

Sulgrave News

April 2026



*This newsletter is an independent publication, edited and compiled by
Victoria Barker and Kat Farmer*

*It is delivered free of charge to all houses in Sulgrave and Stuchbury
by **Kym & Tony Keatley, Susie Mason, Jean Bates, Nikki Mulcahy,
Clare Nash and Felix and Claire & Jon Sadler.***

Costs are met by Sulgrave Parish Council.

*It is provided as a service to the community and those involved in its
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**Deadline for the May Newsletter is
20th April**

If you have information, articles or stories for the newsletter telephone
Victoria on 07780578008 or e-mail: sulgravenewsletter@outlook.com
or post through the letter box at
Kiln Farmhouse, Manor Road, Sulgrave. OX17 2SE

IF YOU HAVE A STORY TO TELL OR A HOBBY TO TELL US
ABOUT THEN PLEASE DO GET IN TOUCH

SULGRAVE SCARECROW FESTIVAL

8th – 23rd May

‘VILLAGE LIFE’



Our first scarecrow festival is coming to Sulgrave, and we are excited to welcome everyone to be involved, and spread some village joy.

Historically villagers & farmers would gather to make scarecrows at the start of the growing season, to mimic human presence and protect their crop from birds - also known as ‘field guardians’. They are still used in this way today and the tradition has been kept alive by villagers coming together to host festivals in celebration.

We welcome everyone that would like to, to take part. Its free, with the theme inspired by ‘Sulgrave Village Life’. All you need is to do is build one of your choice and pop it in your front garden on the weekend of 8th May for everyone to see. (If you don’t have a front garden, pop one on your post box, front wall or even on your roof!)

There will be a voting box in the village shop, for everyone to have the opportunity to vote for their favorite, with the winner to be announced at the new pocket park picnic on 23rd May.

More info will be included in the May newsletter about where and how to vote. But take this as your 1 month notice to get those thinking caps on, get building, join us, and be involved!

Rules

- The Theme is ‘Sulgrave Village Life’
- Take part in whatever way you wish, be it a small scarecrow on your letterbox, a larger chap propped up in your front garden, or even better, a family of scarecrows having a giggle! – whatever you fancy, so long as its inspired by Village Life.
- You do not need to notify anyone to take part, you will simply be allocated a voting number to pin to your scarecrow once its built & in situ, to allow a reference for all villagers to have the opportunity to have a giggle and vote for their favourite.
- Make sure it can be seen from the roadside for villagers walking past to enjoy.
- Winner announced at the new pocket park picnic opening on 23rd May.

‘How to guides’

Below are two simple how to guides available and easy to follow online - it's as straight forwards as some bamboo canes, old clothes, straw and an imagination! Adapt as you wish!

https://www.uphillvillage.org.uk/content/large/documents/brochures/making_a_scarecrow.pdf

<https://www.rhs.org.uk/education-learning/children-young-people/family-activities/do-it/make-a-scarecrow>

Deadline

Please have your scarecrow on display on or before **Sunday 10th May**, to allow time for everyone to enjoy a village walk with a smile, and place a vote in a box, provided in due course. Remember they will be on display for 2 weeks, so prop them up nice and sturdy!



If you need any help or have any further questions, contact Vix on 07780578008 / sulgravevillagenewsletter@outlook.com

If you are in Stuchbury you are very welcome to please join in too!

We are delighted to announce that we have successfully secured funding from HS2 to

redevelop **Sulgrave Pocket Park!**

Works Begin
13 April

Park will close for a period of
6 WEEKS

Disruption will be kept to a minimum.
Thank you for your understanding.

SAVE THE DATE!
GRAND OPENING

23rd May 2026!

... more details to follow.

March on the Farm (2026)



Lambs on the Stuchbury footpath.
Photograph: Colin Wootton

Richard Fonge writes:

Now in mid March the weather is changing to being more spring like. Lambs will soon be in the fields across to Weston and up the Moreton road. This is a good time therefore to ask all dog owners to remember to keep their dogs on leads when walking the footpaths through fields. The worrying of livestock is on the increase costing the industry an estimated £2million a year on official figures. That is without the cruelty and suffering. The young sheep on the Stuchbury footpath are ewe lambs. They are twelve months old and will be bred from this autumn, lambing next spring.

