

Welcome to Genie's latest 'Village Matters' newsletter

In this issue: planning application for The Grotto, plant sale this coming Saturday, Goring Grocer wins awards, new paperless rail tickets on your phone - plus a lot of other things you may find of interest!



STOP PRESS!

**Plant and Garden Sale to take place this Saturday 28 April!
10am - 3pm
Rectory Garden, Goring**

(This is a correction from Village Matters 15, which stated it would be on 28 May.)

Goring Neighbourhood Plan Consultation by SODC Comments invited on the Goring Neighbourhood Plan

Goring Parish Council is working on a neighbourhood plan, which it has submitted to South Oxfordshire District Council for the next stage of consultations. They are inviting comments on the plan and supporting documents during a six-week publicity period from Thursday 26 April until 5pm on Thursday 7 June 2018.



You can view the Neighbourhood Plan and supporting documents at www.southoxon.gov.uk/goring
Hard copies are available to view at:

- Goring Library, Station Road during the following hours: Mon 9.30-12.30; Tues 9.30-12.30, 14.00-19.00; Thur & Fri 9.30-12.30, 14.00-17.00; Sat 9.30-13.00
- Goring Parish Council offices, Red Cross Road on Mon 14:00-17:00 and Wed 10:00-13:00
- The Catherine Wheel pub 12:00-23:00 daily (22:30 Sundays)
- SODC's office, 135 Eastern Avenue, Milton Park, Abingdon, OX14 4SB during usual opening hours



Plans for a 60-bedroom boutique hotel and private members club in Lower Basildon

The planning application for the development of The Grotto (also known locally as ILAM / Institute of Leisure & Amenity Management), a Grade II-Listed building originating in the 1730s, is currently being considered by West Berkshire Council.

The application was made in the name of SUSG Goring Ltd, a London-based development company. SUSG Ltd has previous experience of sympathetically working with listed buildings to create successful hotels.

An 'Enabling Development Case' was submitted with the application. The reason for this submission is explained in the letter from West Berkshire Council (see letter below).

The current 'Agreed Expiry Date' for this application is 30 April 2018, although the applicant has agreed to extend this to allow the council's specialist consultant sufficient time to fully review the 'Enabling Development Case'.

You can access full details of the application from the link below:

<http://planning.westberks.gov.uk/rpp/index.asp?caseref=17/00186/COMIND>

Related information is available in this other link:

<http://planning.westberks.gov.uk/rpp/index.asp?caseref=17/00187/LBC2>

SUSG Goring Ltd has provided Genie with the following statement:

"The proposals for the Grotto Estate are intended to bring the Grade II listed building back into beneficial use and secure a sustainable long term future for the site. The proposals are necessary to prevent further deterioration to the already dilapidated building, and to ensure that the quality and character of the heritage asset are restored.

The proposals seek to change the use of the building from residential to high-end boutique hotel and private members club with bar, restaurant and spa & leisure facilities (including the refurbishment of the existing tennis court). Local residents and the public will have access to the facilities in the hotel, providing amenity for the local community and an opportunity for this important heritage asset to be enjoyed by all.

Central to the scheme is the sensitive and respectful treatment of the heritage asset and its grounds, with a commitment to understanding and complementing the historical significance of the architecture and its setting in order to limit potential harm.

The works to the Grotto involve the restoration, reconstruction and enhancement of the Grade II-Listed building, which will also be respectfully extended to a similar extent as an already consented scheme. The restoration and extension of the existing building will be funded through enabling development in the form of seven detached lodges and two houses within the grounds.

The lodges contain hotel bedroom suites and are nestled into the sloping site between the existing building and the road, thus minimising any visual impact. The overall landscape design seeks to enhance the existing views of the Grotto, whilst also screening any new development.

The two detached houses are proposed to the east of the site at a distance from the Grotto house and designed with a sensitivity and subservience to the existing buildings both within and outside of the site boundary.

We are greatly looking forward to working with West Berkshire Council to restore the Grotto Estate to its former glory, and provide a new destination for the public, and employment for the local community.”

