

# **THE LIVING CHURCHYARD**

**OF ST. DENYS, STANFORD IN THE VALE**

**A GUIDE TO GOD'S ACRE**



**MARGARET GRANT**

**2016**

## **GOD'S ACRE**

*The churchyard, God's acre, is one of the most enduring features of the landscape. Together with the church it forms the physical as well as the spiritual centre of the community. It is the most sacred and usually the most ancient enclosure in the parish. Some churchyards may even be older than the church itself, having their roots in pre-Christian ceremony. The memorials, public and private, are a tangible link between the inhabitants today and their forebears. The churchyard is the centre of communal worship and celebration, the site of the most important occasions of life, baptism, marriage and burial.*

*John Talbot White*

Quotation taken from the book "God's Acre" by Francesca Greenoak

Published by Stanford in the Vale and District Local History Society.

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## **Foreword by the Vicar of Stanford in the Vale**

On moving to Stanford in the Vale in 1986, Margaret Grant brought her passion for wildlife to our village and started a Wildlife Watch in Stanford in the Vale Primary School, with the encouragement and support of the then head teacher, Margaret Williams.

The idea of using Stanford churchyard as a place to study wildlife came about in 1990. For some time churchyards, nationally, had been considered valuable wildlife habitats. So in conjunction with my predecessor, the Reverend Michael Wenham, Margaret drew up a management plan with some areas set aside specially to encourage wildlife. Since then generations of children, aged 8-11 years, have carried out studies, recorded their findings and produced displays for the church notice boards which, in turn, inform the general public of the value of this ancient habitat.

Margaret is a very humble person, and it has not surprised me that no-where in this book has she recorded herself that in 2003, she was awarded an MBE in the Queen's Birthday Honours, the citation being *"For services to nature conservation in Stanford in the Vale, Oxfordshire"*. On my arrival in Stanford in 2013, the Bishop of Dorchester wrote to me asking if I would like to nominate a lay person who had given outstanding service to the parish. I did not have to think hard for long. I nominated Margaret, and she was awarded the Diocese of Oxford's *St Birinus Fellowship* at Dorchester Abbey for her faithful service to St Denys Church, and its churchyard.

I am deeply grateful to Margaret for her faithful service to God in caring for our churchyard over many years, and I am delighted that Margaret has shared much of what she has come to learn about our churchyard having spent literally thousands of hours amid the headstones, flowers, plants, trees and other wildlife which make up such a special place for villagers to spend time in.

Stanford churchyard is precious to many generations of villagers, and as you read through this little book, you, like I will become fascinated by the 'Living Churchyard' as Margaret aptly describes it. I warmly commend this booklet to you and am sure it will become a most valuable resource for many generations to come.

**Revd Paul Eddy  
Vicar  
Stanford Vicarage  
Church Green, Stanford In the Vale  
SN7 8HU**

# 1. INTRODUCTION

The Living Churchyard: A Guide to God's acre is a record of the wildlife, conservation management and history of the churchyard of St Denys, Stanford in the Vale.

The Wildlife Sanctuary, representing specific areas of the churchyard that have been set aside for the enhancement of wildlife, became a reality in 1990 through the encouragement and support of the Vicar, the Rev. Michael Wenham, and St Denys Parochial Church Council and Stanford Primary School's Headteacher, Margaret Williams. The wildlife and conservation sections in this document bring together information gathered through project work of the school's Wildlife Watch Group and its leader Margaret Grant during the period 1990 - 2015. It includes a section on the formation of the Wildlife Sanctuary and the subsequent care of the churchyard with involvement from numerous children and adults. The wildlife records provide a snapshot of the diversity of species to be found in the churchyard in the late 20th century and early 21st century.

The section on the history of the churchyard has been compiled from books written by Violet M. Howse, namely her *Stanford in the Vale, A Parish Record* (5 parts, privately published in 1962) and her transcriptions of *Stanford in the Vale Churchwardens Accounts 1552 - 1725* (printed 1987) and *Stanford in the Vale Churchwardens Accounts 1753 - 1906* (printed in 1990). Other information has come by word-of-mouth from parishioners who have lived in the village for many years and who have kindly shared their memories.

It is hoped that the wildlife records in The Living Churchyard will be of value to future generations and that the whole document will be of interest to members of the local community and to visitors interested in the churchyard area.

The chapter on the Village Memorial was written by David Axford to whom sincere thanks are due.

The author of this document acknowledges that its publication has been made possible with encouragement from Stanford in the Vale and District Local History Society and the generous financial support of the Stanford in the Vale Public Purposes Charity. Information within the document is as accurate as possible, but it is acknowledged that some mistakes may have been inadvertently overlooked. Any corrections, inaccuracies or additional information should be passed to the Secretary of the Stanford in the Vale and District Local History Society. All photographs were taken by Margaret Grant with the exception of the view of the Village Memorial on page 53 which was taken by David Axford.

# WILDLIFE SANCTUARY

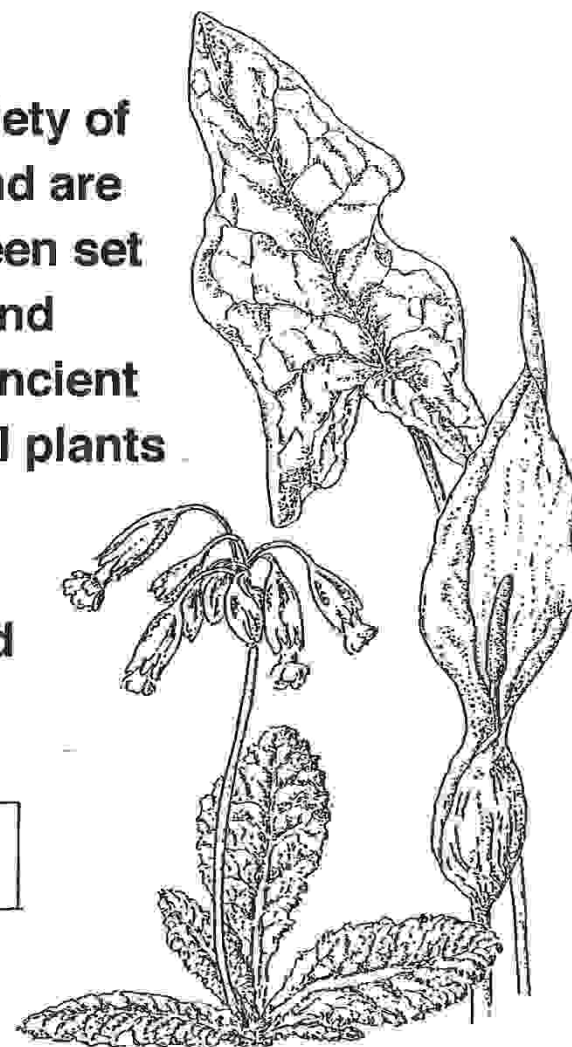
Within this large churchyard there is a great variety of wildlife. Whilst some areas are in regular use and are maintained for convenience, other parts have been set aside to protect and encourage the rare plants and birds, mammals, insects and butterflies in this ancient habitat. The long grass will remain unmown until plants have seeded.

**PLEASE help to preserve the variety and beauty of God's creation in this place.**



Project of Stanford in the Vale Primary School  
Wildlife Watch Group.  
Advised by the Parochial Church Council and BBOWT.

**Further information is available in church.**



## **2. WILDLIFE SANCTUARY**

The idea of establishing a wildlife sanctuary in the churchyard came about at the end of 1989, when several factors pointed in that direction:

1. Nationally there was, at that time, a growing awareness that old churchyards were being acknowledged as valuable pockets of original species-rich pasture in a landscape which was being increasingly dominated by intensive agriculture and building development. Such areas are worthy of special care and it was felt that St. Denys' Churchyard came into that category. In 1987 a number of national nature conservation organisations had joined together to create "The Living Churchyard Project", a scheme designed to help churches see the potential for enhancing wildlife interests in the management of churchyards. An information pack, produced by the organisations, gave valuable guidance on how to create an appropriate management plan.
2. Locally the Stanford in the Vale Primary School Wildlife Watch Group (the junior section of the County Wildlife Trusts), which was set up in 1987, was interested in finding a suitable place nearby where the children could study wildlife. The churchyard seemed ideal. The Vicar, Parochial Church Council (PCC) and the Diocese, when approached, agreed that setting up a Wildlife Sanctuary in the churchyard would greatly enhance the area. The head teacher of the Primary School welcomed the opportunity for the school and church to work together on this project.
3. At that particular time funds were being made available for projects such as the one being proposed for St. Denys' churchyard. BBONT (Berks, Bucks and Oxon Naturalist Trust) and National Power, Didcot, had set up an Environmental Liaison scheme whereby schools and Watch Groups, who wished to be involved with practical nature conservation, could apply for a grant to help towards initial expenses. St. Denys' churchyard project was considered a suitable one by the donors and the money received was spent on practical equipment and a special grass and wildflower seed mix which was to be used to reseed an area of the churchyard where rubbish had recently been removed.

Work started straight away in January 1990 with children preparing the ground and sowing the flower meadow seed. Bird watching sessions became a regular feature of lunch time visits and from 1990 to 2015 generations of Wildlife Watch Group members have benefitted from the chance to study churchyard wildlife close up. Over the years after school club activities have included projects with titles such as "Looking at local trees", "Flower surveys", "Looking at lichen", "Nature Scavenger Hunt", "Environmental I-spy", "Wild Art" and the ever popular "Mini-beast hunt". Lists of species, photographs and children's art work have featured in displays in the church, which have enabled the general public to appreciate the diversity of wildlife to be found in the churchyard. In the early 1990s a management plan for the churchyard was drawn up. It was designed to be sympathetic for wildlife and also for people who regularly use the churchyard as a thoroughfare and to attend graves.



In some areas away from footpaths the grass would be left to grow long to benefit flowering plants and butterflies, while in the more public areas grass would be kept short. The original management plan has been adjusted from time to time to fit in with changing circumstances, but it remains fairly similar to the early copy reproduced on pages 6 to 8.

Over the years since 1990 mowing the grass has been undertaken by teams of volunteers using a variety of machines from the simplest to the more powerful. In recent years the larger areas of grass have been cut by the Parish Council using a tractor style ride-on mower.

Twice a year, in March and September, working parties, sometimes of up to 20 volunteers, help with extra jobs including cutting and raking hay, strimming, tree trimming, ivy removal and general tidying. One or two volunteers work throughout the year attending to problems as they arise. The dedication of all these volunteers is greatly appreciated; they all help to keep the churchyard in good order for the benefit of the whole village.



ST. DENYS' CHURCH  
STANFORD IN THE VALE

CHURCHYARD MANAGEMENT PLAN

MOWING REGIME

REVISED      APRIL 1999



## LEGEND



Trees.



Pathways created by regular mowing.



Grass cut regularly.



Conservation areas:

Perimeter strip, 2 yds wide, cut July and/or Sept.

Area south of church cut early spring. Cut down large patches of cowparsley April, but leave grass to grow. Cut all cowparsley before seeding. Whole area cut Sept., though some grass could remain long over the winter.



Whole area cut early spring, then patches left for spring flowers to bloom; cut June/July; create new patches for summer flowers to bloom. Cut whole area in Sept.



Sensitive areas. Cutting time will depend on the flowering season of the special plants.

### Special spring flowering plants.

C. Cowslip	- Mar. April. May.
G. Goldilocks buttercup	- April
L. Lady's smock	- April, May.
Ms. Meadow saxifrage	- April May.
P. Primrose	- Feb. Mar. April.
Ss. Spiked sedge	- May-June.
V. Sweet violet	- Feb. Mar.
W. Field woodrush (Good Friday Grass)	- April. May.