Age brings nostalgia, and looking back over a farming career and an involvement in rural life, the memories are good. As a child and teenager farming was still very labour intensive and physical. It wasn't until the mid sixties that we saw the rapid mechanisation of agriculture. This not only brought specialisation to individual farms, but the demise of the smallholder and the less need for farm workers. This in turn led to a change in the make up of our villages, with many leaving the rural life to one of a more urban life in our local towns and beyond.

Surnames back then were synonymous with certain villages. Sulgrave had many families called Wootton, Cleaver and Hiron. Greatworth or Grit'worth as it was pronounced had families called Carpenter, Barrett and Isham to the fore.

Today we forget or don't realise how hard life was back in the fifties with the pig and allotment vital to the living of the household as it had always had been to the rural worker. The allotment grew the vegetables and the pig the meat. The pig was salted down and the bacon sliced off as required, usually about 80% fat, which was not a problem as the work was physical and the day started with a walk or cycle ride. Many were still living off the land and not the supermarket as of today.

True conversation in Grit'worth shop. Ernie Isham (always known as neighbour) was patiently waiting to be served is asked by shopkeeper Ernest Barratt If he has planted his broad beans. Reply: *"Yes. and the b*****s will be up before I get my tobacco"*.

Richard Fonge.



Village Shop News Update

Shop Telephone: 01295 760 066  **e-mail: svshop@hotmail.co.uk**

On April Fools' Day, one is advised to "believe nothing and trust no-one - just like any other day". Thank goodness we are not that cynical.

Jane and Jai have had a response from the Manor to say that they would be pleased to participate in the Great Easter Egg Trail this year. This event, which was so successful last year, will take place on Easter Monday 6th April (see the flyer on the opposite page). All participants should gather at the Shop at 11.30. The hunt will take place in the Pocket Park and end up for some 'events' at the Manor. Much fun and lots of chocolatey fingers are anticipated.

The recent sunny weather seems to have brought shoppers out of hibernation and the shop has been busy. The new pie warmer has gone down very well with customers, and many have commented on how delighted they are to now be able to pick up a hot pasty or pie for their lunch.

Jai has recently introduced a new line to our alcoholic drinks range. For gin enthusiasts (we are sure there are one or two in Sulgrave), we are stocking a range of artisanal gins and gin liqueurs from The Buckingham Distillery. They come in a variety of flavours including 'original', 'spiced apple', 'pomegranate & sloe' and, for those that like their G&T to pack a real punch, 'navy strength' which checks in at an eye-popping 58 abv. They are definitely worthy of a taste-test on a Friday night at the end of a long week.

On the grocery front, we now stock Kikkoman panko breadcrumbs, a range of Holmes Bakery biscuits and shortbreads, some new corn snacks, and the very moreish Mr Trotter's Pork Crunch crackling which has recently received a Great Taste award.

The English asparagus season is just beginning and soon there should also be rhubarb on the veg rack.

We have recently had two young students providing a valuable service by helping out in the shop and some of the older volunteers have appreciated having access to strong young legs to run up and down stairs to stock shelves.

Please note that the shop and PO will be closed all day on Good Friday (3rd April) and all day on Easter Monday (6th April). We shall be open as usual on Saturday 4th and Sunday 5th March.

Digby and Alison





EGG TRAIL & HUNT

on Easter Monday, 6th April

Starting at 11.30am

from Sulgrave Village Shop

Come and have lots of fun finding the answers to the clues where you will collect 6 tokens, finishing at Sulgrave Manor for some activities and a chocolate surprise!

Just come to Sulgrave Village Shop on the day – it's only a bunny hop away.

