fast broadband service and is investigating quotes for new windows for the Pavilion. As mentioned in the February Advertiser, the Council is working on applying for grants for all 3 items

Based on the above, at the January 2026 meeting of the Parish Council, the Council resolved a budget for 2026/2027 of £76,576 in expenditure and £5,414 in income with a precept of £60,000. With the current number of houses, the calculation of increase would be approximately 78%. For a Band D household, this works out an annual increase of approximately £55.

The precepts for the past 2 years are as follows:

25/26: £33,500

24/25: £32,000

Some other projects the Council will be working on in 26/27 are:

Repair of the sleepers at Jubilee Park

Restoration of the Village Album

In addition to the new projects, services the Parish Council provides within the budget include:

Management of Jubilee Park

Management of the Pavilion and Sportsfield

Management of the bookings at the Pavilion and Sportsfield

Some grounds maintenance

Village communication via the website, the Parish Council Facebook page, mailing list and newsletter

Maintenance of its assets which are listed on the Asset Register on the website

Publicly available and dedicated email addresses for the Clerk and Councillors

The Clerk who manages the Council's finances and operations

Events to foster community engagement

The Council continues to work hard to provide the best services to residents while also considering the associated costs. Residents are always welcome to attend meetings of the Parish Council. Information on the Council's finances can be found on the website in the Finance section of the Parish Council section: Finance / Insurance – Appleton With Eaton

If you have any questions as to the finances of the Council, feel free to contact the Clerk, Allison Leigh, via email at: [parishclerk@appleton-eaton-pc.gov.uk](mailto:parishclerk@appleton-eaton-pc.gov.uk) or via phone on 07767 596 650.

### **Litter Pick**

The Council will be holding a litter pick on Saturday the 14<sup>th</sup> March, meeting at the Village Hall at 10am. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact John Adams at [john.adams@appleton-eaton-pc.gov.uk](mailto:john.adams@appleton-eaton-pc.gov.uk).

The next meeting of the Parish Council will be held on the  
9<sup>th</sup> of March 2026, 7:15pm, Appleton Village Hall.

All are welcome!

Allison Leigh, Parish Clerk

**07767 596 650 / [parishclerk@appleton-eaton-pc.gov.uk](mailto:parishclerk@appleton-eaton-pc.gov.uk)**

# the WI

## INSPIRING WOMEN

## Appleton with Besselsleigh Women's Institute

### Celebrating our Centenary

The Women's Institute (WI) was founded in 1897 in Canada and brought to the UK in 1915 by Madge Watt to support the efforts for WWI. At this time, women did not have the vote and the organisation was aimed at giving women (and especially those in rural areas) a voice.

Fast forward to 10 years later, in 1926, Appleton had a new village hall. This was a neutral space where women could meet. On the third Thursday in March that year, our Women's Institute held its first meeting. One of the attendees came from Besselseigh, hence the inclusion of Besselsleigh in the name. Appleton with Besselsleigh WI meets on the third Thursday of every month to this day.

Initially we were part of the Berkshire Federation. However, when boundary changes came into effect in 1973/4 we became part of the Oxfordshire Federation which currently has offices in Tackley.

We've experienced many changes since 1926. Attaining equal suffrage in 1928, and in education the raising of the school leaving age and the introduction of secondary education as a right for all. Opportunities and rights for women have increased dramatically. At first, most of the women you see in our original photos lived in the village, went to the village school and came to the WI in family groups. Currently, we have one mother and daughter in our membership and our members come from a much wider area.



Still recovering from the war, but with prosperity and opportunity coming in the 1960s, we began to organise theatre trips, holidays and outings to places of interest all around the country. We went to Highclere before Downton Abbey made it famous, to see the Tutankhamun exhibit. We continue to explore: last year we organised a boat trip on the Thames and we made a steam train trip to Cheltenham, ending at Broadway for lunch. One of our more interesting memories is the moment when the then Prime Minister addressed the NFWI annual meeting in 2000. He had used the meeting to air his political views which didn't go down well with the audience and they expressed their feelings by slow handclapping. It was our turn to send a delegate and she was astonished by the security for a WI gathering. Of course she was unaware who the guest speaker was and security needs were necessarily tight and kept secret.