### Special summer flowering plants.

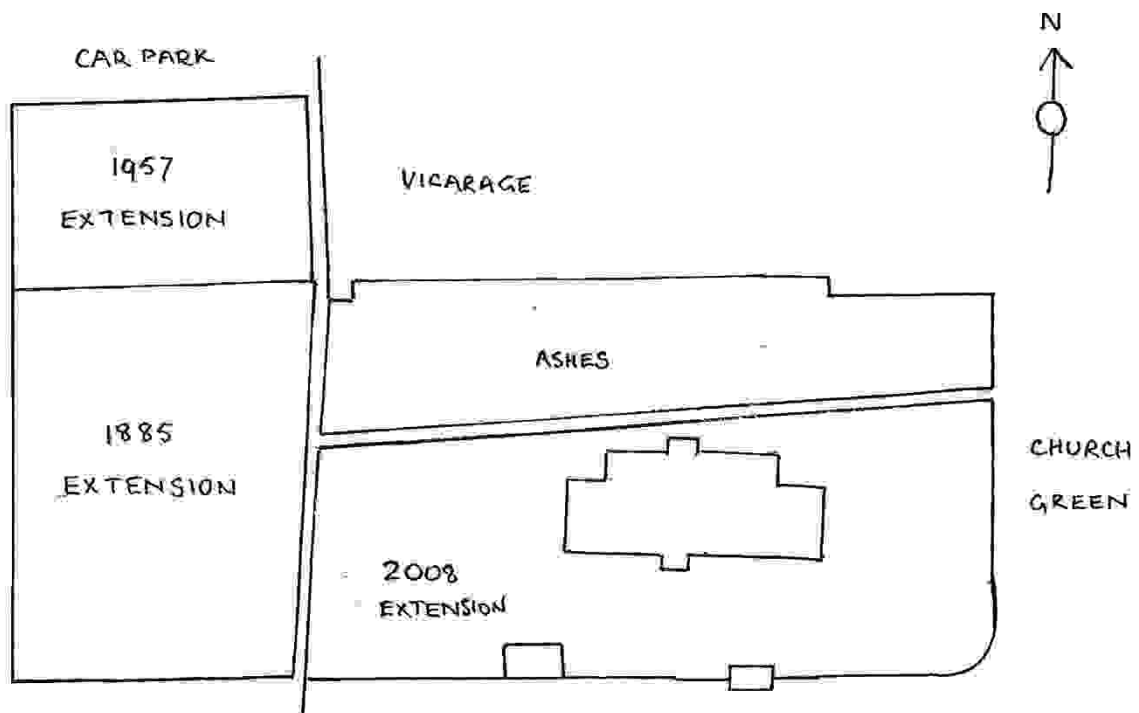
B. Lady's bedstraw	- June. July. Aug.
H. Self-heal	- July. Aug.
I. Stinking Iris	- June.
N. Valerian	- May. June. July
Ox Ox-eye daisy & many other meadow flowers	- April - July
T. Birdsfoot trefoil.	- June. July. Aug.
Bl. Biddieien	- July. Aug.

The mowing regime has been designed to create conditions suitable for plants to flower and seed and to provide a variety of habitats where insects can thrive. These creatures will, in turn, provide food for birds and small mammals.

## Living Churchyard project on display in the Church



### 3. BURIAL GROUNDS



The consecrated land around the church has for centuries been used for burial. Tombstones from the late 17th C. to the late 19th C. can be seen in the oldest section of the churchyard which surrounds the church. Towards the end of the 19th C. more space for burials was needed with the result that the churchyard was extended westward in 1885. A copy of the legal document recording the transfer of ownership is reproduced at the end of this section and a transcription is given here.

*I, Charles Morrison of Basildon Park in the County of Berks Esquire, under the authority of The Consecration of Churchyards' Act 1867 do hereby freely and voluntarily give, grant and convey unto the person or persons or Corporation sole or aggregate in whom the Churchyard or the burial place known as the Churchyard of Stanford in the Vale in the County of Berks and Diocese of Oxford, is now vested his or their heirs or successors.*

*All that piece of Land adjoining to and being on the West side of the Churchyard aforesaid, and containing two roods or thereabouts as the same is delineated in the plan hereon indorsed and thereon coloured pink; And all right tithe and interest in*

*the same and every part thereof to be held for ever  
as part of the said Churchyard or burial place.  
Signed sealed and Delivered  
in the presence of*

*Fredk. J. Gordon      C. Morrison.*

*53 Coleman St  
London E 6  
Accountant*

Information copied from documents relating to the requisition and consecration of the extension is as follows:

*1885. 2 roods bought. Half acre.*

*Purchase date 15th June 1885.*

Purchase document signed by:

*E. Penwarne-Wellings, Vicar*

*T.M. Davenport*

Consecration Petition document dated 6th July 1885. (16th referred to in another document)

Signed by:

*E. Penwarne-Wellings, Vicar*

*Albert Whitfield, Church Warden*

*George Willis      “      “*

The Churchwardens' Accounts record this transaction as follows:

*1885 Receipts.*

*C. Morrison Esq. half an acre to enlarge the churchyard and donation £50. 0s. 0d.*

There is also reference to payments at that time:

*To Mr Wm. Kimber, Steventon, for palisading, fixing and painting to enclose new churchyard, £68. 11. 6d.*

*For spiked wire fence by footpath in the New Churchyard. £9. 0s. 0d. (This was removed in 1904).*

*To Robert Tucker for shrubs and planting in the churchyard £2. 12s. 0d.*

*Consecration cost of new churchyard £4. 9s. 0d.*

It is assumed that the railings which exist today are the ones erected in 1885. Fixed to the railings at intervals along the southern boundary are small metal plaques, each with a number on it, 1-14, presumably identifying the rows of the graves. There is a record in the church archives of the names of the people buried in this area, but unfortunately not the position of their graves.

In 1957 there was a need to create more space for burials. The churchyard was extended once again, this time into land owned by the church, known as Glebe Land. A copy of the map showing its location is reproduced at the end of this section.

The wording, copied from documents relating to the purchase and consecration of the extension, is as follows:

*.....Your Petitioners therefore humbly pray that your Lordship may be pleased to separate from all common and profane uses the land so conveyed and to consecrate and set it apart for ever as a burial place for the dead of the Parish of Stanford in the Vale aforesaid.*

*Vicar J L Street  
Churchwardens G B J Kellie  
E O Groves*

*Conveyance 21st August 1957*

*Consecration 5th May 1958*

Document signed by:

*Eric Reading (Bishop)  
Harold Manslidge, Rec. of Shellingford  
Clive H.G. Davey, Vicar of Faringdon with Little Coxwell*

*1485 sq. yards or thereabouts*

*Laid out and fenced ready for burial.*

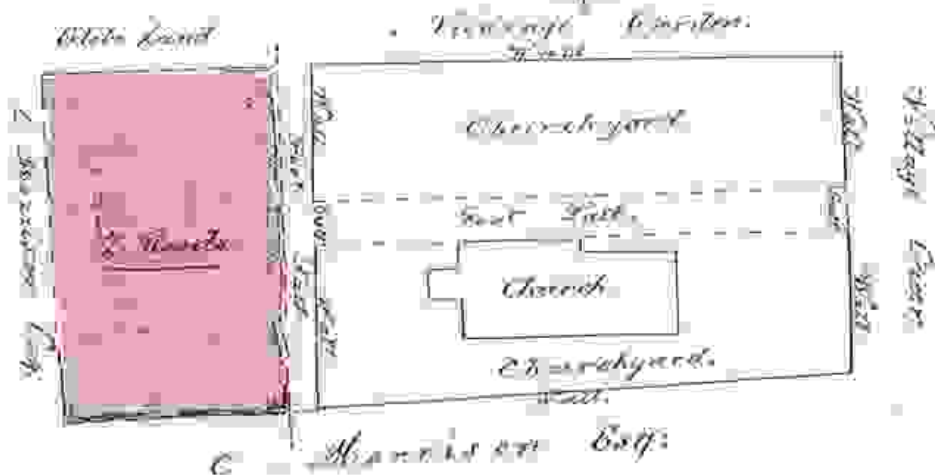
*Date printed on map 23.4.57*

It is assumed that the railings, on the northern side of the old extension, were moved to form the new northern boundary. They still exist today and still attached are a few old metal plaques similar to the ones on the old southern boundary. The space created along the western side of the new area was filled with chain link fencing fixed to wooden posts. For the latest update on the western boundary see the information in the “Boundaries, Gateways and Paths” section.

The 1957 extension became full in 2008. Since then burials have taken place in an area of the oldest section of the churchyard where there were no memorial stones.

An area of land opposite the north door of the church, and a little to the west, has been used for the interment of ashes since the early 1980’s.





Charles Morrison of Bresiden flanking  
the County of Bucks Esquire, under the authority  
of The Incorporation of Churchyards Act 1864  
do hereby freely and voluntarily give, grant and  
convey unto the persons or persons or Corporation  
sole or aggregate in whom the Churchyard or the  
burial place known as the Churchyard of St. Michael  
in the Vale in the County of Bucks and Diocese of  
Oxford, is now vested his or their heirs or successors  
All that piece of Land adjoining to and being  
on the West side of the Churchyard aforesaid, and  
containing two acres or thereabouts as the same is  
delimited in the plan hereon enclosed and thereon  
coloured pink, And all right title and interest in  
the same and every part thereof to be held for ever  
as part of the said Churchyard or burial place

Dated this Fifteenth day of June in  
the year of our Lord One thousand eight hundred and  
eighty five.

Signed, sealed and delivered  
in the presence of  
Hedderburn  
B. Colman  
Lange  
Graham

Morrison

The document below and the one opposite were photocopied in 1990 from the originals, which were housed, at that time, in the Oxfordshire County Council's archives stored in the basement of County Hall.



#### 4. BOUNDARIES, GATEWAYS AND PATHS.

The churchyard has been surrounded by stone walls for centuries, but it is not known when they were first built. There are many entries in the Church Wardens' Accounts referring to work carried out during the 17th, 18th, 19th and 20th centuries. Examples are as follows.

*1622 Mend church gate, 4d.*

*1623 Thomas Stone carrying 3 loads of stone to amend churchyard wall, 1s. 10d.*

*1624 Henry Rayner paid to make churchyard wall next to the Green, 7s. 0d.*

*1792 Lime for churchyard wall, 10d.*

*1846 Bill for repairing churchyard wall, 7s. 0d.*

*1881 Repairing churchyard wall, 7s. 0d.*

*1883 To W. Williams bill for repairing churchyard gates and putting up 2 new ones, £5. 13s. 6d.*

*1893 Repairing churchyard wall, 8s. 6d.*

1903-4 The Church Wardens' Accounts list in detail the rebuilding work carried out by Messrs. J.E. Gregory of Wantage on the wall alongside Church Green. It was topped with blue coping stones and those stones are still there today. New gateposts were provided and the gates repaired.

Total cost £34. 4s. 2d.

The same year the wire fence, between the old and the new churchyard, was taken down and an iron gate moved to NW entrance. The iron fencing round the new churchyard was repainted.

Total cost £9. 0s. 0d.

In recent years parts of the stone walls have collapsed and lime mortar has been used to repair these sections. In 2006 the wall, which borders the Manor House drive, was rebuilt by the owners of the Manor House and the height increased. It was topped with stones set on end, this type of finish being termed "Cock and Hen". Similar topping was also added to the section of the Manor House wall westward of the churchyard mower shed.

The most recent repairs were made to a section of wall between The Grange Nursing Home and the churchyard. A large horse chestnut tree, growing close to the wall in the garden of The Grange, was pushing against the wall making it in danger of falling. When the tree was felled some of the wall collapsed. The wall was eventually repaired by the owners of The Grange.

Over time the fence along the western boundary of the 1957 extension deteriorated and needed to be replaced. In 2002 funding was obtained to pay for new metal railings chosen to be similar in style to the old ones, but without spikes. At the same time it was decided to plant a new hedge along the full length of the western boundary of the churchyard to provide a screen and also to create a wildlife habitat. Mr John Savings from Appleton, a well known champion hedgelaying who had recently taught H.R.H. Prince Charles the skill of hedge laying, was given the job of installing the new railings, which he did in July 2002. On the 30th November that year he planted most of the new hedge leaving a small section for parishioners and members of the Wildlife Watch group to finish at a special ceremony the following day. As the year 2002 marked the Queen's Golden Jubilee it was decided to name this the Golden Jubilee Hedge.

Details of the hedge are as follows:

Approximately 352 plants were used.  
They were bare-rooted, 2 year old saplings, 44 - 60cm tall.  
They were planted 5 per metre in a double row, zig-zag fashion.  
Only native species were used.

60% Hawthorn	10% Field Maple	5% Spindle
10% Hazel	10% Dogwood	5% Dog rose

Existing old hedge plants were cut back hard, and have sprouted again from the base.  
Species that have regenerated included hawthorn, holly, privet, blackthorn, spindle and butcher's broom.

The following year, 2003, turned out to have an exceptionally prolonged drought during the spring and early summer. In order to help the young plants survive they were watered almost daily for 2 to 3 months. These efforts were rewarded as only 6 out of a total of 352 plants died. The hedge is maturing well and is trimmed annually along both sides and the height is kept to that of the railings.

A few years later the spikes of all the old railings were sawn off to abide by the current health and safety regulations.

The Lych Gate, set in the wall which divides the Manor House from the churchyard, was built sometime between the late 1920's and early 1930's. One of the Church Wardens at that time was Vice-Admiral Francis Clifton-Brown. He lived at Stanford Place (near Faringdon) and would travel to church by car. Ownership of a car in those days was a rarity. He liked to park his car in the drive of the Manor House, which was where the other Church Warden, Hubert Howse, lived with his wife, Violet, and their family. The Lych Gate provided Clifton-Brown and the Howse family with a direct route to the church. It was never a public entrance as it only led to a private drive.