All children must be accompanied by an Adult

SULGRAVE GARDENING CLUB

THE
**LIVING
JIGSAW**

The secret life in your garden



An illustrated talk by VAL BOURNE

Sulgrave Village Hall

Monday 13th April 7.00 for 7.30pm

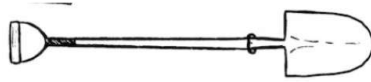
Members £5.00 Guests £7.50

For more information :

Pamela Wagman thatchedtea@aol.com

07774 848988

Maureen Jeffery maureenjeffery1@btinternet.com 07788 191601



April on The Allotment

We're past the Spring Equinox and the days are getting longer helping seedlings to really get going. It still pays to be mindful of any last frosty mornings if planting seedlings outside though, so keep those less hardy ones on your windowsill a little longer if it's still super cold overnight.

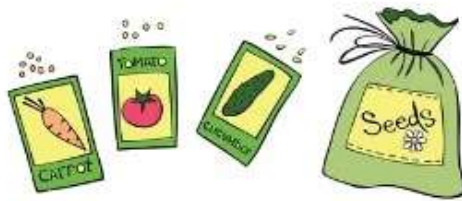
I'm trying out companion planting this year to try and maximise space, support soil fertility and deter pests. I've started off with potatoes and broad beans as the beans help enrich the soil with nitrogen which really benefits root vegetables. We'll see how it goes!

This month I've been harvesting chard, sprouting broccoli and parsley from my plot which have all overwintered well. My rhubarb is also starting to really get going - looking forward to a rhubarb crumble soon!

What can be sown in April:

On your windowsill/in your greenhouse:

- Basil
- Beans
- Courgettes
- Cucumbers
- Squashes
- Spinach



Direct sow outside:

- Beetroot
- Rocket
- Lettuce
- Peas
- Carrots
- Potatoes

We've had some more folks sign up for a plot recently which is really exciting!

There are still a couple of spots left in prime sunny positions in various sizes so do come join us if you're interested in growing your own food or flowers (or both!).£30 for a big plot for the year.

If you're interested, please contact **Rosie** on **07779 149319**





Weather Wise

Facts and figures from Sulgrave's own weather station.
(20 February - 19 March 2026)



Intro' for new readers of **Sulgrave News**.

Your Editor thought it would be interesting to talk about the weather! After all, it is the subject we often choose when we want to break the ice!

Sulgrave has had its own weather station in the centre of the village for several years. Its 'live data' is posted every two or three minutes, wirelessly, via the internet, to a host website in the USA, where it can be seen by any visitor from around the world.

The Sulgrave village website (www.sulgrave.org.uk) has a grey 'patch' on its homepage, which shows the current 'live' summary of the weather.



Village website screen shot - 20 March 2026

<u>Weather Stat's</u>		Last Month February '26	Last 3 Weeks 1 - 19 Mar' '26
Temp	Max	14.4 °C	19.6 °C
	Min	- 0.7 °C	0.1 °C
	Average	6.5 °C	7.8 °C
Rain		99.0 mm	17.3 mm
Pressure	Max	1018.6 mBars	1027.8 mBars
	Min	975.3 mBars	994.2 mBars
Wind	Steady Max	18 mph	16 mph
	Av. Direction	South	South

At last a dry spell!

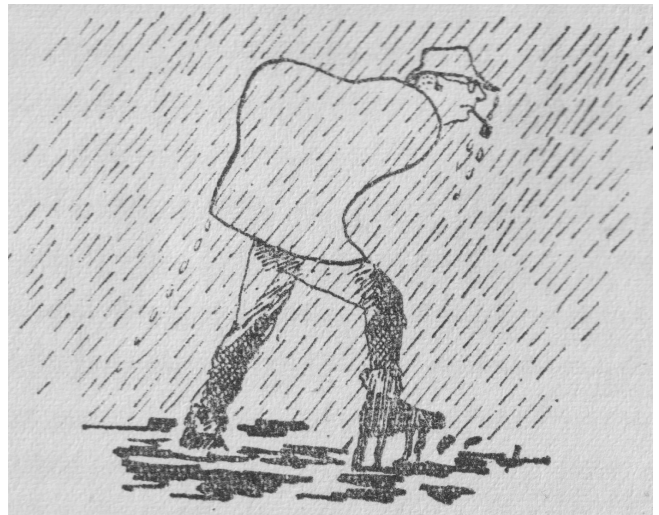
At last it has been dry enough to cut the lawn! I've just "topped" mine for the first time this year. Footpaths are drying out too. We no longer need to wear wellies for dog walking. I'm sure our dogs are pleased too, not having to be stood under a cold hose on return home.