Covid restrictions impacted on many of our members but we've adapted and recovered. We still meet on the third Thursday at Appleton Village Hall but we now meet at 2pm instead of 7.30 pm. The age range is wide with our eldest member about to reach the magnificent age of 100 years.

We celebrate our Centenary in hope and with gratitude to our forbears who had the vision to create our organisation back in 1926. We would like to see Appleton with Besselsleigh WI continue to flourish and our hope is that future members will cherish the organisation as we do.

**Sally Lawton - President.**

This is a very exciting year for Appleton WI. On 19th March we shall be 100 years old! We are celebrating with a special lunch at 12.30 on Thursday, 19th March in Appleton village hall. There will be the usual raffle and bring and buy stall.

Because this is the date for our normal monthly meeting, that will be held on Thursday, 26th March at 2pm in the village hall. It is our AGM so it is important that as many members as possible are there,. We shall be electing a new committee and president, and reviewing the past year and planning the coming year.

Elaine Flint

**SOCIABLE COFFEE MORNING** - open to all

A warm welcome and warm Village Hall awaits you on Wednesday 4th March from 10.30 - noon. However a donation towards the overheads will be much appreciated and ensure good coffee! Correct date this time.

## **Appleton with Eaton Tennis Club**

This year has been extremely wet so far, with many junior coaching sessions and club matches cancelled or postponed. Hopefully the weather will improve soon so we can play more tennis.

**Annual General Meeting 19<sup>th</sup> March 2026** at Appleton Village Hall starting at 7:30pm



We would love to see as many members as possible attending.

### **Weekly coaching sessions run by Head Coach Bart (term time only)**

Adult Tennis Coaching Beginners	Monday evenings 6.30 pm #
Adult intermediate Tennis Coaching	Monday evenings 7.30 pm *
White Horse Tennis Centre Indoor session	Next session Wednesday 4 <sup>th</sup> March \$
Cardio Tennis (non-members welcome)	Thursdays 10:30-11:30 am *
Junior Tennis Coaching	Thursday and Friday afternoons #

# Bookable via the coaching link on our website <https://clubspark.lta.org.uk/AppletonwithEatonTennisClub>

\*Email [appletonwithheatontennisclub@gmail.com](mailto:appletonwithheatontennisclub@gmail.com) if you would like to join.

\$ Join the Wednesday social session WhatsApp group to book your place before each session.

### **Car parking at the tennis club**

Please walk or cycle to the tennis club if possible, particularly on Friday afternoons and Saturday mornings, which are our busiest times. If you need to drive please park considerately in our car park and surrounding streets.

### **Very reduced price membership from now until end of March 2026!**

If you would like to join our friendly tennis club, please email the club on [appleton-withheatontennisclub@gmail.com](mailto:appleton-withheatontennisclub@gmail.com) or turn up at one of our club sessions (Saturdays 10 am-12 pm, Wednesday 7-9 pm, or Thursday 1.30-3.30 pm).

### **Dates for your diary**

19<sup>th</sup> March - AGM

28<sup>th</sup> June – Club Tournament Finals Day

**For more information see:** <https://clubspark.lta.org.uk/AppletonwithEatonTennisClub/>

### **Appleton Trust Hardship Fund**

The Appleton Trust has some funds available to help those individuals or families in immediate hardship with no other means of support.

Please apply to the Trust Clerk by email at  
ClerkAppletonTrust@yahoo.com

Or Mrs Sue Halliday at 12, Netherton Road

The Appleton Trust takes your privacy very seriously and will not pass your personal details on to anyone

### **EVERGREEN CLUB**

Our next meeting will be on  
Friday 13th March at 2pm.  
We shall be entertained by  
The Waltons as well as  
enjoying tea and cakes

### **Appleton Voluntary Transport Scheme (AVTS)**

We try to arrange transport to medical and dental appointments in Abingdon, Oxford, Witney and Wootton for residents of Appleton, Eaton, Fyfield and Besselsleigh, who have no other means of transport. The contact telephone number is 07503 447884. Leave a message if your call is not answered and we will get back to you.

Please note that

- Covid safety measures remain in force and masks need to be worn
- We need at least 48 hours notice of an appointment
- There is a small charge to cover the driver's costs.

Demand for our service is picking up again, but we are very short of drivers. If anyone would be happy to help, please do contact us.