There used to be a gate in the wall which divides the former Vicarage (now The Grange) from the churchyard. This gate led along what old plans call the Vicarage Path to the Priest's Path which in turn led to the Priest's Door in the north wall of the chancel. The gateway was blocked up in the early 1980's when the former Vicarage was sold and the new Vicarage built.

The public footpath through the churchyard is marked on old maps and according to references in the Church Wardens' Accounts it has been looked after by the church over the centuries:

1786 *Pd. to John Arnold for laying the church pavement down, 1s. 8d.*

1894-5 *Chas. Wicks, Bill 5 Forest stone, carting and laying repair pathway, £3. 10s. 0d.*

1898-9 *Jesse Harris repairing footpath, 13s. 0d.*

In her book, *A Parish Record*, Violet Howse comments "*The main footpath was improved in 1806 by laying of fine paving stones, but alas these were removed a few years ago (ie 1950's) to make way for labour saving asphalt.*"

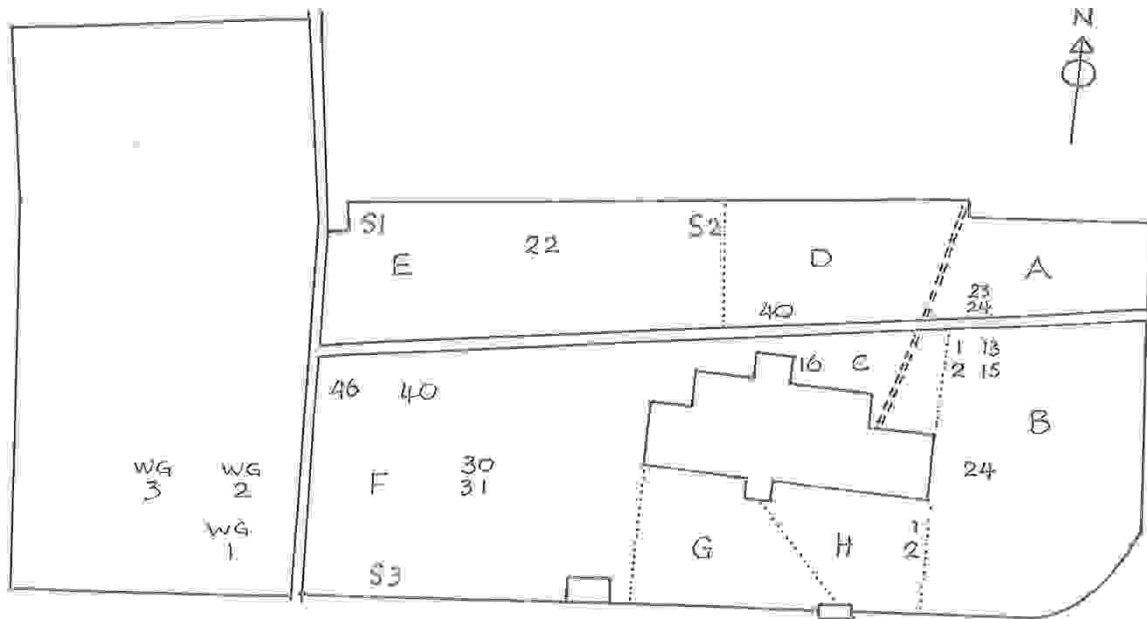
There is one other item of historical interest worth recording here.

1882-3 *Payment . . . . . R. Wicks for removing ground around the tower and the church and putting down a brick gutter etc. £15. 9s. 7d.*

1992-93 Jock Hamilton-Baillie and a number of helpers relaid the entire gutter using the same bricks. There is an inscription in the cement at a point below the south side of the tower which reads:

GUTTER RELAID 1992-93 J.R.E. H-B.

## 5. HISTORIC TOMBSTONES



Violet Howse undertook the enormous task of recording all the old tombstones in the area around the church, of which there were 314. She transcribed the inscriptions, took photographs and gave each tombstone a number which was plotted on a plan to indicate its position. She divided the churchyard into eight sections and label them A to H. While compiling these details she added extra information which she obtained from church records of burials and marriages. She gave this remarkable historic record to the Bodleian library in 1972. Recently the Stanford in the Vale and District Local History Society obtained permission to scan these records. They can be accessed by applying to the Society.

In her book, *A Parish Record*, Part 3, Violet Howse recounts stories associated with some of the oldest tombstones, a few of which are quoted in the following pages along with some additional information taken from the Bodleian records. On the accompanying plan her letters and numbers are used to identify the position of each tombstone described. Photographs taken recently are reproduced at the end of this section.

In November 2015 two professional geologists, Nina Morgan and Philip Powell, were invited to lead a conducted tour of the churchyard. The focus was on a dozen tombstones selected to represent the various types of rock used for memorials over the centuries. They named the types of stone used, where and when they might have been quarried, and talked about the geological formation of the rocks which were formed many millions of years ago. Brief reference about the rock type is added at the end of each tombstone described below.

The words in *italics* are quotations from Violet Howse's book and Bodleian records.

**D40.** *A stone of interest lies alongside the central path exactly opposite the north porch. It is a long, flat stone with head and foot stones. It was erected many years ago to commemorate a man who was killed in a fall from the tower when it was in the hands of the builders.*

The inscription reads:

**DESESED  
INTERED IN THE  
YEAR OF OUR LORD  
1681**

Geology: Made of oolitic limestone, probably quarried in Burford. Heavily covered in lichen which obscures the rock surface.

**C16.** *Another stone of interest lies near the edge of the churchyard path, close to the east wall of the north porch. It is about a foot high and just over a foot wide with deeply cut lettering.*

The inscription reads:

**NON NISI PARVULES  
As Christ to Babes  
The kingdom gave.  
Here lies his Promise  
In this grave.**

*Tradition asserts this is a grave of a gypsy child.*

Geology: This special type of oolitic limestone, estimated to be over 165 million years old, came from quarries at North Leigh, Oxfordshire.

**B1, 2, B13, 15, A23, 24.** A group of tombstones of the Strong family lies south and north of the main path not far from the churchyard gate. Historians are uncertain whether the Strong family of Stanford in the Vale is the same as the Strong family of Taynton, so the story below, which Violet Howse recounts, may not be the local family at all. However, it is worth repeating it here as that is what Violet understood at the time of writing in the 1950's. The following is an abridged version of the information she recorded.

*The beautifully carved tombstones were the work of the Strong family who were famous masons of their day. .... In 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> Centuries the Strongs made a fortune supplying stone from their quarries at Taynton, near Burford in Oxfordshire, which included material for Blenheim Palace. After the Great Fire in 1666 great quantities were also sold to London masons for the rebuilding of St. Paul's Cathedral and many other buildings. Valentine Strong, who died in 1662, had 10 children. Thomas, the eldest of his 6 sons all of whom became masons, carried on the family business upon his father's death. He undertook to build several London churches before becoming one of the principal contractors for St. Paul's Cathedral's reconstruction after the Great Fire, laying the foundation stone with his own hands in 1675. .... On his death, Edward a younger brother, took over the business employing in 1694 as many as 65 masons on St. Paul's. From 1698 to 1707 Edward had the contract for the north west quarter of the dome, laying the last stone in the lantern in 1708. .... Edward was regarded by Sir Christopher Wren as a leading builder of his time. .... John and Timothy set up business in Stanford in the Vale and descendants of John continued to live in the district.*

**B13.** *This is a tall weathered headstone with a hog back between this and a footstone, deeply carved with a skull.*

The inscription reads:

Headstone

To  
the Memory of  
**HENRY STRONG**  
the son of  
**JOHN STRONG**  
and **MARY** his wife  
Late of **LONDON**  
who died **January 13th**  
**1770 Aged 77 years**

Footstone

**Mary wife of John  
STRONG who died  
Dec. ye AD  
1714**

Geology: The stones commemorating the Strong family are made of oolitic limestone most likely quarried at Taynton near Burford. The engravings would either be the work of masons at the quarries or by the Strong family masons in Stanford in the Vale. The style of carving is typical of the 18<sup>th</sup> Century.

**B24.** *About 21.5 feet from the east wall of the chancel lies a 13<sup>th</sup> Century coffin lid, similar to the three placed in the north porch many years ago. This one is 6ft 5.5 ins. long and 1ft 8ins. at the widest point. There is a drawing of it by W.H. Ryland dated 1898 in the Bodleian records. In recent years grass has grown over the stone obscuring it from view. In 2015 the grass was removed revealing the stone. The carving on the surface matches that shown on the old drawing and can be clearly seen on the photograph taken in 2015. See photograph and drawing at the end of this section.*

Geology: Oolitic limestone most likely quarried locally as, in those days, transport over long distances would have been a problem. Nothing is known of the person buried here, but it could be someone of importance.

**H1.** Grade II listed. *One of two richly carved, thick headstones south of the east end of the chancel.*

The inscription reads

**Here  
Lyeth the Body of  
Ann ye wife of Richard  
Church who departed  
March ye 8  
1717**

**H2.** Grade II listed. *The second of two fine, thickly carved headstones.*

The inscription reads:

**Here lyeth the body  
of Richard Church**



**who departed 8  
of  
January 1701**

From the church registers: *Marr. 1636, Nov 3<sup>rd</sup> Richard Church of Stanford and Ann Bunce of Frilford.*

Geology: Oolitic limestone probably quarried in Taynton or Burford. Carving design typical of late 17<sup>th</sup> Century and early 18<sup>th</sup> Century.

The section of the churchyard south of the church (H on the plan) has been called the Goosey burial ground. Goosey church did not have its own consecrated burial ground until the 1860's or 70's. Before that the people of Goosey had to carry their dead to Stanford along the field path, which today is still referred to as The Coffin Path.

**F46.** Grade II listed. *This table top tomb was originally surrounded by iron railings for which socket holes still remain.*

The inscription on the south side reads:

**Here lyeth the Body of  
MRS MARY BUCKLEY  
Wife of JOHN BUCKLEY  
Citizen of London  
and only child of  
MR THOMAS AND MRS JANE VEZEY  
She died Nov 9th 1784  
Aged 25 years**

Inscriptions on the other three sides refer to other members of the Vezey family with dates of death ranging from 1785 to 1800, the latest date being that of the grand-daughter of Thomas Vezey.

Geology: Sandstone, a sedimentary rock, light coloured and strong. It is difficult to see as this tomb is well covered with lichen. The formation layers in this type of rock, known as "bedding", can clearly be seen on some of the sandstone buttresses on the south side of the church building.

**F40.** *A little east of the above tombstone is another tomb bearing an unusual design, consisting of a 7ft. 4ins. long flat stone, 2ft. 5ins. wide, placed level with the ground.*

*The story goes that a representation of a 5ft. 4ins. long “frying pan”, carved lengthwise on the face of the stone, commemorates an old gypsy woman who lost her life while doing the family cooking. The hot fat bespattered her, with the result that her clothing caught alight, from fat or fire is not known, with the inevitable sad result. This could be a late 13<sup>th</sup> century coffin lid, incised with a cross, similar to the ones fixed to the walls of the north porch. This story, which Violet Howse recounts, is pure legend and has been passed down through the generations. Jasmine Howse, Violet’s daughter, says the “gypsy” tombstone was damaged by a heavy vehicle being driven over it when work was going on around there. The crack can clearly be seen in the drawing done by Violet’s husband Hubert, in the 1950’s. When grass was removed from the stone in 2015 further damage was revealed, now making it difficult to decipher the shape of the “frying pan”. See photograph and drawing at the end of this section.*

Geology: Oolitic limestone. Like the other 13<sup>th</sup> century coffin lids it was most likely to have been quarried locally. A stone of this size and age would most likely mark the burial of a person of local importance.

**F30, F31.** Two beautifully carved tombstones set side by side. Martha was one of eleven children of Stanford farmer William Penstone.

F30 inscription reads:

**To the memory  
of MARTHA WIFE of  
WILLIAM RICHARDS  
who died  
12th February 1838  
Aged 55**

F31 inscription reads:

**To the Memory  
of  
BENJ. RICHARDS  
who died 28th Dec  
1848**

Geology: Pennant sandstone, formed about 313 million years ago, contains quartz, feldspar, mica and small fragments of coal. Probably quarried in South Wales or the Forest of Dean. By the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century stone could be transported over longer distances.

**E22.** This is one of a number of tombstones bearing the name Wicks, many of the Wicks family were local masons and builders.