Whilst reflecting on the weeks of rain we had during January and February, I was reminded of Alfred Wainwright who wrote and published a wonderful series of Pictorial Guides to the Lakeland Fells in the 1960's.

These are beautifully illustrated with his own drawings and printed using his handwriting. In these he waxes lyrically about his beloved Fells. After the enormous success of these guides he was persuaded to compile a guide to the Pennine Way. He spent a total of 18 months walking different stretches of the 270 mile route during 1966 and 1967. Unfortunately each time he returned to compile another section - it rained. He was not impressed.

At the finish he talks about "*mud, glutinous mud*" and says that he "*came to pray not for fine days, which seemed too much to ask, but for gentle and not too wetting rain*".

This is the final drawing in his "Pennine Way Companion! Note his pipe is reversed to keep the rain out! I think we get the picture?



Today, (the 20th March) is the **Spring Equinox**. It marks the point in the annual calendar, when at last the days start to become longer than nights, in the northern hemisphere. I talked about this last year.

A reminder that all our clocks "*spring forward*" at 01.00 am on Sunday 29th March. Unfortunately this means that we loose an hour of sleep.

More from Trebormint next month. Written: Friday 20 March 2026.



Sulgrave 'Sew' cial

Date	Day
Apr 16th 2026	Thursday
Apr 23rd 2026	Thursday
Apr 30th 2026	Thursday
May 07th 2026	Thursday
May 21st 2026	Thursday

Let's Jump into Spring with something new!



Whether you enjoy sewing, knitting, cross stitch or anything crafty

– if it can be transported – why not join us.

Enjoy a cuppa and chat with some cake and biscuits thrown in whilst enjoying some 'you time' to concentrate on your projects. Or maybe you have some UFO's that you need to finish!

Time: 7pm to 9pm

Venue: Sulgrave Church Hall, Sulgrave (unless advised otherwise)

If you'd like more details, please reach out to Sue or Libby at sponting16@yahoo.co.uk or libby.cave@aol.com.



Sulgrave Camera Club Newsletter

The members of Sulgrave Camera Club meet up regularly to share images, discuss techniques and learn from each other. You don't need to own a fancy camera to take part, camera phones are welcome too.



March 2026

During our March meeting members shared the photographs taken in high contrast, sometimes called Hi-Key and Low-Key images, we had explored this at our previous meeting and the images we shared were really varied and interesting. Please take a moment and look at the results on our Club Website, details below.

We also discussed topics and dates for future meetings which may alternate between 2nd and 3rd Wednesdays due to holidays etc.

Our next opportunity will be a photoshoot capturing the spring flowers around Sulgrave, results will be viewed at the next meeting on 8th April. Come along if you are curious about the Camera Club.

We will always welcome new members. No experience or fancy camera is needed just a desire to take and share photographs.

Visit our website www.sulgravecameraclub.org to see more of our members photographs.

More details from grahamroberts53@hotmail.com



Saturday April 18th 10-12noon

Come and join us for Coffee, Cake and Chatter.

Hopefully the bakers will rustle up some late Easter goodies to eat and the sun will be shining.

£3.50, cup of coffee or tea and a slice of cake, drink top up free.

All proceeds go to funding our Church Hall, so you joining us is very important.



The next CCC will be Saturday May 23rd @ 10.00am.

Coffee, Cake and Chat Team update

Great News, there has been a very positive response in creating a Coffee Morning team.
But more help would be very welcome.

Three people have stepped up to take on a coffee morning. Thank you so much.