## March 2026 Appleton Community Shop News

### Spring is (nearly) here

March brings longer days, lighter evenings and hopefully brighter weather. Here at the village shop we are looking forward to the season ahead. You'll find a slight shift in the seasonal produce.

The wonderful Carole will be baking new cakes - did you try the Parsnip and Maple syrup cake during February?

New stock includes tins of biscuits decorated with cats or dogs, perfect for gifting your pet sitter when you go away.

Mothering Sunday falls on the 30th March. Look out for cards and special treats. We have stocked up with a new range of cards, so you are sure to find one that you like.

Towards the end of the month you'll find a range of Easter cards and Easter Eggs in stock ready for the first weekend in April.

### New Volunteers

We are delighted to recently welcome two new volunteers to our team. Thank you for giving your time.

As always, we are incredibly grateful to all of our volunteers and loyal customers. Do pop in for a chat, stock up on essentials and see what is new this March - we look forward to welcoming you.



## Shop opening hours

Monday-Friday: 7am–6pm

Saturday: 8am–1pm

Sunday: 8am–12noon

**Post office** Mondays and Thursdays, 9am–1pm

Shop telephone: 01865 863191

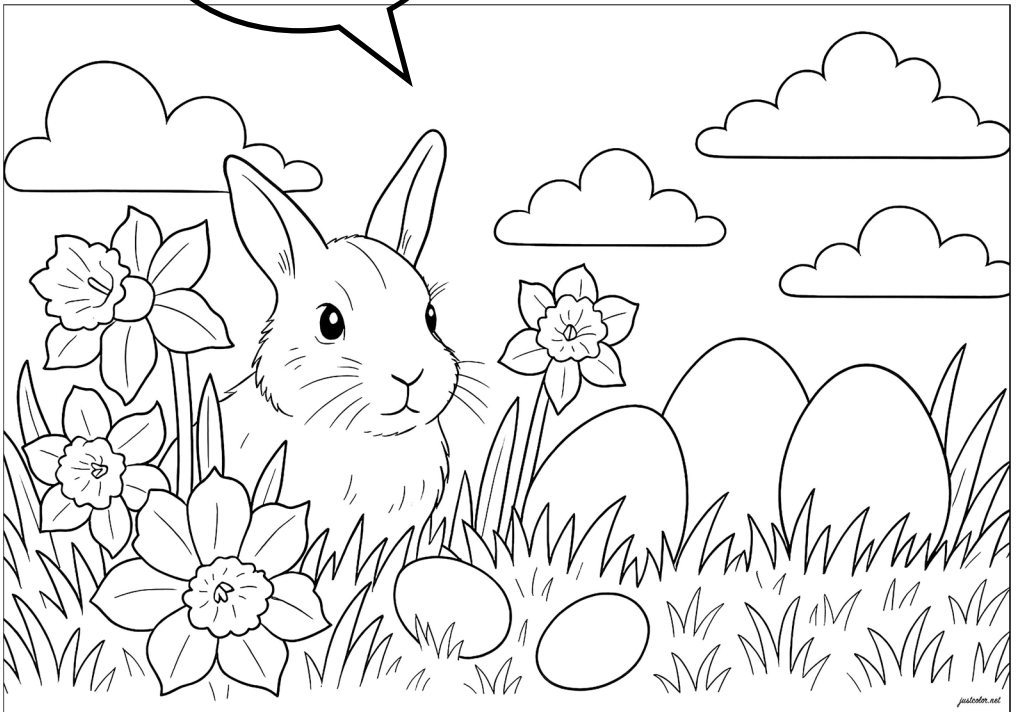
Email: [appletonship@gmail.com](mailto:appletonship@gmail.com)

Follow us: <https://www.facebook.com/appletoncommunityshop>

## Shop monthly turnover

	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
May	£27,338	£27,718	£26,869
June	£29,347	£28,268	£28,376
July	£28,208	£30,582	£27,256
Aug	£24,841	£25,678	£24,839
Sept	£24,479	£25,345	£23,608
Oct	£26,318	£26,522	£25,290
Nov	£26,600	£26,224	£24,547
Dec	£27,354	£26,525	£24,005
Jan	£24,690	£23,937	
Feb	£24,144	£22,477	
March	£26,109	£25,360	
April	£24,762	£24,843	

Why not  
colour me  
in?