The inscription reads:

**Sacred  
to the Memory  
of  
ELIZABETH WICKS  
DIED NOVEMBER 15th 1922  
AGED 84 YEARS**

Geology: Carrara marble is the name given to marble quarried around the Northern Alps. Under a hand lens carrara marble appears to have a granular, sugary texture and can look like dirty snow. By the 20<sup>th</sup> century, when this lady died, stones for memorials could be imported from the continent.

During the 43 years since Violet Howse completed the transcription of the inscriptions of the old churchyard tombstones the elements have taken their toll. Today a lot of the wording is no longer legible. The deterioration of the surface of the stones has been more rapid during the past 50 years than during the previous 100 to 150 years, possibly the result of air pollution. The growth of lichen also obscures the lettering. These factors make her work even more valuable as it is a permanent historical record of the people of Stanford.

Three headstones, which have more recently been added to the 1885 extension, are worthy of note. These are the War Grave Commission stones. They honour three Stanford men who died as a result of their war service, one in 1920, who fought in the First World War and two in the 1940's who fought in the Second World War. The headstones are made of Portland Stone and designed in exactly the same manner as all the stones one sees in the War Grave cemeteries throughout this country and abroad. The positions of these headstones are marked on the plan labelled WG1, WG2, WG3.

The inscriptions read:

**WG1.**

**7584517 WO 11 (ARMR QMS)  
S. J. PERRY  
R.E.M.E.  
19th AUGUST 1946  
AGED 31  
THY PURPOSE LORD  
WE CANNOT SEE  
BUT ALL IS WELL  
THAT'S DONE BY THEE**

**WG2.**

**1675430 GUNNER  
A. RIXON  
ROYAL ARTILLERY  
15th JANUARY 1943 AGE 33**

**THE LORD IS MY SHEPHERD  
I SHALL NOT WANT**

**WG3.**

**11356 PRIVATE  
F. W. JONES  
MACHINE GUN CORPS  
4th DECEMBER 1920**

Geology: Portland stone is a type of limestone formed 145 million years ago and is made up predominantly of ooliths. It was chosen by the War Graves Commission because it is readily available, retains its pale colour as it weathers and holds inscriptions well. It is still quarried on the Isle of Portland.

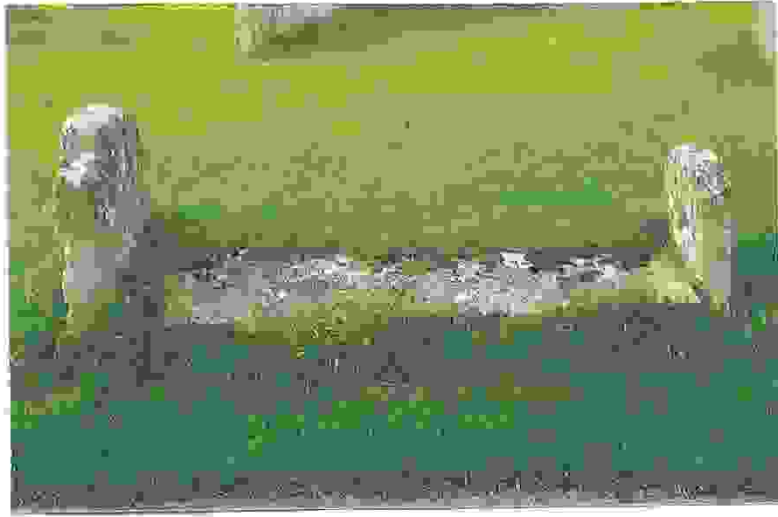
In recent years many of the oldest tombstones have started to lean, some dangerously so and one or two have fallen. In 2008 a professional stonemason reset 50 of these stones into a vertical position, securing their stability. This was done in the interests of retaining historical records, preserving the lichen and for health and safety reasons. The Public Purposes Charity provided the funds to allow this vital work to be done.

In recent years three seats have been provided by parishioners as memorials to family members. They are marked on the plan as S1, S2, S3.

S1. Metal seat in memory of Letty and Jock Hamilton-Baillie.

S2. Wooden seat in memory of Jim and Robin Moore.

S3. Wooden seat in memory of Shirley Inez Ely.

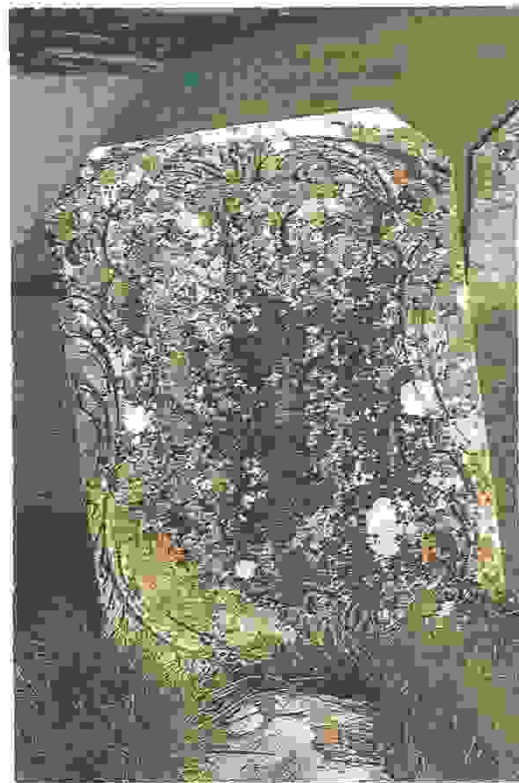


**D 40**



**C 16**

**B 13**





**Bodleian Library**

Drawing by  
W.H. Ryland,  
of 13th C.  
tombstone

**B 24**





**H1**

**H2**



**H1**

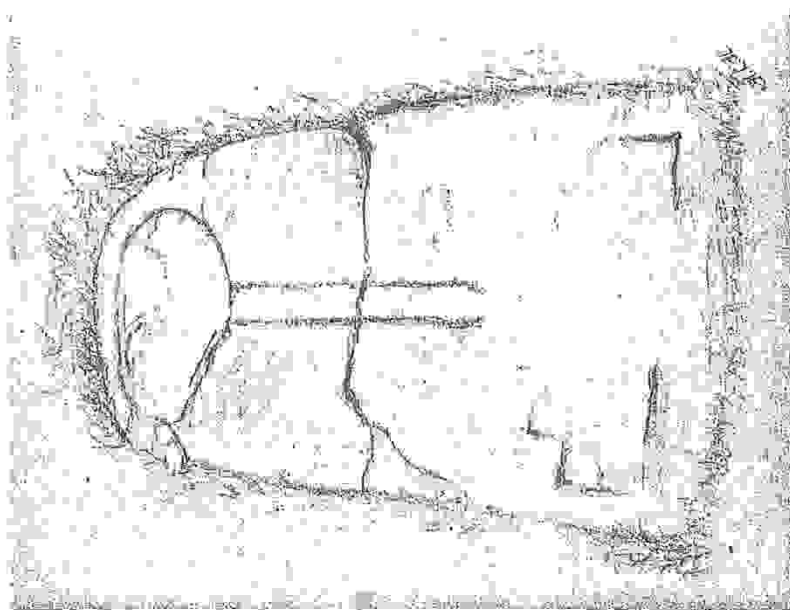


**H2**





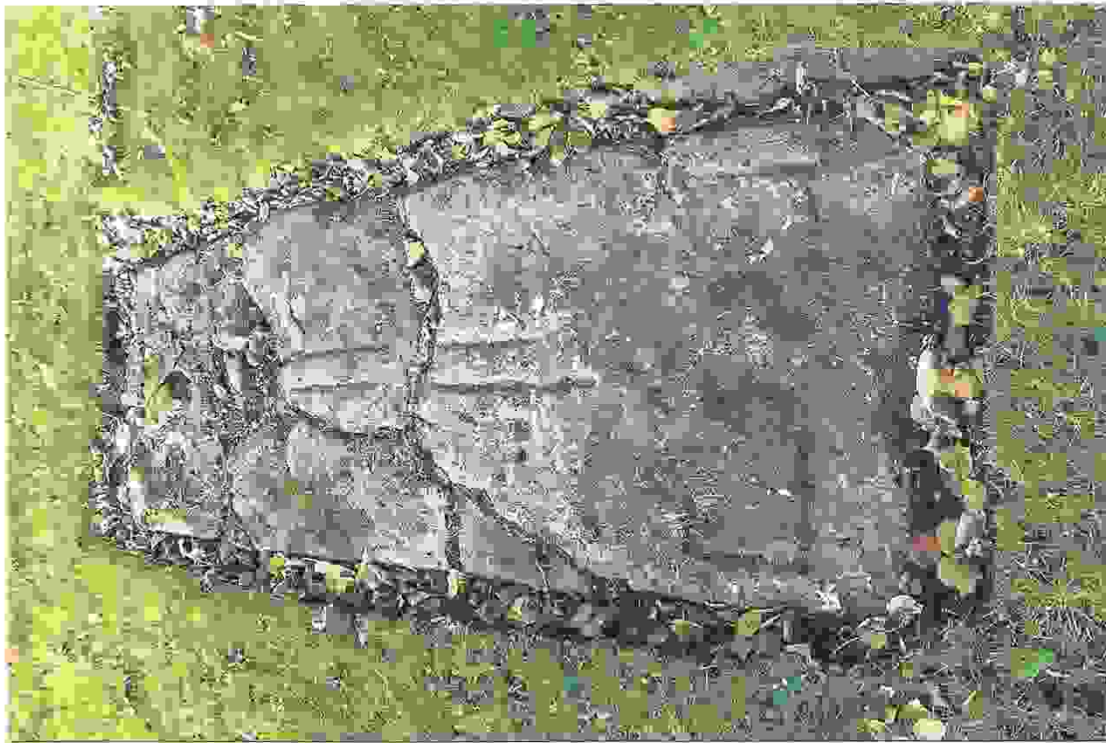
Drawing by Hubert Howse, 1950's



"The gypsy tombstone

The story goes that the representation of a 5ft. 4in. long trying pan, carved lengthwise on the face of the stone, commemorates an old gypsy woman who lost her life while doing the family cooking. The hot fat bespattered her, with the result that her clothing caught alight, with the inevitable sad result.

F 40



13th Century coffin lid. Nov. 2015

**F30**

**F31**



**E22**





WG 1



WG 2



WG 3



Nina Morgan and Philip Powell discuss the geology of some old tombstones. November 2015

## 6. TREES

In 2005 a tree surgeon inspected all the trees in the churchyard to assess their health. In doing so he listed all the trees by name and indicated what remedial work was necessary. For ease of identification in the future all the trees were numbered and their positions marked on a plan. Over the past 10 years (2005-2015) remedial work has been attended to and occasionally trees have had to be felled due to being diseased, dangerous or dying. Gaps in the numbering sequence indicate trees which have gone.

When trees in the churchyard have to be removed planning permission to fell must be obtained from the Diocese. This is called a Faculty. Along with permission to fell a request is made (another Faculty) to plant new trees for each one felled. A chance to replant came about in 2008. A number of parishioners, who wanted the opportunity to place a memorial of some sort to a loved one in the churchyard, were approached for funds to purchase some young trees. Ten memorial trees, marked on the plan with an M before the number, were planted in a ceremony at the end of 2008. A Memorial Book, now in the church archives, was created to record the names.

The following is a list of churchyard trees with names of species and any historical detail or anecdote of interest that has come to light while researching the subject. The location of the trees can be seen on the plan at the end of this section.

### **Tree No. 1. Malus.**

This is an ornamental apple tree. It does not produce fruit.

### **Tree Nos. 2 and 2a. Christmas trees.**

These trees were planted in 2011. The larger one, No.2, is now big enough to be decorated with Christmas lights. These lights are switched on during a ceremony held each year in mid December accompanied by carol singing and refreshments.

### **Tree No. 3. Millennium Lime.**

In the spring of 1998 four members of the Wildlife Watch Group planted some lime tree seeds in pots and looked after them for two-and-a-half years. During the Village Summer Festival of the year 2000 two of the young saplings (the other being tree No.47) were planted in the churchyard during a special ceremony by the same four boys accompanied by members of the Hunter family and the general public. The seeds came from the lime trees now lining the east side of Manor Green. These trees, now mature, were planted about 1913 by John Hunter of Manor House Farm to replace some old and dying ones in order to create shade for his rick yard. Descendants of John Hunter gathered to celebrate the new plantings. The family connection is as follows: Robert O'Hagan (then 11 years old) was one of the four who originally planted the seed in 1998. His mother, Jackie O'Hagan, her mother Anne Jones, and her mother's sister Joan Rowe (nee Hunter) were all present. (Anne's mother Mary Puzey died in 1999). Mary Puzey (nee Hunter) and Joan were nieces of John Hunter of Manor House Farm. The Millennium Lime trees are therefore linked historically with the Hunter family and genetically with the Manor House Farm lime trees.

