



Neighbourhood Plan

Heritage and Character Working Group

Working Group Report – March 2026



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Disclaimer:- This report has been prepared in good faith to be an accurate and unbiased summary of what is known within the topic area. However, the authors cannot guarantee the accuracy or the completeness of the information provided, and the report may be subject to revision and correction.

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Aims, scope and membership

WG Name	Heritage and Character
Aims	To identify the unique heritage and character of Sunningwell parish with the aim of protecting, preserving and enhancing that heritage and character for the benefit of residents, visitors and future generations.
Scope	1. Identify the physical assets (natural and man-made) that contribute to the life and character of the parish, including: • Listed properties • Non-designated heritage assets, e.g. sites and items of historic or architectural significance or interest, the built environment in relation to its natural setting, built assets (including individual properties where appropriate), green assets, views and sight-lines • Assets of community value e.g. buildings and areas used for community gatherings and activities 2. Identify the community activities and amenities that contribute to the life and character of the parish, including: • Community organisations and businesses based within the parish 3. Engage with the community to understand the aspects of heritage and character that people collectively value, and ensure this is documented as part of the Neighbourhood Plan 4. Publicise and promote educational activities relating to the above
Members	Judy Aspinall, Bob Evans, Duncan Graham, Karen Laister, James Weeks, Richard Youdale

Executive Summary

Sunningwell is a small ancient parish, shaped roughly as an elongated ellipse with axis stretching north to south from the top of Boars Hill to the edge of Abingdon (where the portion beyond the modern A34 road has been built on for residential housing in stages since the 1970s, and transferred to the town as a result). Our report first seeks to capture the character of the four settlements (Sunningwell village, Bayworth, and parts of Boars Hill and Long Furlong) which comprise this still predominantly rural community, and briefly sketch their history from the significant early (mesolithic to iron-age) and Roman remains, through the long period of manorial administration and peasant agriculture, to the emergence of the place as it appears today, including its association with celebrated individuals like Roger Bacon, John Jewel, and J.M.W. Turner.

We provide an inventory of heritage assets in the parish: listed buildings and other structures of special value, within their wider spatial context and their natural settings (but please see the separate, overlapping report on Biodiversity and Environment for fuller information about that). We also list the more important social and physical amenities available within the parish. Our illustrations support this text, but indicate in addition a number of viewpoints which afford panoramas of high landscape value, both within Sunningwell and beyond it.

In conclusion we assemble for further consideration and submit for broader consultation the ways in which we believe this heritage could and should be preserved and enhanced.

1. Sunningwell parish

1.1 Introduction

Sunningwell parish is an ancient rural area containing the village of Sunningwell, the hamlet of Bayworth, the north-western part of Long Furlong, and the eastern part of Boars Hill.

Situated approximately three miles from the centre of the town of Abingdon, and five miles from the city of Oxford, the parish offers rural respite from these busy and growing urban areas.

One of the distinctive and valued features of the parish is that the settlements remain well separated from each other by a rural landscape, such that each is surrounded by green fields as illustrated in the image on the cover and in section 3 of this report.

Each of the settlements has its own distinctive character.

Sunningwell village is the archetypal English village with a range of building styles and ages which have happily coexisted and remained largely unspoilt for the last hundred years, as shown in the images on the next page.

Eastern Boars Hill is characterised by signature dwellings of a range of late 19th and 20th century vintages, mostly set in large plots with many trees. Like the rest of Boars Hill, its character has been shaped by the many eminent residents from academia and the literary, artistic, and media worlds. The views are famous, with those towards Oxford captured by many artists including J.M.W. Turner, and are still enjoyed by residents and visitors today.

The ancient settlement of Bayworth has been largely rebuilt since just before World War II, with many of these dwellings originally being council houses.

Long Furlong is a more recent development from the first half of the 20th century characterised by bungalows and low-rise detached houses.



Sunningwell. St Leonard's Church and pond. Top, present day ©Wikipedia, and bottom in 1907.

1.2 Welcome to Sunningwell!

The parish attracts many visitors and welcomes them with a smile.



Sunningwell welcomes visitors with a smile!

Many come from neighbouring, more built-up areas to enjoy the countryside, the walks and the views.