## The Great British Spring Clean – Taking part in a litter pick



Spring has finally arrived! And with it comes a burst of new life into our green spaces. So, what better time to help give nature a fresh start by taking part in The Great British Spring Clean, the UK's biggest mass-action environmental campaign, running from 3rd to 29th March 2026. You can pledge to pick up however many bags you choose from Friday 13th February.

### Why Litter Picking Matters



Giving our shared spaces a little TLC helps wildlife, keeps our communities clean, and brings neighbours together. And while it can be tempting to think “a little bit of rubbish won't hurt”, small pieces quickly add up.

Litter can harm mammals like hedgehogs and birds like swans, who are frequently injured after getting caught up in waste. A short hour spent litter picking makes an immediate and satisfying difference, and if you don't have much time on

your hands as the months get busier, it's one of the simplest actions we can take.

### Tips for Safe and Wildlife-Friendly Litter Picking

- Complete a risk assessment before you start.
  - Wear gloves and sturdy shoes.
  - Use a picker if you have one.
  - Avoid disturbing piles of leaves or logs.
  - Keep dogs close by, especially near roads or thick scrub.
  - Report instances of danger, such as fly-tipping.
  - Don't forget to sort and separate what you've collected for recycling.
  - Tie bags securely and dispose of them appropriately.
- Wash your hands after you've finished.

### Planning a litter pick? Here's how your local council can help:

1. Oxford City Council Register your litter pick with OxClean to receive equipment. Email [streetscene@odsgroup.co.uk](mailto:streetscene@odsgroup.co.uk) quoting 'OxClean', and include the date of your

litter pick, the location where filled bags will be left, and the collection time.

2. Cherwell District Council Supports community litter picks and can loan the necessary equipment to residents and groups.
3. South Oxfordshire District Council Provides litter-picking equipment (including pickers, hi-vis vests, branded bags, and hoops) and can collect litter if pre-booked.
4. Vale of White Horse District Council Loans equipment to individuals and groups. Simply contact the waste team at [waste.team@southandvale.gov.uk](mailto:waste.team@southandvale.gov.uk).

West Oxfordshire District Council Supports local litter picks and offers an information pack outlining available support, including equipment loans and collection arrangements.

### **Wildlife Friendly Gardening Jobs for March**

Meanwhile, there are plenty of jobs to be getting on with in your own patch. And while it may be the month of the 'Big Spring Clean', when it comes to our gardens at this time of year, less is often more. Resist the urge to tidy (leave that energy for the litter pick!) and instead sit back and let nature run its course.

**Leave some areas undisturbed** Sometimes what really matters is what you *don't* do. Leave dead leaves, log piles, and dead flowers where they are. These provide vital shelter and resources for hedgehogs, insects, and small mammals, and are crucial habitats as wildlife becomes active in early spring.



Hedgehog - (C) Stephen Powels

**Feed the birds** Providing food for birds is a great help, but make sure all bird feeders are cleaned weekly to prevent the spread of disease. If you won't have the time or energy to thoroughly clean feeders weekly using disinfectant, then it's better to grow native plants with berries and seeds, such as Elder trees, Hawthorn, and fruit trees, all of which provide natural bird feed.

If you think you have spotted a diseased or injured bird in your garden (obvious wounds or bleeding, swellings or crusty growths on the skin, heavy breathing), **do not** touch them or pick them up. Instead, report any sick birds you see to Garden Wildlife Health. Dead wild birds should be reported to Defra using the online reporting system.

### **Grow food for bees and butterflies**

Sow native wildflower seeds in trays or modules now to grow plants for your own mini meadow later in the year.

Check out the guidance on our website for more details: <https://www.wildoxfordshire.org.uk/guidance/helping-nature-on-your-patch>

## **Appleton Chapel**

Sun 8th Mar. 3:00pm	Family Service followed by refreshments
Tues. 10th Mar. 7:30pm	Healing and "Heart to Heart" Fellowship meeting.
Tues 18th Nov 7pm	Sausage sizzle and games evening
Thurs 26th Nov. 7pm	Applejack Club
Dr Ken Stallard	01235 868304

## **Joys of Spring**

How much we all look forward to the beauty and scent of Spring after the dark, rainy days of late. It cannot come soon enough, although the signs are there – snowdrops everywhere, even fields of them in Welford Park Estate.