One of the other boys who helped plant the Millennium limes was Lewis Brooks. His young sister was born on the same day in 1998 that the boys planted the seeds. Rebecca Brooks is delighted to know she is exactly the same age as the two trees in the churchyard. Sebastian Munday and Sam Collingwood were the other planters in 1998, and together with Robert and Lewis all four took part in the Millennium planting ceremony.

Another story worth quoting in connection with the Manor House Farm lime trees is that of Wally Price, whom older members of the village will remember. He was deaf and could not speak, yet as an adult, earned a living as a cobbler and lived in the thatched cottage in Sheards Lane. He is said to have been given the task, as a young boy, of daily watering the Manor House Farm limes when they were first planted in about 1913.

#### **Tree No. 6. English Oak.**

This tree was grown in a pot from an acorn and given to the Wildlife Watch Group by Anne Walsh when it was four years old. It was planted in the churchyard during the Village Summer Festival in 1997 to mark the club's 10th anniversary. The planting was performed by Mrs Lin Blackwell, Lucy, Michael and Amy who were all founder members of the group, the children as young members and their mother as an adult helper.

A memorable event occurred the day before the Festival. When a hole was being dug in preparation for the planting ceremony the spade accidentally severed the water pipe which, by coincidence, crossed the churchyard at the exact spot chosen for planting. Hasty repairs had to be made as this pipe is the only water supply to the church and flower arrangers were waiting for the supply to be reconnected. The tree was eventually planted in the position where it is today, well away from the water pipe.

After about two years the tree was involved in an unfortunate incident. A parishioner had permission to tether his goat in the churchyard to graze on the long grass. Unfortunately the goat broke free from its tether and ate most of the young tree. Surprisingly the tree managed to survive and has grown well since.

#### **Tree No. 7. Robinia, False Acacia.**

This large tree is thought to be about 70 to 80 years old and is related to a number of other Robinias growing in various gardens in the village.

#### **Tree No. 8. Ornamental cherry.**

This tree produces a magnificent show of double white blossom each spring and was planted sometime in the 1960's. Information from Pearl Frost indicated it was planted by, or in memory of, her mother Caroline Whiting. The tree does not produce any fruit. Some of its spreading branches are now propped up.

#### **Tree No. 11. Western Red Cedar.**

This tree was felled in 2014 due to the fact it was leaning dangerously. It had been assumed that this, and the other trees which border this area of the graveyard, were planted about 1890 when the extension of the graveyard was established. Once the tree was cut down the annual growth rings could be counted. The count of approximately 120 rings confirmed the tree must have been planted in the late 1890's.

#### **Tree No. 12. Lime.**

This lime tree is assumed to be of similar age to all the other trees surrounding the 1885 extension of the graveyard.

#### **Tree No. 13. Red flowering Horsechestnut.**

Age is similar to the above lime.



**Tree No. 14. Horsechestnut.**

This tree has the traditional white flowers. Age as above.

**Tree No.15. Red flowering Horsechestnut.**

Red flowering Horsechestnut. Age as above.

**Tree No. 17. Lime.**

Age as above.

**Tree Nos. 18, 19, 20. Horsechestnuts.**

Ages as above.

**Tree No. 22. Lime.**

Age as above.

**Tree No. 23. Red flowering Horsechestnut.**

Age as above.

**Tree No. 24. Western Red Cedar.**

Age as above.

**Tree No. 24a. Holly.**

This holly was probably self sown and left to grow into a young tree.

**Tree No. 25. Flowering Cherry.**

This young cherry tree is most likely a sapling formed from a sucker from the older tree growing just outside the churchyard railings. Its single white blossom matures to produce small cherries.

**Tree Nos. 26 to 29. Line of Lawson Cypress and Norway Maple.**

This row of trees was planted along the northern boundary of the 1957 extension to the graveyard in the 1970's at the suggestion of Mrs Irene Johnson. With the agreement of the Vicar, Rev. F.S. Ebbitt, she paid for the trees. While tending her husband's grave Mrs Johnson often felt the need for protection from the elements. The trees eventually grew to form a thick hedge, but needed regular trimming. Unfortunately they were very severely cut back, without authority, in 2014, the result being the trees no longer act as a physical and visual barrier as conifers of this type and age do not regrow from their trunks. Maybe in the future some other hedgerow shrubs could be planted to fill the gaps and provide a screen.

**Tree No. 31. Western Red Cedar.**

This tree and Nos. 32 and 33 formed the northern boundary of the 1885 extension to the graveyard and are the same age as the other old trees surrounding that area.

**Tree No. 32. Lime.**

This tree was pollarded many years ago and is now a multi-stem crown form. Age as above.



**Tree No. 33 Western Red Cedar.**

Age as above.

**Tree No. 35. Swedish Whitebeam, Sorbus.**

Probably planted in the 1970's.

**Tree No. 36. Variegated Sycamore, Acer.**

This tree was planted in the late 1970's in memory of Mrs Pam Day.

**Tree Nos. 37, 38, 39. Cedar of Deodar, Yew, False Cypress.**

These three trees were probably planted in the 1970's.

**Tree Nos. 40, 41. False Cypresses.**

These are old trees and may have been planted at the same time as the boundary trees in the 1890's.

**Tree No. 42. Hawthorn.**

This tree has double white blossom in the spring and produces red berries in the autumn. It was planted in 1960's or 1970's.

**Tree No. 44. Hawthorn.**

This tree has double pink blossom in the spring and produces red berries in the autumn.  
Age as above.

**Tree Nos. 45, 46. Malus.**

These are ornamental apple blossom trees with dark pink flowers. Fruits are small and hard.  
Age unknown, but are looking elderly.

**Tree No. 47. Millennium Lime.**

Planted in 2000. See Tree No. 3 for details.

**Tree No 48. Malus.**

Similar to Trees Nos. 45 and 46 in type and age.

**Tree No. 49. Lime.**

The age of this large, old lime tree is unknown. It is probably well over a hundred years old as its topmost branches seem to appear in the background of an old photograph of the church taken in the late 1800's. Its upper branches are beginning to die back.

**Tree No. 50. Flowering Cherry.**

This tree has single, white blossom in spring and produces small red cherries in late summer. It was planted by Rev. F.S. Ebbitt sometime between 1974 and 1980 during his time as Vicar. It is said his plan was to trim the branches as they grew to form the shape of a cross to be seen by people as they come out of the church doorway. Whether this was ever achieved is not known, but today such a shape is not obvious.

**Tree No. 52. Lime.**

This tree is similar in age to Tree No. 49 and has even more upper branches dying back.

**Tree No. 53. False Cypress.**

The age of this tree is unknown but could be similar to the old limes.

**Tree No. 54. Crabapple.**

This small tree was planted by the people of Gainfield in memory of Mrs Street who died aged 102 in 1991. She had spent the last years of her life living in Gainfield. Her husband, Rev. J. L. Street, was Vicar of St. Denys' from 1951 to 1963. He died in 1976. The crabapple tree flowers well each spring and by late summer produces a good crop of fruit which, each year, is picked and made into crabapple jelly by a parishioner.

**Tree No. 55. Malus.**

This is an ornamental apple tree but does not produce fruit.

**Elm trees.**

The churchyard was once described as being "ringed by elms" and these can be seen on some old photographs. Sadly the large trees died during the 1960's and 1970's due to Dutch Elm disease. However, the underground root system remains alive and suckers appear constantly throughout the churchyard often in the most inconvenient places. The shoots are cut back each year to prevent the spread of unwanted growth. If left to mature the young trees would only live a few years before they too would die of the disease.

**Memorial Trees.**

In 2008 ten young trees were planted each one given by a parishioner in memory of a loved one. A short service of dedication for family members was held in November that year. A Memorial Book was created to record the names.

In 2013 two of the trees had to be replaced. One of the single pink flowering cherries, M.4., was severely vandalised and the Silver Birch, M.9., suddenly died. Their replacements are doing well.

The trees are marked on the plan with an M before the number.

**M.1. Double pink flowering cherry. *Prunus* 'Kanzan'**

**M.2. Double pink flowering cherry. *Prunus* 'Kanzan'**

**M.3. Double pink flowering cherry. *Prunus* 'Kanzan'**

**M.4. Single pale pink flowering cherry. *Prunus* 'Pandora'**

**M.5. Single pale pink flowering cherry. *Prunus* 'Pandora'**

**M.6. Winter flowering cherry. *Prunus subhirtella* 'Autumnalis'**

**M.7. Fruiting crabapple. *Malus prunifolia***

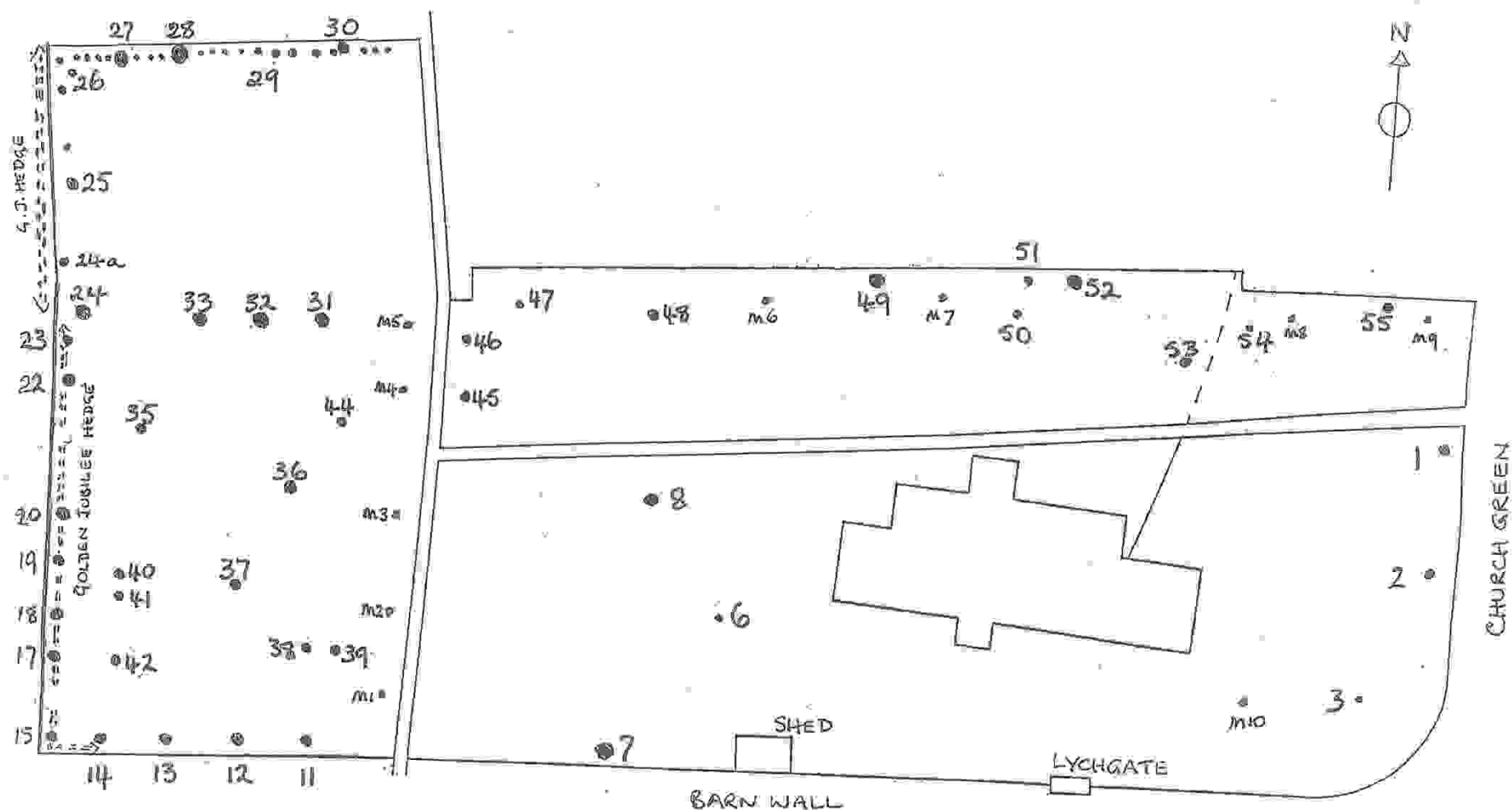
**M.8. Fruiting crabapple. *Malus prunifolia***