The parish is also home to a number of attractions that draw people from both within and outwith the parish. These include:

- Old Berkeley Golf Course
- Sunningwell Cricket Club and playground
- Sunningwell Deer Park, and Deer School and Forest School
- Sunningwell Church of England Primary School
- Sunningwell School of Art
- Opera Anywhere and Sunningwell Festival
- Church Farm Barn Café
- St Leonards Church and bellringers
- Flowing Well public house
- Sunningwell bonfire and fireworks

as well as frequent events in Sunningwell Village Hall and Bayworth Chapel Hall.

2. A History of Sunningwell parish

Timeline

Date	Event Description
Iron Age	Pottery production
Roman	Pottery production
c.993	Abingdon Abbey Charter (King Aethelred II)
6C–7C	Original settlement by Sunna and his tribe
1086	Domesday Book: Bayworth and Sunningwell
13–16C	St Leonard's Church
17C	Golden age of Bayworth Manor – era of farmhouses
1723	Sunningwell boundary created by Enclosure Act
1838	Sunningwell Parish Tithe map
1871	Primary school opens
1880 on	Boars Hill development
1912	Disney Estate sale
1927	Oxford Preservation Trust established
1930s	Long Furlong houses built
1938	Dark Lane and Brumcombe Lane houses built
1948–60	Many Bayworth houses
1950	Flowing Well opens
1970s	A34 Abingdon By-pass opens
1980s	Land ceded to Abingdon – Farm Lane
1990s	Land ceded to Abingdon – to Dunmore Road
1999	Village green registered
2017	Deer farm opens
2022	Land ceded to Abingdon – to A34
2026	Lodge Hill interchange opens

Timeline of major events in Sunningwell parish

The earliest archaeological find in the parish of Sunningwell, was an ‘un-urned’ prehistoric (date could range from 4000BC–42AD) cremation pit, found whilst work took place on the Wootton–Abingdon pipeline (Ref: Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) Monument/Building Record PRN 15681). Although difficult to precisely date (c800BC–42AD), a later ‘pit’ find, in the garden of ‘Ridgeway’ in Lincombe Lane, Boars Hill, revealed animal bones, struck flints and shards of iron age pottery (Ref: OCC PRN 7681).

A Romano-British inhumation burial revealed two grey-ware carinated and pedestalled beakers, in the Boars Hill area. Indeed, there have been several recorded finds, in the OCC records, of grey-ware pottery kilns on Boars Hill, around Lincombe Lane and Foxcombe Hill. Pottery from the 1945 excavation is housed in the Ashmolean Museum. Oxford was a known centre for grey-ware pottery production and in fact the area has enormous quantities of grey clay in the landscape. There must have been much pottery production using local clay in the Lincombe Lane area and pottery fragments can be regularly found in the spinney by ‘The Burrows’ just north of the deer farm boundary with the Oxfordshire Preservation Trust field.

The first documentary evidence of the parish can be found in the Charters of Abingdon Abbey, dated 956AD. In the Abingdon Abbey Charters, King Eadwig or Eadred gave 25 hides of land to Abbot Aethelwold. This is one of the earliest mentions of Bayworth (Saxon Baeganwyrthe) Estate which included Sunningwell and Wootton. Sunningwell was also mentioned in the Domesday Book with Bayworth being worth ten hides, yet Sunningwell was only worth five hides. After the Norman Conquest it is interesting to see how land was divided up with such men as a ‘De Sandford’, who founded the Priory of Littlemore and a ‘De Seacourt’ from the lost village of Seacourt, after which the ‘towers of Botley’ take their name. One such was Eskil of Seacourt who took part in a rebellion against William Rufus and having been captured was ‘encarcerated in conditions of some rigour and died a few days later.’ His wife and heirs were dispossessed of their lands. The story has a ‘happy ending’, in that Eskil’s widow became the mistress of Henry I and upon the death of William Rufus in a hunting ‘accident’ had her lands restored to the dower lands of Bayworth.

There is mention of the ‘outlaws of Bagley Wood’, an Oxfordshire equivalent to Robin Hood and his Merry Men. In 1327, after a riot in Abingdon, the Abbot was seized, taken to Bagley Wood, and ransomed, ‘lest his head be taken from his body.’ In the reign of Henry III, a significant ‘breach of the peace’ occurred, more akin to a pillaging raid, of Henry V’s wars in France, when Richard de Rucote and others came to Adam de Kerseye’s houses in Bayworth and took away his goods and chattles.