Below are extracts of a letter from the Development and Planning Department, West Berkshire Council:

“... Development is proposed to assist in repairing the building and bringing it up to habitable standard, making it viable securing the asset for the future, and as this development takes the form of new housing and lodges to be used as accommodation in conjunction with the hotel use, an enabling development case has been made by the developer (enabling development is development that would be unacceptable in planning terms, but would bring a public benefit is securing the future of a place of heritage).

Aside from the enabling development aspects of the scheme, the Council are, and have been, considering the landscape, highways, and ecological impacts, flood risk, impacts on neighbouring amenity, and design. The conclusions of the consultant on whether the development as presented is enabling development will feed into this assessment.”



There are NO local elections on 3 May in South Oxfordshire

Unlike other parts of the county, there will be no elections on 3 May in South Oxfordshire or Vale of White Horse District Councils.

The next scheduled elections will be in May 2019.

Goring Grocer's triple triumph at national Farm Shop/Deli Awards

The Goring Grocer won 3 awards earlier this month including 'Delicatessen of the Year'. In addition to the main national delicatessen award, Goring High Street's popular food shop was 'South East Regional Winner' and 'Newcomer of the Year'.

Owners, Caroline and Stuart Pierrepont, along with their staff are delighted with scooping these awards. The Farm Shop & Deli Awards celebrate the very best standards in the UK's independent, specialist retail market. The expert panel of judges are tasked with recognising the highest levels of service, product knowledge, initiative, innovation and community involvement offered in the country's high streets.



Goring towpath and footpath diversions in May

Following a previous Genie article, more information is now available from the Environment Agency about the forthcoming diversions for work on the bridges and fencing near Goring Mill.

It is anticipated that it will approximately 3 weeks to complete all three separate jobs.

On Tuesday 8 May, a footpath diversion will be set up and work will begin upgrading the access bridge outside Goring Mill to replace the bridge's weakened decking boards in a like- for-like

fashion, with upgraded anti-slip strips. This will enable the bridge to have a restored capacity of 4 tonnes (up from its current 2 tonnes). This work is due be completed on Friday 11th May and the diversion will be removed on completion.

On Monday 14 May, work on two other jobs will begin: 1) The towpath bridge overlooking the rear of George Michael's house. Here, the rotten sections, including posts, which are currently very weak and dangerous, will be replaced. It is hoped that the river levels will allow boat access to the towpath bridge, enabling operatives to safely work from a barge to carry out the required work. 2) An extension of the existing fencing by the mill race will begin to protect the public from the weir.

You can now use your mobile phone as a paperless rail ticket

A new free app from GWR will allow you to buy your ticket online and then use your smart phone to walk through station barriers without a paper ticket.

GWR say it's a green and more efficient way to travel and that if all users of the app were to buy their paper-free tickets this way, it would save a 500 metre high pile of orange rail tickets every year and avoid litter at stations.

For more information, read GWR's press release [Use-your-phone-as-a-rail-ticket](#) and follow the links to get going with the new GWR app.



**The Royal
Berkshire**
SHOOTING
SCHOOL

Leading UK gun maker buys local shooting school

The Royal Berkshire Shooting School (RBSS), set in 65 acres between Streatley, Basildon and Aldworth, acknowledged as one of the UK's top shooting schools, was bought on 3 April by James Purdey & Sons. The British gun maker was established in 1814 and is one of the top manufacturers of shotguns and rifles and has held Royal Warrants from every monarch since King Edward VII in 1886.

Purdey, in turn, is owned by the Swiss luxury goods company, The Richemont Group, which includes brands such as Cartier, Van Cleef & Arpels, Mont Blanc & Dunhill.

<http://rbss.co.uk/shooting-school/>

**To comment on any of these stories please email contact@genienews.org
To send in news items, use news@genienews.org**

Village Matters reports on topical events and items of interest to local residents. There is no specific publication schedule, as it goes out 'as and when' sufficient material justifies a newsletter. Unless stated otherwise, the items will refer to Goring-on-Thames, Streatley, South Stoke and the surrounding villages.

If you like it, please forward to your friends and encourage them to subscribe. Also, to ensure you consistently receive the e-mails it is suggested that you either 'whitelist' subscribe@genienews.org or **add us to your contact list.**

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