On our farm in the 1930s I always looked for the first primrose in the same place each year, surrounded by celandines and sometimes wood anemones. Later, my favourites – cowslips and later still daisies and buttercups, white and red clovers and flowering nettles appeared. Occasionally I found a purple orchid, but not many – beautiful but rare.

We were lucky to have a bluebell wood on our land – a mass of blue flowers, natural English bluebells with white anemones, forget-me-nots and purple violets. In the wood I found a low-lying nest with an over-sized bird lolling in it – far too big for the nest! I learned later that this was probably a cuckoo!

Our brook's living hedges were also alive with plants – abundant water-cress picked for tea with bread and butter, along with wild mint marsh marigolds and where the water was deep. Slow-worms basked coiled up on the banks enjoying the sun.

Even hedges were a delight – strewn with sweet-smelling honeysuckle and wild plum blossom, not forgetting crab apple blossom too.

How fortunate we were to have this abundance of beautiful, free-growing plants to see and cherish with such joy and to form such happy memories!

Barbara Bunyan, 2026

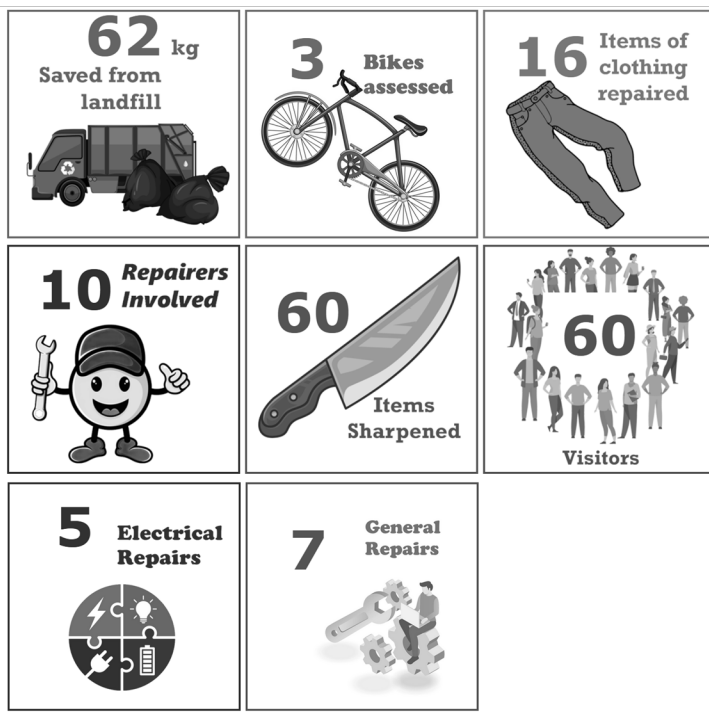


## Green Appleton Repair Cafe

Thank you to everyone who came to our Repair Cafe on 7th February at Appleton School. It was a huge success. Thank you to school for hosting us and making us so welcome. Thank you to everyone that helped on the day.

The photo competition was a great success. Thank you to all that entered and thanks to our wonderful judge Clive Turner.

Here are our stats:



Dates of future Repair Cafes for your diary:

Saturday 6th June 2026

Saturday 15th August 2026

Saturday 24th October 2026.

# Advertiser

Deadline for April issue:  
19th March

## Notices for village organisations

All printed copy to the editor - just post it through the letterbox—or by email to [editor.advertiser@gmail.com](mailto:editor.advertiser@gmail.com) before the deadline. Please email if you can!

No formal payment is required but we ask for a donation towards the running costs of the Advertiser: between £5-50 depending on the length and frequency of entries. Liaise with Wanda Todd to agree an appropriate donation.

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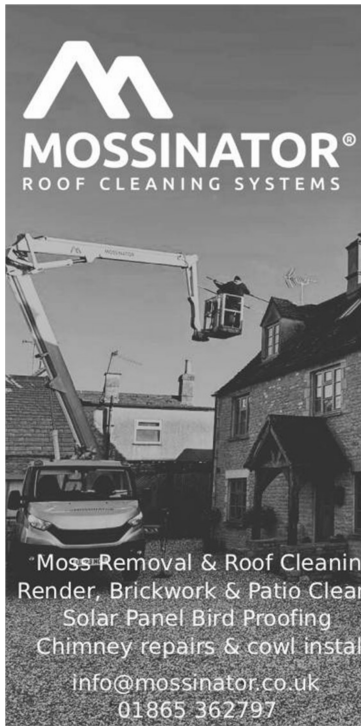
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References available.