In 1540, Henry VIII assigned the manors of Sunningwell and Bayworth to a group of merchants. Their heirs in 1597 sold the Manor of Bayworth to one of Elizabeth I's generals, Sir Thomas Baskerville, the man who buried Sir Francis Drake in the Atlantic after an unsuccessful raid on the Spanish Main. The Baskervilles of Bayworth, Thomas's son Hannibal and then his son, another Thomas, became well known as charitable squires and as antiquaries. Thomas junior's travelogues, some written in hilarious doggerel verse, have recently been rediscovered. Eventually the final heir, in 1721, died heavily in debt, and by 1727 the house was a ruin and 'quarried' for stone. Their lordship of the manor passed to the landowners at Radley, in the 18th century the Stonhouses and in the 19th century the Bowyers. Hence forward, half a dozen farms, centred in Sunningwell, would see that village, around the church, become the major residential area compared to Bayworth.

St Leonard's Church, a building which dates from various periods in the later Middle Ages, had its modest share in the protestant Reformation: its rector in the 1550s was John Jewel, who became one of the leading spokesmen for the Elizabethan church settlement and the establishment of Anglicanism. Reputedly he had our unique seven-sided porch constructed, though we have no proof of this and don't know why. Equally murky are the stories, in circulation by this time, that the brilliantly original and controversial 13th century philosopher Roger Bacon used Sunningwell tower (evidently not the present one, which dates from after 1400) to make astronomical observations, and perhaps indulge in some black magic. A subsequent rector, Joseph Benet, more demonstrably helped the young J.M.W. Turner, who lodged in Sunningwell for extended periods with his aunt and uncle, to make his way as an artist in the last decades of the 18th century. The church had a sympathetic restoration in the 1870s, when it acquired its beautiful and rare encaustic tiles and pretty east window. Most villagers seem to have remained loyal to the Anglican establishment, but in Bayworth a Baptist congregation laid the foundation stone for its chapel in 1900.

At that date agriculture was still the vital employer of almost all within the Sunningwell parish. Even in the 1920s the newly-founded Women's Institute sported a banner bearing the motto, 'God Speed the Plough'! Yet working conditions had been slowly changing. Sunningwell was already enclosed by Act of Parliament in the 1720s, which brought to an end the open-field system of farming (though the surviving ridge and furrow pattern on the green still reminds us of it). Besides the local trades associated with village life, such as blacksmiths and carriers, there were brickworks using the clays on Boars Hill. And a larger transformation was on the horizon: one Sunningwell villager had a famous grandson, William Morris, the carmaker and multi-millionaire philanthropist.

Just as Morris began to construct his first motor vehicle, in 1912, almost the whole of Sunningwell was put up for sale.



Its landlords by then were a non-resident gentry family, the Disneys of Ingatestone in Essex, and their estates were encumbered with debt as a result of the great depression in farming. Many tenants could now own their houses and meanwhile plots of land on Boars Hill were fast being acquired for building (initially on 999-year leases). Then came the Great War. Some 60 men from the parish served, of whom almost one third did not return. Their names are recorded on a memorial in the church, and also in the village hall, which had been built just a few years earlier – initially with a gallery for shooting practice – and which was now rededicated in their honour. (An excellent website provides full details of all those lost in the war at <https://www.oxfordhistory.org.uk/war/sunningwell/index.html>).