Ideally, it would be useful if one other person could agree to run another Saturday coffee morning. This would give us greater flexibility should there be a date clash, also, it will mean that the level of commitment of time and effort won't be so great.

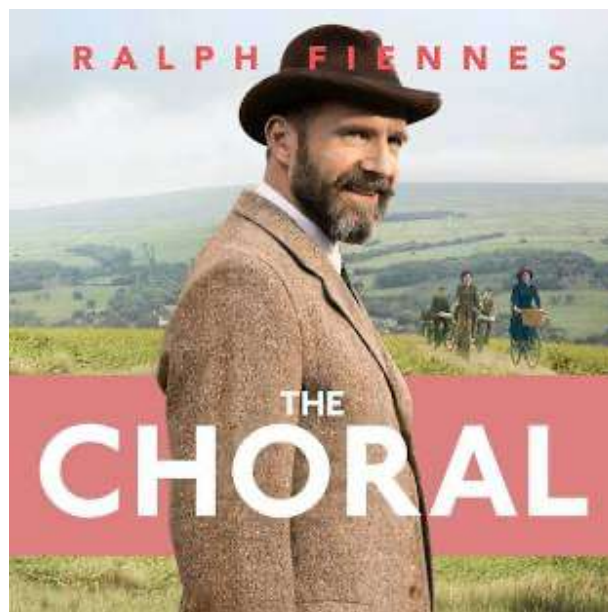
But, if you would like to help but feel that the actual running of the morning is too much, we will welcome cake bakers and all cakes.



Contact Ingram Lloyd. 07796 545288. Ingram.lloyd2@gmail.com

CULWORTH VILLAGE HALL

FRIDAY 10TH APRIL



British [historical](#) drama film co-produced and directed by [Nicholas Hytner](#) and written by [Alan Bennett](#). Set in 1916, during [World War I](#), in the fictional town of Ramsden, [Yorkshire](#), the film follows the members of the local choral society which recruits a disparate group of townspeople for a performance of [Edward Elgar's](#) [The Dream of Gerontius](#),

DOORS OPEN 6.30PM

TICKETS:£15 (including supper)

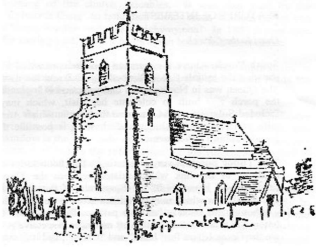
£7.50 film only

CONTACT JULIE TO BOOK

jules.tinn@gmail.com

0776 973 0668

Bring your own drinks & glass



Church News

The Rector for our Benefice is

Nick Leggett 07925 419068

Email leggettluwe@yahoo.co.uk

Services for April

Sunday, April 5th.	Holy Communion.	8.15am
Sunday, April 19th.	Holy Communion.	10.30am
Sunday, April 26th.	Mattins.	10am.

Finally! No excuses for staying at home and staring out of the window at wet and windy weather! Spring has arrived and those that use the footpath through the churchyard cannot fail to notice the abundance of spring flowers in the Garden of Remembrance. With the better weather we have commenced our work of tidying up the churchyard with weeding, clearing up ivy etc. The removal of the lavender plants along the pathway have given the entrance a much tidier look.

At our Mothering Sunday service all the mums and grannies went home with a beautiful primula plant and a pink cupcake as a 'thank you' for all that they do for us and we didn't forget all those families who are currently living in war zones. How lucky are we to live in such tranquil surroundings.

For those who use the footpath through the churchyard can we ask you to close the gates and, if you have a dog, please keep it on a lead. Unfortunately, there are still some people who have not cleared up after their pets. This makes it particularly intolerable for those who come to visit their family graves and for the grass cutters. Poo bags are available at the village shop and there are numerous dog bins around the village. Your cooperation is much appreciated.

In the run up to Easter we like to decorate the church so if you can provide any flowers or foliage please could you leave it at the church. Your contribution will make all the difference. May we take this opportunity of wishing you all a very Happy Easter. We look forward to seeing you in the church or making the most of the churchyard.