**M.9. Silver Birch. *Betula utilis* var. *jacquemonti***

**M.10. Rowan, Mountain Ash. *Sorbus aucuparia*.**

VILLAGE HALL  
CAR PARK

# ST. DENYS' CHURCHYARD, STANFORD IN THE VALE



	Species
1	Malus adjacent to entrance
2	Christmas tree
3	Lime, planted 2000
6	Oak, planted 1997
7	Large False Acacia adjacent to boundary and overhanging next door garden.
8	Flowering Cherry
11	Western Red Cedar
12	Large Lime Tree adjacent to southern boundary
13	Red Flowering Chestnut
14	Horse Chestnut
15	Red Flowering Chestnut
17	Lime Tree
18	Horse Chestnut
19	Horse Chestnut
20	Horse Chestnut

	Species
22	Lime Tree
23	Red flowering Chestnut
24	Holly
24	Western Red Cedar
25	Flowering Cherry
26	Group of Lawson Cypress in corner of churchyard by car park.
	Norway Maple
27	
	Norway Maple
28	
29	Line of larger Lawson Cypress
30	Ash Tree growing through railings
31	Western Red Cedar (adjacent to grave of Little Timothy)
32	Lime Tree (previously pollarded and now multistem crown form)
33	Western Red Cedar (adjacent to grave of Laura Champion)
35	Sorbus
36	Maple (variegated leaf)
37	Cedar of Deodhar
38	Yew Tree
39	False Cypress
40	2 x False Cypress
41	
42	Hawthorn

	Species
	Hawthorn
44	
45	2 x Malus by path
46	
47	Lime planted 2000
48	Malus
49	Large Lime Tree
50	Flowering cherry
52	Large Lime Tree
53	False Cypress
54	Small crabapple
55	Malus

	MEMORIAL TREES
m 1	Double flowering cherry
m 2	Double flowering cherry
m 3	Double flowering cherry
m 4	Single flowering cherry
m 5	Single flowering cherry
m 6	Silver birch
m 7	Winter flowering cherry
m 8	Fruiting crabapple
m 9	Fruiting crabapple
m 10	Mountain Ash, Rowan

PLANTED 2008

## 7. FLOWERING PLANTS

### excluding those cultivated on graves

It is generally acknowledged that ancient churchyards are a sanctuary for wildlife and St Denys' is no exception. Many of the flowers recorded during the past 25 years (1990-2015) could be referred to as common, but a number are no longer to be found in the wider countryside due to intensive farming and urbanisation. The presence of certain rarer plants is indicative of old pasture, which has not been disturbed by ploughing or by the application of fertilisers or herbicides.

Some species are worth a special mention:

**Meadow Saxifrage** - This is the rarest plant in the churchyard and is found in only a very few locations in Oxfordshire. Its presence in St Denys' churchyard will be included in a new book to be published in 2016 called *The Vanishing Flowers of Oxfordshire* co-authored by John Killick and Susan Erskine. Great care is taken each spring to ensure the area where it grows is not mown until the flowers have set seed.

**Wood Goldilocks Buttercup** – This is a plant which grows best in old meadows and in the dappled shade of old woodland. There is a large patch of it growing under the old spreading white cherry tree west of the church and in the grassy area to the left of the path leading to the door in the north wall of the chancel. It can be distinguished from other members of the buttercup family by the fact that it flowers earlier, usually April to early May, and by its unusual flowers. Instead of the traditional five equal yellow petals of the common buttercups, this one can have some petals missing, often of unequal size, or even none at all. It also has a different shape leaf which helps with identification. The reason the grass is left to grow long under the cherry tree and beside the chancel door is to enable the flowers to set seed.

**Field Woodrush, Good Friday Grass** – This rush, with a very insignificant flower only a few inches high, favours old damp pasture. It is to be found in the area of the churchyard northeast of the church building, where it is cool and damp. It grows amongst the primroses, cowslips and wood Goldilocks buttercups so benefits from the grass being left to grow long. Its common name, 'Good Friday Grass' comes from the fact that it flowers around Easter time. Easter being a moveable feast means the rush can be found anytime from late March to the end of April.

**Lady's Smock, Cuckoo Flower, Milk Maids** – These are the most common names for this flower which was once a common and widespread species of damp grassland and ditches. It is much less common now due to modern agricultural practices, but it is pleasing that the churchyard still supports some of these plants. They can be found at the northeast side of the church where it is damper than elsewhere. It is one of the food plants of the Orange-tip butterfly caterpillar and therefore valuable for butterfly conservation.

**Common Broomrape** – This is a curious plant being parasitic and lacking its own chlorophyll. The flowers are brownish-pink in colour and occur mainly growing on the roots of plants of the pea family. It has appeared a few times during the past 25 years, most recently in 2015 when five specimens bloomed in the short turf amongst the graves in the 1957 extension to the churchyard. Once observed they were marked by stakes to avoid being mown down.

**Ivy** – There are two opposing views about ivy. It is a valuable plant for wildlife but can cause damage to stone walls. A compromise has to be reached when considering its management. On the positive side thick patches of ivy provide suitable habitats for overwintering butterflies, insects and spiders. Its flower, which bloom from September to November, provide nectar for bees late in the year when all other flowers are over and ripe berries are food for birds throughout the winter. On the negative side, if ivy is allowed to smother stone walls, it can cause damage by loosening the mortar holding the stonework together. This aspect has to be taken seriously as the cost of repairing stone walls is high. In recent years ivy has been removed from all the churchyard walls and it is also regularly cut back where it is growing up tree trunks and over tombstones.

The following is a list of flowering plants identified during the past five years (2010-2015) and gives an indication when the flowers can be seen in bloom.



Meadow Saxifrage

WILD FLOWERS		
1	Stinging nettle	June-Sept
2	Knotgrass	June-Nov
3	Common sorrel	May-Aug
4	Broad-leaved dock	June-Oct
5	Curled dock	June-Oct
6	Fiddle dock	June-Aug
7	Fat hen	June-Oct
8	Common orache	July-Oct
9	Common chickweed	All year
10	Common mouse-ear	April-Nov
11	White campion	May-Oct
12	Meadow buttercup	April-Oct
13	Bulbous buttercup	March-June
14	Creeping buttercup	May-Sept
15	Wood Goldilocks buttercup	April-May
16	Lesser celandine	March-May
17	Common fumitory	April-Oct
18	Common poppy	June-Oct
19	Long-headed poppy	June-Aug
20	Opium poppy	June-Aug
21	Hedge mustard	May-Sept
22	Charlock	April-Oct
23	Cuckoo flower, Lady's smock	April-June
24	Garlic mustard, Jack-by-the-hedge	April-Aug
25	Hairy bittercress	Feb-Nov
26	Wavy bittercress	April-Sept
27	Shepherd's purse	All year
28	Biting stonecrop	May-July
29	English stonecrop	June-Sept
30	Rue-leaved saxifrage	May-July
31	Meadow saxifrage	April-June
32	Dog rose	June-July
33	Bramble, blackberry	May-Nov
34	Herb Bennet, Wood Avens	May-Sept
35	Creeping cinquefoil	April-June
36	Common vetch	April-Sept
37	Meadow vetchling	May-Aug
38	Bird's-foot trefoil	May-Sept
39	Black medick	April-Oct
40	Spotted medick	April-Sept
41	Slender trefoil	May-Sept
42	Red clover	May-Oct
43	White clover	May-Oct

44	Meadow cranesbill	June-Sept
45	Hedge cranesbill	May-Sept
46	Herb Robert	April-Nov
47	Dove's foot cranesbill	April-Sept
48	Small-flowered cranesbill	May-Sept
49	Cut-leaved cranesbill	May-Sept
50	Sun spurge	April-Nov
51	Petty spurge	April-Nov
52	Musk mallow	July-Aug
53	Common mallow	June-Oct
54	Least mallow	June-Sept
55	Sweet violet	March-May
56	Common dog violet	March-May
57	White bryony	May-Sept
58	Greater willowherb	May-Sept
59	Broad-leaved willowherb	May-Sept
60	Square-stalked willowherb	May-Sept
61	Ivy	Sept-Nov
62	Cow parsley	April-June
63	Burnt saxifrage	May-Sept
64	Hogweed	April-Nov
65	Primrose	March-May
66	False oxlip	March-May
67	Cowslip	April-May
68	Cyclamen	June-Oct
69	Scarlet pimpernel	May-Oct
70	Field bindweed	June-Sept
71	Lady's bedstraw	June-Sept
72	Common clevers, goosegrass, sticky weed	May-Sept
73	Field forget-me-not	April-Oct
74	Seal-heal	June-Nov
75	Ground ivy	March-June
76	Black horehound	June-Sept
77	White deadnettle	March-Nov
78	Red deadnettle	All year
79	Field woundwort	April-Oct
80	Woody nightshade, bittersweet	May-Sept
81	Black nightshade	July-Oct
82	Great Mullein	June-Aug
83	Purple toadflax	June-Aug
84	Ivy-leaved toadflax	April-Nov
85	Foxglove	June-Sept
86	Germander or bird's eye speedwell	April-Sept
87	Common field speedwell	All year
88	Green field speedwell	March-Nov

89	Grey field speedwell	March-Nov
90	Ivy-leaved speedwell	March-Aug
91	Thyme-leaved speedwell	April-Oct
92	Wall speedwell	March-Oct
93	Slender speedwell	April-June
94	Common broomrape	June-Sept
95	Greater plantain	June-Oct
96	Ribwort plantain	April-Oct
97	Hoary plantain	May-Aug
98	Red valerian	May-Sept
99	Corn salad, Lamb's lettuce	April-Aug
100	Nettle-leaved bellflower	July-Sept
101	Canadian fleabane	June-Oct
102	Daisy	All year
103	Yarrow	June-Nov
104	Mugwort	July-Sept
105	Ox-eye or moon daisy, margarite	May-Sept
106	Ragwort	June-Nov
107	Oxford ragwort	April-Nov
108	Groundsel	All year
109	Burdock	July-Sept
110	Creeping thistle	June-Sept
111	Spear thistle	July-Sept
112	Greater knapweed	June-Sept
113	Goat's beard, Jack-go-to-bed-at-noon	May-Aug
114	Smooth sowthistle	May-Nov
115	Prickly sowthistle	May-Nov
116	Perennial sowthistle	July-Sept
117	Prickly lettuce, compass plant	July-Sept
118	Least lettuce	July-Aug
119	Nipplewort	June-Oct
120	Dandelion	April-June
121	Common cat's ear	June-Sept
122	Autumn hawkbit	July-Oct
123	Mouse-ear hawkweed	May-Oct
124	Orange hawkweed, Fox-and-cubs	June-Aug
125	Beaked hawksbeard	May-July
126	Crow garlic	June-Aug
127	Bluebell	April-June
128	Butcher's broom	Jan-April
129	Snowdrop	Jan-March
130	Lords & Ladies, Wild arum	April-May
131	Stinking iris	May-July

GRASSES		
1	Rye grass	May-Nov
2	Annual meadow grass	All year
3	Cocksfoot	April-Nov
4	Barren brome	April-July
5	Wild barley	May-Oct
6	False oat-grass	May-Sept
7	Yorkshire fog	May-Aug
8	Timothy	June-Aug
9	Meadow foxtail	April-June
10	Perennial meadow grass	May-July
11	Tor grass	July-Aug
SEDGES & RUSHES		
1	Spiked sedge	May-Aug
2	Field woodrush, Good Friday grass	April-May
FERNS		
1	Maidenhair spleenwort	All year
2	Wall-rue	All year
TREES & SHRUBS		
1	Crabapple	May
2	Swedish whitebeam	May-June
3	Hawthorn	May-June
4	Blackthorn	March-May
5	False acacia	June
6	Spindle	May-June
7	Dogwood	May-July
8	Hazel	Jan-March
9	Privet	May-June
10	Holly	May-Aug
11	Elder	May-July
12	Buddleia	June-Sept
13	Silver birch	April-May
14	Pedunculate oak	April-May
15	Variegated sycamore	May
16	Norway maple	April
17	Field maple	May
18	Horse chestnut	May
19	Lime	June-July
20	Rowan, Mountain ash	May-June
21	Ash	April-May
22	Yew	Feb-April
23	Deodar cedar	Oct-Dec
24	Lawson's Cypress	April



## 8. BUTTERFLIES

Annual butterfly surveys have been carried out since 1990 and during that period a total of 20 different species has been recorded in the churchyard. Most of them are seen regularly each year, but some may occasionally be absent. The results of the surveys are sent to Butterfly Conservation, Upper Thames Branch, and their annual reports indicate that St. Denys' churchyard has had, consistently, one of the highest counts amongst the churchyards surveyed throughout Berks., Bucks., and Oxon. The churchyard management plan is designed to encourage butterflies to breed. The churchyard has a variety of habitats which help to support butterfly colonies that require different conditions to survive. For example, there are sunny areas of open grassland with long and short grass, a good variety of wildflowers to provide nectar, hedgerows to form shelter and trees for shade. There is a well-known saying that butterflies act like "canaries in the mine"; a healthy butterfly population indicates a healthy environment.