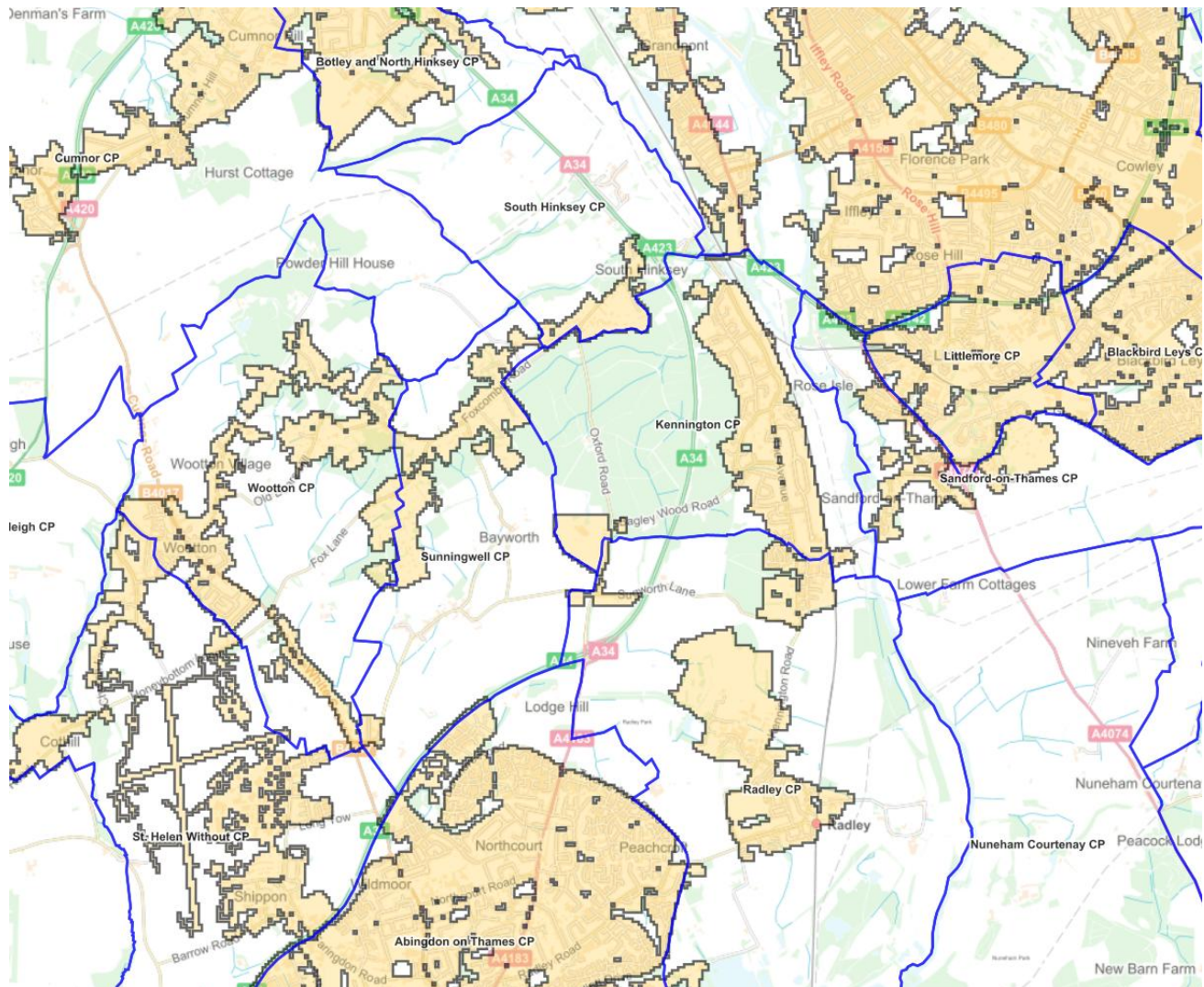
The 20th century witnessed vast expansion in the parish, above all in the part of it which extends across Boars Hill, where the spread of roomy residences was limited only by a desire for leafy privacy and by the emergence of a conservancy movement centred on the Oxford Preservation Trust (founded there in 1927). New housing also developed on a smaller scale from the inter-war years on in Bayworth and at Long Furlong. As transportation was transformed by the (Morris and other brands of) motor car, so employment linked the parish more and more to Abingdon and above all to Oxford. And local culture and amenity were transformed too. There had been a village school at least since 1871, when its building beside the pond was opened. After this school moved to a new site in 1972, its old premises could be acquired by a body of painters, potters and sculptors who turned them into the notably successful Sunningwell School of Art. Cricket had certainly flourished here by the late 19th century. In 1915 the ground was made over, in memory of a World War I casualty, to a trust to ensure the game should be played there in perpetuity. In the 1950s the parish acquired its first public house – previously thirst seems to have been quenched at the Fox, just across the boundary with Wootton – in a building, now rechristened the Flowing Well, which had been constructed earlier in the century by a bachelor rector for purposes unknown.

The first of the houses in Long Furlong that are recognisable today were the ‘800 sq. ft.’ bungalows built in the 1930’s. The proximity to the end of runway 08/26 at RAF Abingdon meant strict height restrictions giving rise to the distinctively ‘low-rise’ character of the area that remains evident today, even though many houses have been added or remodelled since the war. Long Furlong Farm has long been associated with the Greening family who were notable benefactors and philanthropists, and whose donations include the 42 acres on which Tilsley Park leisure centre is built in memory of their son, John Tilsley Greening, who was tragically killed in a road accident in Wootton in 1979.