- Andrew Dixon and Shrimp Christy. Churchwardens.

VILLAGE CHURCH HALL CAR PARK TIDY UP

SATURDAY 11TH APRIL 10am -12 noon.

It's that time of year for a Spring Clean.

We are appealing for volunteers to help for about 2 hours in the Hall Car Park.
Please bring appropriate garden tools – gloves, a garden hoe etc

Your help is much appreciated. Tea and coffee will be served.

Please contact annedyde@gmail.com for more information.

St James the Less Annual Spring Clean.

Save the Date

Brooms, buckets, mops and dusters will be wielded during May and all help
will be gratefully accepted



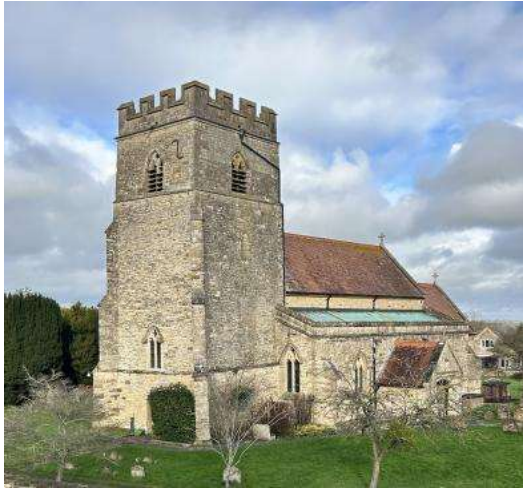
Do contact either:

Ingram Lloyd 07796 545288 or Shrimp Christy 01295 760214

If you need more information,

SAVE THE DATE!

SATURDAY 10 OCTOBER 2026



**St James the Less Church
Sulgrave**

**CELEBRATION ORGAN
CONCERT
with IAN TRACEY**

MORE INFORMATION TO FOLLOW



Sulgrave Parish Council.

The Annual Parish Meeting will be held on Thursday 2nd of April

In the Church hall at 7.30.

All welcome.

**Summary of Parish Council Meeting held at Sulgrave
Village Hall on Thursday 5th March 2026 at 7.30**

The Chairman **Cllr Richard Fonge** welcomed all to the meeting. He expressed the Council's condolences to **Cllr Alison Eastwood** on the recent death of her husband **Timothy Eastwood**.

Apologies for Absence.

Cllr Will Priestman. Villagers Colin Wootton and Graham Roberts.

High Speed Rail (HS2).

Cllr Powell reported. Radstone Road opening delayed till late April. Anglian Water still working on fault on B4525. New section. Moving of earth now increasing causing longer delays at traffic lights.

West Northants Council.

Cllr Alison Eastwood confirmed no parking charges proposed for Brackley, Daventry or Towcester.

Government seeking further devolution. Proposing to put Northamptonshire, North and West Bedfordshire and Milton Keynes into one area with an elected Mayor. Councils' views to be submitted by March 20th.

Pocket Park.

Cllr Sarah Parker reported that our funding request to HS2 had been successful. Work to start April 13th.

Council agreed to have an official opening on Saturday May 23rd with a picnic. Victoria Barker's idea of a scarecrow competition warmly agreed. More details in newsletter. The Chairman thanked **Cllr Parker** for her work and dedication in getting the funding and organising the contractor.

Village Newsletter.

Council agreed to charge outside advertisers £20 for a full page and £10 for a half page. Historic Door - agreed to place on Castle Green near to information notice.

Annual Parish Meeting.

Thursday April 2nd at 7.30 at the Village Hall. Invites to be sent to relevant organisations.

Parish Council Website.

This now now live. Karen Baldry complimented on her excellent work. Need to link with existing website. Photos required.

Councillors' Reports.

Cllr Powell reported on lamp in Little street which is bent over. Clerk to report. Chairman mentioned that **Father Nick Leggatt** had left the Benefice. Replacement unlikely for sometime. Proposed a joint meeting with P.C.C . The Chairman with **Cllr Jo Peppiatt** and **Cllr Powell** to attend.