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[www.appletonvillagehall.com](http://www.appletonvillagehall.com)



## St. Laurence Church website

[www.stlaurenceappleton.org](http://www.stlaurenceappleton.org)

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NOTE: This newsletter is also available on  
the Parish website. If you do not wish  
your item to be displayed online, please  
inform the Editor. All items are included in  
good faith, and the Appleton with Eaton  
Advertiser cannot take responsibility for  
any content.

**St Laurence Church Appleton with Besselsleigh**  
**SERVICES FOR HOLY WEEK & EASTER 2026**

<b>Sunday 29th</b>	<b>10.00am</b>	<b>Palm Sunday Eucharist</b> begin in School Car Park at 10.00am
	<b>3.30 to 5.00pm</b>	<b>Messy Church for Holy Week and Easter</b> faith and fun for all the family
<b>Wednesday 1st</b>	<b>10.00am</b>	<b>Holy Week Eucharist (said) and Address</b>
<b>Thursday 2nd April</b>	<b>7.00pm</b>	<b>Maundy Thursday Eucharist in the 'Upper Room'</b> followed by silent <b>Watch of Prayer</b> until 10.00pm
<b>Friday 3rd</b>	<b>2.00pm</b>	<b>Good Friday Liturgy</b> Reading of the Passion, Prayer at the Cross, Holy Communion
<b>Saturday 4th</b>	<b>8.00pm</b>	<b>Easter Liturgy</b> New Fire, Easter Proclamation and Readings, Baptismal Promises, First Eucharist), with a drink to break the Lenten fast
<b>Sunday 5th</b>	<b>8.00am</b>	<b>Holy Communion (BCP said)</b>
	<b>10.00am</b>	<b>Easter Day Festal Eucharist</b> with an Easter Egg hunt for the children

For further details: [www.stlaurenceappleton.org](http://www.stlaurenceappleton.org)

**Contact us:**

For enquiries about baptisms, weddings, funerals, pastoral care and home visits,  
please contact the Rector, The Revd Wealands Bell: 01865 599003;  
[rector@stlaurencechurchappleton.org](mailto:rector@stlaurencechurchappleton.org)

For matters concerning the church building and churchyard, please contact one of  
the Churchwardens: Jane Cranston: 01865 863681; [jane@cranstonjane.co.uk](mailto:jane@cranstonjane.co.uk); or  
Pete Day: 01865 862671; [p.h.m.day202@btinternet.com](mailto:p.h.m.day202@btinternet.com)

**St Laurence Church Appleton with Besselsleigh**  
**SERVICES – MARCH 2026**

<b>Sunday 1st</b>	<b>8.00am</b>	<b>Holy Communion (BCP said)</b>
	<b>10.00am</b>	<b>Parish Eucharist</b>
<b>Wednesday 4th</b>	<b>7.30pm</b>	<b>Compline (said) with short address</b>
<b>Sunday 8th</b>	<b>10.00am</b>	<b>Parish Eucharist</b>
	<b>4.00pm</b>	<b>Evensong (BCP)</b>
<b><u>Sunday 15th</u></b>	<b>10.00am</b>	<b>All Age Mothering Sunday Service</b> <i>35 minutes, with refreshments from 9.40am</i>
	<b>5.30pm</b>	<b>Eucharist (a short, said service)</b>
<b>Thursday 19th</b>	<b>7.30pm</b>	<b>Compline (said) with short address</b>
<b>Sunday 22nd</b>	<b>10.00am</b>	<b>Parish Eucharist</b>
	<b>4.00pm</b>	<b>Evensong</b>
<b>Sunday 29th</b>	<b>10.00am</b>	<b>Palm Sunday Eucharist</b> begin in School Car Park at 10.00am
	<b>3.30 to 5.00pm</b>	<b>Messy Church for Holy Week and Easter</b> faith and fun for all the family

**See separate list on page 19 for Holy Week and Easter Sunday services**  
**The Eucharist (Holy Communion) is celebrated every Wednesday at 10.00am**  
(a quiet, peaceful service lasting 30 minutes)  
**The church building is open every day 9am to 5pm for all to visit**