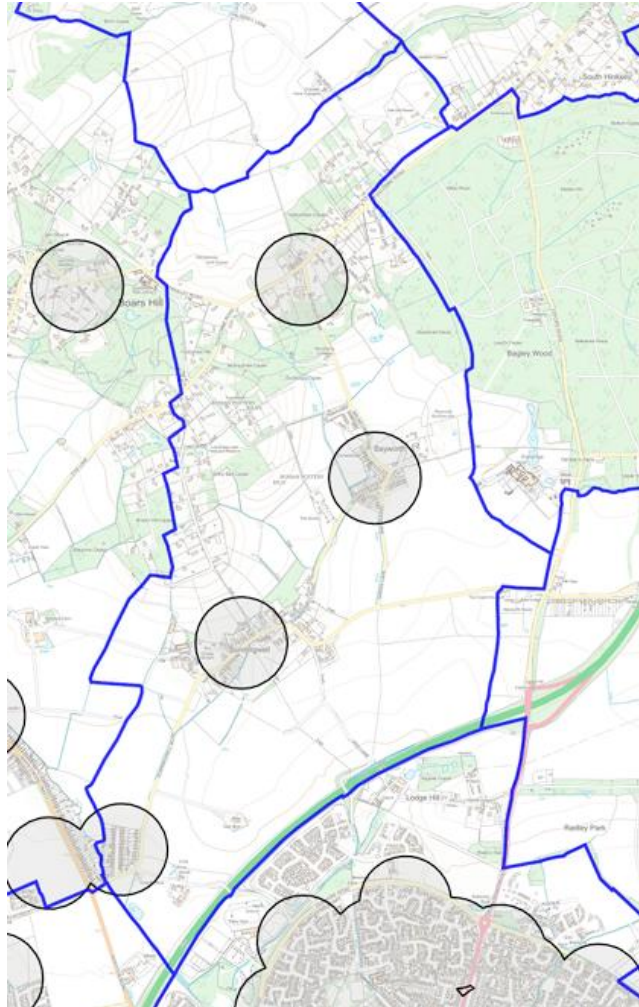
By the start of the new millennium most of the village and Bayworth had been rebuilt, their old cottages replaced as no longer fit for purpose; and there were no independent farms in the parish, although many of their buildings could be adapted as residential accommodation. The bulk of the land was worked from Blagrove, also based across the boundary in Wootton. However, Church Farm has recently been re-established to raise deer on the slopes of Boars Hill. One ten-acre parcel passed into collective public ownership after a landmark lawsuit. The church’s glebe was scheduled by the diocese to be sold for housing but was successfully claimed as common land and purchased by the parish. Nothing in its more than thousand-year history so raised the profile of the place as the Sunningwell Case, concluded at the House of Lords in 1999.

3. Character of the parish

The parish of Sunningwell lies in close proximity to the city of Oxford, the town of Abingdon and the villages of Wootton and Kennington. It is a rural area surrounded by these growing built-up areas.



Sunningwell parish, and the surrounding built-up areas



The parish has four distinct population centres of Bayworth, Boars Hill, Long Furlong and Sunningwell village. It is a distinctive and treasured characteristic of the parish that the four distinct populated areas within it remain separated by open fields.



Sunningwell village with the view north towards Boars Hill © Lucy Roberts Photography



Sunningwell village with view south towards Abingdon © Lucy Roberts Photography



Bayworth with view north towards Boars Hill (centre) and west to Sunningwell village (left)
© Lucy Roberts Photography

One of the reasons that Sunningwell is so distinctive is in its contrast to the ever more populous urban market town of Abingdon. It acts as a ‘lung’ for the town population, and many walks set out by crossing the bridge over the A 34 into the parish. The parish is characterised by its narrow lanes, its many hedgerows which abut the roads and divide fields, and its fine views across the parish to the north, south, east and west.

The characters of each of its four communities, Bayworth, Boars Hill, Long Furlong and Sunningwell are distinctive and add to its diversity. Agriculture, primarily arable and venison production, are also characteristic of a community whose farms, up to the late 20th century, have provided the livelihoods of most of its inhabitants. This landscape, with many footpaths crossing the parish, many sites of bio-diversity, including close proximity to Bagley wood, together with its many historic buildings make Sunningwell parish a special place valued by both its inhabitants and neighbours alike.