Meeting closed at 8.30pm.

Richard Fonge, Chairman.



A SEASONAL RECIPE

This month celebrates the mighty asparagus! With the official start to the British asparagus growing season coinciding with St George's day, 23rd April, asparagus has become the official celebration of British produce with all sorts of festivities held in its honour across the UK. I know.. Who'da thought it..

So, here is an easy peasy , quick and delicious snack for 2 recipe to whip up in just 10 mins – one not to miss!

Tempura Asparagus



EQUIPMENT



- Nothing with this one, easy peasy!



Ingredients

For the tempura:

200g asparagus
sunflower or vegetable oil
50g plain flour
50g rice flour (or another 50g of plain flour)
2 tsp cornflour
1 tsp bicarbonate of soda
160ml cold sparkling water
salt

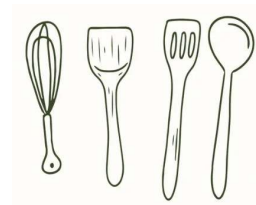
For the dipping sauce:

2 tbsp soy sauce
2 tbsp mirin
1 tsp light brown sugar
2cm piece fresh ginger, peeled & finely grated



Method

Prep time: 5 min
Cooking time: 10 min



Step 1

Trim off any tough ends from the asparagus, the bottom inch or so, and cut each spear into 5cm pieces. You want stalks no thicker than a pencil so if they are fat, split them evenly lengthways, too.

Step 2

Heat the oil in a high sided pan. You should only need about an inch and a half of oil to fry in. Slowly bring the oil up to 190°C.

Step 3

Meanwhile, mix the dipping sauce ingredients together in a small bowl.

Step 4

To make the batter, sift the dry ingredients into a bowl, mix well and add a generous pinch of salt. When the oil is at temperature, add the cold sparkling water to the dry ingredients and mix it together fast and loosely; a quick stir rather than a whisk is good as you want a few lumps and imperfections.

Step 5

Dip the asparagus into the batter one at a time and gently drop into the oil. Don't put more than 8 in at a time, to prevent the oil temperature from dropping too much. Fry for 2 mins or so or until golden, crisp and buoyant.

Step 6

Remove carefully with a slotted spoon and drain on kitchen paper to soak up excess oil. Bring the oil back up to temperature and repeat until all of your asparagus is cooked. Scoff hot with the dipping sauce on the side.



Bon Appetit!

Don't forget your chippy tea!

Sulgrave is lucky enough to have our yummy fish & chip van visit each month. They have noted past visits being very quiet of late, with a lot of villagers forgetting. Pop it in your diary so you don't forget and lets keep our monthly Saturday nights alive with fresh fish and chippes! It would be a shame to lose them to a busier village.

They are usually popped up outside the village shop around 5:45 – 7pm

Dates below..

Fish & Chip Pop up Van visits for

Sulgrave /Moreton Pinkney



April 4th

May 2nd

May 30th

June 27th

July 25th

August 22nd

September 19th

October 17th

November 14th

December 12th

KIDS ZONE

Grab some crayons and start colouring!



APRIL 2026

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
		1.	2. Annual Parish Council meeting, 7:30pm, Village Hall	3. SHOP CLOSED	4. Fish & Chip van 5:45 – 7pm, shop	5. Holy Communion, 8:15am, Church
6. Easter Egg Hunt, Village shop 11:30am SHOP CLOSED	7.	8. Camera Club meet up	9.	10. Culowrth film night, 6:30pm, Culworth village hall	11. Village Hall car park tidy up 10-12 noon	12.
13. Gardening club talk 7:30, village hall	14. Pocket Park works begin. PARK CLOSED	15.	16. Sewcial 7-9pm, village hall	17.	18. Coffe cake chat 10-12, Village hall	19. Holy Communion, 10:30am, Church
20.	21.	22.	23. . Sewcial 7-9pm, village hall	24.	25.	26. Mattins, 10am, Church
27.	28.	29.	30. . Sewcial 7-9pm, village hall			