The following list names the species identified giving wingspan measurement to indicate size, the months when they can be seen flying, the caterpillar food plant (CFP) and any other useful details. The figures in brackets indicate the typical number of sightings recorded per visit during their flight period.

**Large White or Cabbage White.** Wingspan: 57-66 mm. Flight: April-Oct. CFP: Brassicas and other members of the cabbage family. (12)

**Small White.** Wingspan: 46-55 mm. Flight: March-Sept. CFP: Brassicas and other members of the cabbage family. (14)

**Green-Veined White.** Wingspan: 36-50 mm. Flight: May-Sept. CFP: Cabbage family, but not a pest of brassicas. Green veins on upper and under sides distinguish it from other whites. (2)

**Orange Tip.** Wingspan 33-48 mm. Flight: April-July. CFP: Lady's Smock, Garlic Mustard. Male has orange tip on upper wing, female has no orange. Underwing of both is heavily mottled greenish grey and this distinguishes it from other whites. (2)

**Brimstone.** Wingspan: 52-60 mm. Flight: Hibernates as adult, then these appear in early spring to lay eggs. Main brood appears July-Sept. CFP: Buckthorn. Male is bright yellow, female is pale cream and can be mistaken at a distance for a large white. It is possible that the Brimstone was once known as the butter-coloured fly and that the contracted form gave rise to the word "butterfly". (2)

**Small Tortoiseshell.** Wingspan: 44-50 mm. Flight: Hibernates as an adult, these appear Mar-Apr. Main brood June-Oct. CFP: Nettles. (9)

**Peacock.** Wingspan: 54-66 mm. Flight: Hibernates as an adult. First brood in spring, second brood July-Oct. CFP: Nettles. (9)

**Red Admiral.** Wingspan: 56-63 mm. Flight: May-Oct. Some specimens hibernate over winter, some are migrants travelling from the continent. CFP: Nettles. (5)

**Painted Lady.** Wingspan: 54-60 mm. Flight: This is a migrant with a rapid powerful flight. They appear in this country from June onwards and have a summer brood here. They do not appear each year, but occasionally they arrive in large numbers. CFP: Nettles. (1)

**Comma.** Wingspan: 44-48 mm. Flight: March-July and Aug-Sept. CFP: Nettles. Distinctive characteristics are ragged margins to wings and a white “comma” on the underside of the hind wing. (2)

**Meadow Brown.** Wingspan: 40-58 mm. Flight: June-Sept. CFP: Grasses. Will fly in dull weather. Seen throughout grassy areas. (9)

**Gate Keeper or Hedge Brown.** Wingspan: 34-38 mm. Flight: July-Aug. CFP: Grasses. Seen throughout grassy areas. (20)

**Ringlet.** Wingspan: 40-48 mm. Flight: June-Aug. CFP: Grasses. To be found in open grassland and open woodland. (6)

**Speckled Wood.** Wingspan: 38-44 mm. Flight: March-Oct. CFP: Grasses. Prefers dappled shade along woodland edges. (2)

**Marbled White.** Wingspan: 46-56 mm. Flight: June-Aug. CFP: Grasses. Prefers grassland in chalky areas. This butterfly is a member of the “Brown” family and is not related to the Large and Small Whites. (1)

**Common Blue.** Wingspan: 28-36 mm. Flight: May-Sept. CFP: Birdsfoot trefoil and clovers. Male has bright blue upper wings, the female’s are brown, sometimes with a hint of blue. (3)

**Holly Blue.** Wingspan: 26-34 mm. Flight: March-April, July-Aug. CFP: Spring brood feeds on holly flowers, autumn brood feeds on young flower buds of ivy. Upper wings strong blue, under wing pale silvery blue. (2)

**Small Copper.** Wingspan: 24-30 mm. Flight: July-Aug. CFP: Sorrel and dock. (1)

**Small Skipper.** Wingspan: 26-30 mm. Flight: June-Aug. CFP: Various grasses. A fast flying moth-like butterfly. (1)

**Large Skipper.** Wingspan: 28-34 mm. Flight: June-Aug. CFP: Various grasses. A fast flying moth-like butterfly. (1)

## 9. BIRDS

The churchyard is made up of a variety of different habitats — grassy areas, hedgerows, trees — each of which provides a suitable area for birds to feed, shelter and nest. In addition some nest boxes have been put up to encourage breeding by some smaller birds. Over the years bird surveys have been carried out and the following list includes species seen during the various seasons of the year. The birds have been grouped according to families where possible and the letters indicate the frequency with which they have been seen.

FS – Frequently seen.		OS – Occasionally seen.		RS – Rarely seen.	
1.	Blackbird. FS	20.	Goldcrest. RS		
2.	Fieldfare. OS (Winter visitor)	21.	Spotted flycatcher. RS (Summer migrant)		
3.	Redwing. RS (Winter visitor)	22.	Collared dove. FS		
4.	Mistle thrush. OS	23.	Wood pigeon. FS		
5.	Song thrush. OS	24.	Green woodpecker. OS		
6.	Coal tit. OS	25.	Greater spotted woodpecker. OS		
7.	Blue tit. FS	26.	Magpie. OS		
8.	Great tit. FS	27.	Jackdaw. FS		
9.	Long-tailed tit. FS	28.	Rook. FS		
10.	House sparrow. FS	29.	Crow. FS		
11.	Chaffinch. FS	30.	Starling. FS		
12.	Brambling. RS (Winter visitor)	31.	Swallow. FS (Summer migrant)		
13.	Greenfinch. FS	32.	Swift. FS (Summer migrant)		
14.	Goldfinch. FS	33.	House martin. FS (Summer migrant)		
15.	Wren. FS	34.	Sparrow hawk. OS		
16.	Robin. FS	35.	Red kite. FS		
17.	Dunnock, hedge sparrow. FS	36.	Buzzard. OS (seen flying high overhead)		
18.	Pied Wagtail. OS	37.	Seagull. OS (seen flying high overhead)		
19.	Blackcap. RS				

## 10. CREATURES

This section gives a brief overview of some of the many and varied forms of wildlife which make their home in the churchyard. From the thousands of minute creatures which live almost unseen on plants and in the soil to the more recognisable larger ones like spiders and flies, they are all part of the web of life. Their constant need to find food and to reproduce helps to keep a balance in the natural world.

Members of the Wildlife Watch Group have enjoyed spring and summer visits to the churchyard to hunt for mini-beasts. No attempt was made to differentiate between, for example, the different types of beetle or fly of which there are a great many varieties. The names listed below are just a general indication of the types of creatures found.

Dragonfly	Fly	Garden spider
Damselfly	Wasp	Various small spiders
Grasshopper	Bumble bee	Earthworm
Earwig	Cockchafer (May bug)	Snail
Shield bug	Beetle	Slug
Froghopper	Ladybird	
Leaf miner	Weevil	Hedgehog
Moth	Soldier beetle	Grey squirrel
Cranefly (daddy long- legs)	Millipede	Bat
Lace wing	Centipede	
Hoverfly	Woodlouse	Frog
Ant	Harvestman	Toad

Hummingbird Hawkmoth, Garden Tiger Moth and Lime Hawkmoth caterpillars were identified during the butterfly survey and their names were included on the record sheet sent to Butterfly Conservation, who in turn reported their presence to the County Moth Recorder. These sightings are regarded as important due to their recent declining numbers.

## 11. LICHENS

In the late 1980's several members of the British Lichen Society surveyed the lichens of St. Denys' churchyard. Over a hundred different species were identified, most growing on tombstones but also some on walls, trees and soil. The geology of the structures is varied; limestone, sandstone, ironstone, marble, granite, brick and mortar. Each type of stone hosts a distinctive community of lichens.

The following extracts come from a leaflet, entitled *Churchyard Lichens*, produced by the British Lichen Society to help parishes understand and appreciate this delicate and important form of life.

*What are lichens? They are two "organisms" in one: a fungal partner usually forms the visible body of the lichen and, protected by threads of fungus, cells of algae provide nutrition, using sunlight in same way as green plants .....*

*Lichens grow very slowly, sometimes no more than half a millimetre a year and many are long-lived. Individual lichens may well be almost as old as the tombstones upon which they live.....*

*Ideally tombstones should remain in situ. Some lichens are susceptible to the smallest changes and, when stones have to be repositioned, they are most likely to survive if the stone's alignment remains the same.....*

*Lichens vary from simple, powdery scatterings and crusts to more elaborate leafy structures and vary in colour from yellow, orange, brown, black, grey and green. Their minute intricate designs are best seen using a x10 hand lens.....*

*Damage to stonework by lichens is minimal. Walls and tombs of good quality stone show little deterioration, other than that caused by natural weathering, in hundreds of years. Indeed a good covering of lichens may protect them.*

Very few, if any, lichens have English names. Lichenologists classify them using scientific names only.

## 12. FUNGI

“Mushroom” and “toadstool” are terms loosely applied to the fruiting bodies of fleshy gill-fungi and are commonly (if somewhat inaccurately) used to denote edible and poisonous species respectively. From time to time, particularly in damp weather, fungi of various shapes, sizes and colours appear in the churchyard in grassy areas or on dead wood. Identifying and naming them is difficult as many look very similar and only some have common English names. However, two found in recent years are worthy of note. Their names refer to their appearance and the folklore associated with them.

### **King Alfred’s Cakes or Cramp Balls.** *Daldinia concentrica*

These fungi, found on dead or dying deciduous trees, are very hard and woody rounded balls, dark brown to black in colour. They resemble burnt cakes, hence the association with King Alfred. The name Cramp Balls refers to a widespread folk belief that the fungi cure night-cramps in the legs if placed at the bottom of the bed. Soldiers in the First World War are said to have put them in their pockets while in the trenches.

### **Dryad’s Saddle.** *Polyporus squamosus*

The specimen below, photographed in 2010, was found growing on the ground on the rotting root of a felled horse chestnut tree. Other specimens have also been found in previous years growing on healthy tree trunks. These fungi resemble a seat or saddle suitable for use by a “dryad” or “wood nymph”.



## 13. AWARDS

Over the years St. Denys' "Living Churchyard Project" has been brought to the attention of various local and national organisations. The purpose of these organisations is, in some cases, to provide funding for appropriate wildlife schemes or, in others, to award certificates in recognition of good environmental practice.

Below is a list of awards received by St. Denys' "Living Churchyard Project".

### **1990 Environmental Liaison Project**

National Power, Didcot, in conjunction with BBONT (Berks, Bucks, and Oxon Naturalists' Trust) as it was called then, set up a scheme involving local schools and Watch Groups. The objective was "*to help children improve the environment by providing the encouragement and resources to get to grips with a hands-on project*". The proposals put forward by Stanford Primary School Watch Group, for involvement with a wildlife sanctuary in St. Denys' Churchyard, were accepted. A grant of £150 would be spent on various items including scientific equipment, wood for bird nesting boxes and special meadow grass seed for sowing on a bare patch of ground.

### **1994 Shell Better Britain Campaign Project Grant Fund**

A successful application for funds from the above organisation resulted in a grant of £500 being made as a contribution towards the cost of a heavy duty mower and brushcutter to help manage the churchyard wildlife areas.

### **1995 Diocese of Oxford and Berks, Bucks and Oxon Naturalists' Trust**

These two organisations (which cover the same counties) joined with the national "Living Churchyard and Cemeteries Project" to provide advice and information on the care of churchyards for wildlife. They organised networking events and ran an awareness scheme to recognise the efforts of the volunteers involved. St. Denys' churchyard wildlife sanctuary was awarded plaques in 1995, 1999 and 2001.

### **1999 Oxfordshire Special Conservation Award (OSCA)**

This award scheme was set up by Oxfordshire County Council in conjunction with the Oxford Times newspaper group to honour some of the best local conservation initiatives in the county. The Wildlife Watch Group entered the competition and were presented with a certificate of commendation "*to reward an outstanding contribution to conservation of the environment*".

## **2001 Best Kept Village Competition, CPRE Nature Conservation Award**

Stanford Parish Council entered this award scheme and amongst the many sections and reports they included the churchyard conservation area in the environmental category.