3.1 Main character areas

3.1.1 Bayworth hamlet

Despite a history stretching back over 1,000 years, Bayworth retains only two buildings in excess of 100 years old, shown below



Many of the more modern dwellings are semi-detached, and built in a coherent style typical of their era, with the examples below from the late 1940s and the 1960s. These were originally built as council houses and approximately half remain as social housing with the other half now being privately owned.



Bayworth © Google Maps

There are other houses, both terraced and detached, from similar eras, and one block of 1960s maisonettes.

Bayworth has the highest population density in the parish, approaching 50 people per hectare.

As evidenced in the demographics shown in the Planning Working Group report, the area is characterised by a large number of self-employed and business-owners in building, catering and automotive trades.

Bayworth has an active residents' association (Bayworth Residents Association) that organises social and community activities, such as those illustrated on page 30.

Bayworth Triangle is a small triangular patch of grass at the heart of the hamlet and is owned by the parish council.



Bayworth Triangle from above © Google Maps

As illustrated in Section 5, as well as being a pleasant green space, this is a valued gathering place for local events.

3.1.2 Boars Hill

Boars Hill's chief residential characteristic is its interesting mix of signature dwellings of a range of late 19th and 20th century vintages, mostly set in large plots with many trees, and a peaceful feel because of its rural setting. This is illustrated by the aerial image below, and results in a population density of only five people per hectare.



A range of different styles exists, from traditional houses to ultra-modern © Google Maps

Eastern Boars Hill is an unusual and distinctive mix of the residential and the rural sitting on a narrow ridge which affords it its most striking feature, the Old Berkeley Golf Course, now open access land owned by the Oxford Preservation Trust and much enjoyed by residents and visitors.



Old Berkeley Golf Course © Wikipedia Commons

Until the latter half of the 19th century Boars Hill, which straddles the parishes of Sunningwell, Wootton and Cumnor, was largely uninhabited heathland grazed by farmers from the surrounding villages. It was and still is famous for its views northwards to the city of Oxford, southwards to the Downs and westwards to the upper Thames Valley. These views of Oxford inspired Matthew Arnold's famous phrase in *Thyrsis* of 'the dreaming spires', which encouraged people to visit the hill and settle there.

Consequently, from the late 19th century the hill was developed, generally characterised by substantial dwellings situated in large leafy plots. Many of these have since been rebuilt, so that the hill has a wide variety of architecture with many unique signature dwellings. Some locally coherent stylistic groups exist, for example the 14 Voysey-influenced Arts and Crafts Movement houses on Foxcombe Road.

Many of the dwellings on the hill have associations with its past famous residents including Gilbert Murray, a classicist and campaigner for the League of Nations and for the establishment of Oxfam; Catherine Octavia Stevens, a notable astronomer; the botanist Sir Frederick Keeble and his wife the actress Lillah McCarthy, as well as renowned Oxford academics: Geoffrey Blackman, Sibthorpean professor of rural economy and legendary gardener, along with his artist wife Audrey; the bacteriologist Roy Vulliamy, after whom the most deadly strain of anthrax is named; the Assyriologist Oliver Gurney, scholar of Hittite and Akkadian; and the philosopher Edgar Carrington with his remarkable family all devoted to left-wing causes.

Boars Hill has a long-established association for residents (Boars Hill Association) representing the interests of the area which spans three parishes.



Oxford from Boars Hill © Wikipedia Commons

3.1.3 Long Furlong

Long Furlong is a close-knit community of bungalow and low-rise detached dwellings, with a population density of approximately 30 people per hectare.

The height restrictions on buildings in the area originate from the houses being directly in line with runway 08/26 at the nearby RAF Abingdon (now Dalton Barracks).

Many of the original '800 sq. ft' houses from the 1930s have since been rebuilt or remodelled, but the common characteristic style remains and is immediately apparent even though there is house-to-house variability.

This characteristic style continued with further houses added in between 1950 and 1970.



Long Furlong © Google Maps

The area has a high proportion of people who have lived there for many years, with some having been born there in the 1930s. As shown in the Planning Working Group Report, this leads to a significant proportion of the population being above 55 years old.

The proximity of Long Furlong to the B4017 Abingdon–Wootton road means that it is the only part of the parish to be within 500m of a daily bus service.