The CPRE Judges' Report is as follows:

### ***“SPECIALLY COMMENDED: STANFORD IN THE VALE***

*In producing a wildlife friendly plan for their churchyard, parishioners might have been daunted by its large size. It was immediately clear that this was not the case, a wealth of herbs, grasses and invertebrates benefit from the various management regimes producing short, medium and tall grassland at various seasons. Many trees and shrubs form an important part of the whole. Inside the church the exhibition demonstrates a love of wildlife by adults and children alike. The village is to be congratulated because, by forming a Wildlife Trust Watch Group for the children, not only are they improving biodiversity today but they are ensuring that wildlife will be well looked after in the future”*

## **2006 Calor Village of the Year Competition**

The churchyard conservation area was included in Stanford Parish Council's entry in the above award scheme. Stanford in the Vale was announced as the winner of the Environmental Category.

## **BNA (British Naturalists' Association) Blake Shield Competition: Junior section WARD CUP for children aged 7-11 years**

**2004** This competition was designed to encourage children across Britain to be involved in the study of the natural world and to take part in wildlife conservation projects. Stanford Primary School Wildlife Watch Group's project entitled "A Guide to God's Acre" was a year long study of the churchyard. Their records, put together in a file and a brief guide of the same name designed for sale to the public, were entered for the Ward Cup competition. The project won the cup which was presented by Prof. David Bellamy at a special ceremony in Nottingham. All 26 children received books and T-shirts as prizes.

**2009** The Wildlife Watch Group won the Ward Cup with a project entitled "Wildlife of the Churchyard Walls" and once again received the award from Prof. David Bellamy, this time in Northampton.

**2011** Another successful project won the Ward Cup with a study of the "Lives of Local Trees". Prof. David Bellamy once more did the honours. This time the ceremony was held in Bristol.



## **14. VILLAGE MEMORIAL by David Axford**

### **Prelude and initial discussions – 2006 - 2010**

One day in early November 2006 I was walking my dog outside St Denys Church, Stanford in the Vale, and I sat down to talk to another dog owner on the seat by the entrance to the church path.

Remembrance Day was a week away and my friend pointed out that there was no memorial outside the church for a non – Anglican-Christian believer to attend, unlike similar villages in the neighbourhood, such as Buckland or Bampton.

As the Honorary Clerk of the Stanford in the Vale Public Purposes Charity (PPC) I raised the matter with the Parish Council and received the response that there were a number of restrictions and organisational hazards to be surmounted and the PC considered it a very difficult problem.



At the next meeting of the PPC on **13<sup>th</sup> December 2006**, after some discussion, Roger Griffin was asked to research the matter with the responsible bureaucratic organisations.

Thus began the arduous project to get authority and provide the finance for the installation of the Stanford in the Vale Village Memorial.

Over the next four years the possibilities were considered creatively. The village community was asked if a memorial was needed in the Stanford Newsletter and various locations and structures were proposed. As this period covered the economic collapse it was not surprising perhaps that little feedback came from the village. The realisation that a law had been passed in 2006 which did not allow any new building, including war memorials, on village greens resulted in the proposal to place the memorial just inside the church wall close to the Church Green. The vicar of St Denys church obtained diocesan agreement in principle noting that the church authorities would place certain conditions on the design and materials used in the structure.

### **The Remembrance Memorial Project begins – 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2010**

The project began formally when the Faringdon and District Branch of the Royal British Legion made a Grant application to the PPC on 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2010. The application stated:

*“The money is needed to erect a more public and visible war memorial in Stanford in the Vale. The present memorial is a simple brass plate in St. Denys church and this has a number of disadvantages. One is that it pays tribute to only the fallen of WWI and WWII. Another is that, being inside the church, there is little room for people to gather round the actual memorial, particularly when a normal congregation is present. Also, some people, not of a religious or even a Church of England persuasion, might wish to take part in remembrance events, but feel uncomfortable in a church. Yet another disadvantage of the present memorial is its 'tucked away' location; anyone coming to Stanford might have great difficulty finding it. An outside large, and so prominent, memorial in the centre of the village would overcome all these disadvantages.*

*The proposal is for a tall, tapered granite column, topped by a Saxon cross, mounted on a hexagonal plinth and standing on a mound just inside the churchyard by the boundary wall with Church Green.*

*This site is what most people would consider the centre of Stanford and, by being on a mound, would be well visible in spite of being behind a wall. The large area of the village green itself would provide plenty of room for all who might wish to assemble in remembrance.”*

Shortly after this Ms Natalie Merry, representing the Oxfordshire Diocesan Advisory Committee (DAC), advised that the DAC would insist on the memorial being constructed of good quality Portland stone with lime cased mortar, and that design and construction details would be required before the DAC could approve the project with a “Faculty”. In order to deal with any objections to the design it was decided to use the drawings for a Type A/1 Cross of Sacrifice Monument as specified by the War Memorial Trust, without the sword, and manufactured in Portland stone.

The PPC set up a project team with Roger Griffin as the project leader, which, during 2011, obtained formal local planning permission and, over a longer several month period, the necessary faculty. Visits were made to two Portland stone suppliers; Albion Stone plc was chosen; but queries from the DAC held up final approvals until just before Christmas 2011. It was agreed that the inscription on the memorial would be general and not include specific names. It would be relevant to all who had lost family in any of the wars which had occurred throughout the world in the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries. The L. Binyon poem below was chosen:

**“They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old:  
Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.  
At the going down of the sun and in the morning  
We will remember them.”**

Albion Stone began the manufacture of the memorial in Portland in March 2012. In Stanford substantial foundations were dug and filled with concrete on the chosen site and the PPC began consideration of the dedication ceremony that they felt necessary when the memorial was finally handed over to the British Legion. Installation began by the end of June 2012. During the installation a time capsule was left encased in a flat plastic sack just above the spigot.

This memorial was erected in 2012 to honour those members of the Stanford community who gave their lives in defence of their country in the numerous wars and conflicts in the 19<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries.

The memorial was financed by the village through the Stanford in the Vale Public Purposes Charity (PPC) whose Trustees at the time were:

#### **Stanford War Memorial**

Dr. David Norman Axford (Clerk/  
Correspondent),

Kathleen Campbell-Cave,  
Paul Corrigan,  
Joyce Gardner,  
Paul Gooding,  
Bill Grant,

Dr. Roger Malcolm Griffin (Project Manager  
for the PPC),  
Andrew Higgins,  
Caroline Somerset,  
Roy Walker (Chairman of the PPC), and  
Derek Winter

#### **The Hand-over and Dedication of the Stanford in the Vale Memorial**

On Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> October 2012 the Area Dean, the Reverend Canon Richard Hancock conducted the Dedication Service of the Stanford in the Vale Memorial. The ceremony was arranged through the

work of three joint meetings between the PPC, the Parochial Church Council (PCC) Churchwardens and the Faringdon British Legion District Branch which took place on 20<sup>th</sup> July, 26<sup>th</sup> July and 4<sup>th</sup> October 2012. The event, which involved young people as far as possible, included a march by the local Cadet Forces and their Military Band (buglers) from the village hall through the village with banners arriving at the memorial from the Church Green side. Other invitees went either to the village hall car park to walk down the church paths to the memorial or they went straight to the memorial. The representatives of the local Stanford Scouts and Guides lined up at the memorial to be there when the Band arrived.

Invitations had been sent out to representatives of all the village organisations as well as to senior members of the British Legion and the MOD.

The PCC arranged for the church bells to ring from 10.45 to 11.30 a.m. and a flag was flown on Millennium Green. For the Faringdon British Legion, G. Belcher quoted the Binyon verse “They shall grow not old . . .” and the Kohima Epitaph was read by a young person before the Last Post and Two Minutes Silence. The service concluded with wreath laying by the participants.

The event concluded with a reception in the Village Hall to which participants were invited. Joan Greenwood organised the food and drinks. Offers of support from the Co-Op and for funding from the village Parish Council were much appreciated.

### **Aftermath**

Following the ceremony thank-you letters were sent to all those who had helped make the event a success. Caroline Somerset’s son-in-law had made a video of the dedication service and a number of copies were given to PPC Trustees.



During the remainder of 2012 and the first half of 2013, the PPC made a formal application for a grant from the DCMS Memorials Grant Scheme to cover the VAT spent on the project. This was eventually successful and it was reported at the 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2013 PPC Trustee meeting that a grant of just under £6k of VAT funds had been awarded. This brought the final total cost of the project to just £30,000.

The possibility of providing an opening in the wall separating the Church Green from the memorial has been followed up by the vicar and the PCC since 2012 and this may become a reality in 2016 bringing the dream of 2006 to a successful conclusion.

## 15. A PICTORIAL RECORD

(all photos were taken in the Churchyard by Margaret Grant)



### Key to photomontages on following pages

Lichens are very difficult to identify and none have common names.

#### Watch Group Activities

1. Bird watching
2. Mini-beast hunt
3. Mini-beast hunt
4. Group photo 2005
5. Group photo 2010
6. Looking at lichen
7. Looking at lichen

#### Flowers

1. Dandelion
2. Meadow cranesbill
3. Cowslip
4. Cherry
5. Wild rose
6. Primrose
7. Slender speedwell
8. Poppy
9. Mallow
10. Lords and Ladies

#### Butterflies

1. Red Admiral
2. Tortoiseshell
3. Comma
4. Peacock
5. Gatekeeper
6. Small white
7. Speckled wood
8. Common blue
9. Small skipper
10. Orange tip

#### Creatures

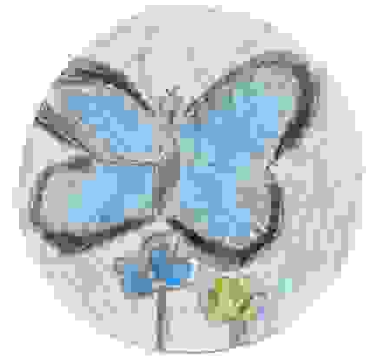
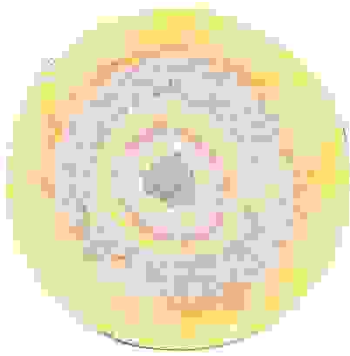
1. Blackbird
2. Robin
3. Wasp
4. Ladybird
5. Beetle
6. Garden spider
7. Lime hawkmoth caterpillar
8. Snail
9. Hedgehog
10. Frog

## ARTWORK

by

WILDLIFE WATCH

MEMBERS





















## 16. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Since the start of the “Living Churchyard Project” in 1990 a great many people have been involved in making this enterprise a success. Sincere thanks are due to the Vicars, Churchwardens and members of the Parochial Church Council and to the numerous parishioners who have helped in so many ways to keep the churchyard in good order. Sincere thanks too are due to the Head Teachers and staff of the Primary School for their co-operation and encouragement over the years. Particularly appreciated has been the involvement of the team of leaders of the Wildlife Watch Group, whose vital role has ensured the club’s success by sharing their knowledge and enthusiasm for the natural world with the children. They in turn have been ably assisted by a large number of adult helpers over the years to whom we are most grateful. Thanks are due to the Stanford in the Vale Public Purposes Charity for providing funds in 2008 for the resetting of a number of leaning tombstones.

Several people have helped with the production of this document. Sincere thanks are due to Christine Smith for typing the text, to David Axford for writing the Village Memorial story and to various members of my family for their help and advice. Particular acknowledgement and thanks must be given to my husband Bill for his computer skills, proof-reading and his constant advice during the production stages.

We hope that this document will be of interest to many of those who live locally and also to the people who visit our village with its historic church and churchyard at its centre.

Margaret Grant MBE

2016



## 17. REFERENCES

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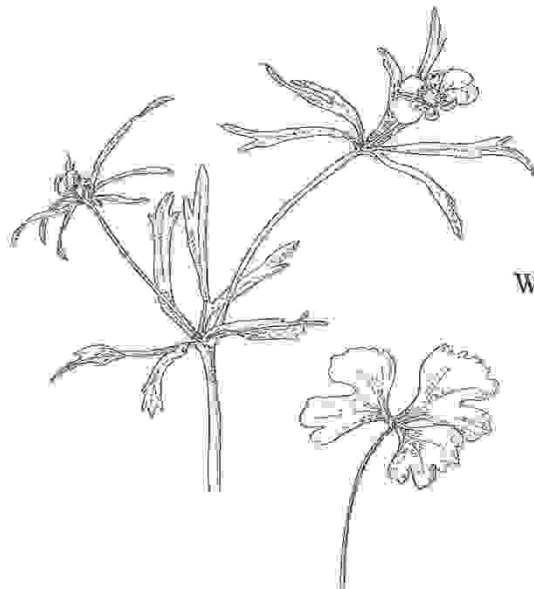
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Wood goldilocks buttercup

Bulbous buttercup