3.1.4 Sunningwell village

Sunningwell village has a population density of approximately 20 people per hectare and benefits from many of the features and amenities that would be considered desirable in the archetypal English village. These include the St Leonard's Church, a medieval building with a prominent tower of local stone and a unique seven-sided porch added in c1560; the primary school, first established opposite the church in the 1870s, relocated to the edge of the village in 1972 which has its own archaeological project, Shrieve Cottage, courtesy of a gift from the friends of Sunningwell School; and the village hall, given just before World War I by the Shawcross family of Boars Hill and then enlarged as a memorial to the fallen.

There is also the pond, the village green, the cricket club and children's playground, the Flowing Well public house, and The Barn, Farm Shop and Café at Church Farm, images of which these are shown in other parts of this report. All of the listed buildings within the parish are within Sunningwell village and these are shown in Section 4.

It also has amenities that are less common, including a School of Art, located in the former primary school premises since the 1970s and serving a clientele well beyond the bounds of the parish; a deer farm, attractively situated in its parkland on the slopes of Boars Hill; and an opera company which has provided entertainment in venues near and far for over twenty years.



The seven-sided Jewel Porch – believed to be unique and the first ecclesiastical building to combine Gothic and Renaissance styles.

As the images below, and also on page 5, show, central Sunningwell has remained unspoilt for over a hundred years.



Hollytree and Rowan Cottages – Sunningwell village – present day and circa 1900

Further from the centre of Sunningwell, other styles of house are found, sometimes with a coherent style, but often with a mix of styles and vintages.



Cricket Lane, Sunningwell – early 20th century



Sunningwell Road – range of ages



Dark Lane – c1930s

3.2 Outlying areas

The old Quarry is situated between Bayworth and Sunningwell village. It is defined and constrained by the topography created by the quarrying work. With two dwellings, it is home to both Turner's Coal and Garden and to Opera Anywhere, a successful and popular travelling opera company. The Quarry garden provides a unique setting for summer musical performances that are well supported by locals and visitors alike. (see Section 5).

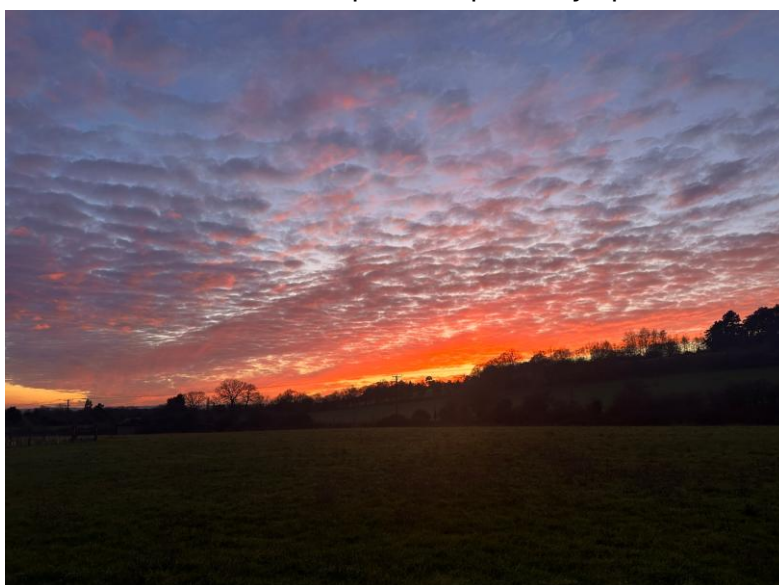
The views from the Quarry footpath extend to reach Goring Gap. The (never-completed) quarry canal running south from the quarry in the direction of Abingdon is a valuable flood-mitigation feature and a potential wildlife haven.

Church Farm is situated off the end of Dark Lane to the west of Sunningwell village. It is a working deer farm, that also runs educational events, some for adults and many for children including Deer School and Forest School in the holidays.

Long Furlong Farm is isolated together with one house at the very southern end of the parish, with two converted barns a short distance away.

Manor Farm is the historic location of Bayworth Manor, just to the east of the main hamlet of Bayworth, with earthworks dating back to Roman times. The farm house and two adjacent barns have now been converted to residential use.

Bayworth Residential Park is located a little north of the hamlet of Bayworth. Historically a caravan park, this is now a thriving community that embraces both its proximity to Bayworth, and the beauty of its views from its elevated position part way up Boars Hill.



Sunset from Bayworth Residential Park © Katherine Rhodes

4. Heritage assets

4.1 Designated heritage assets

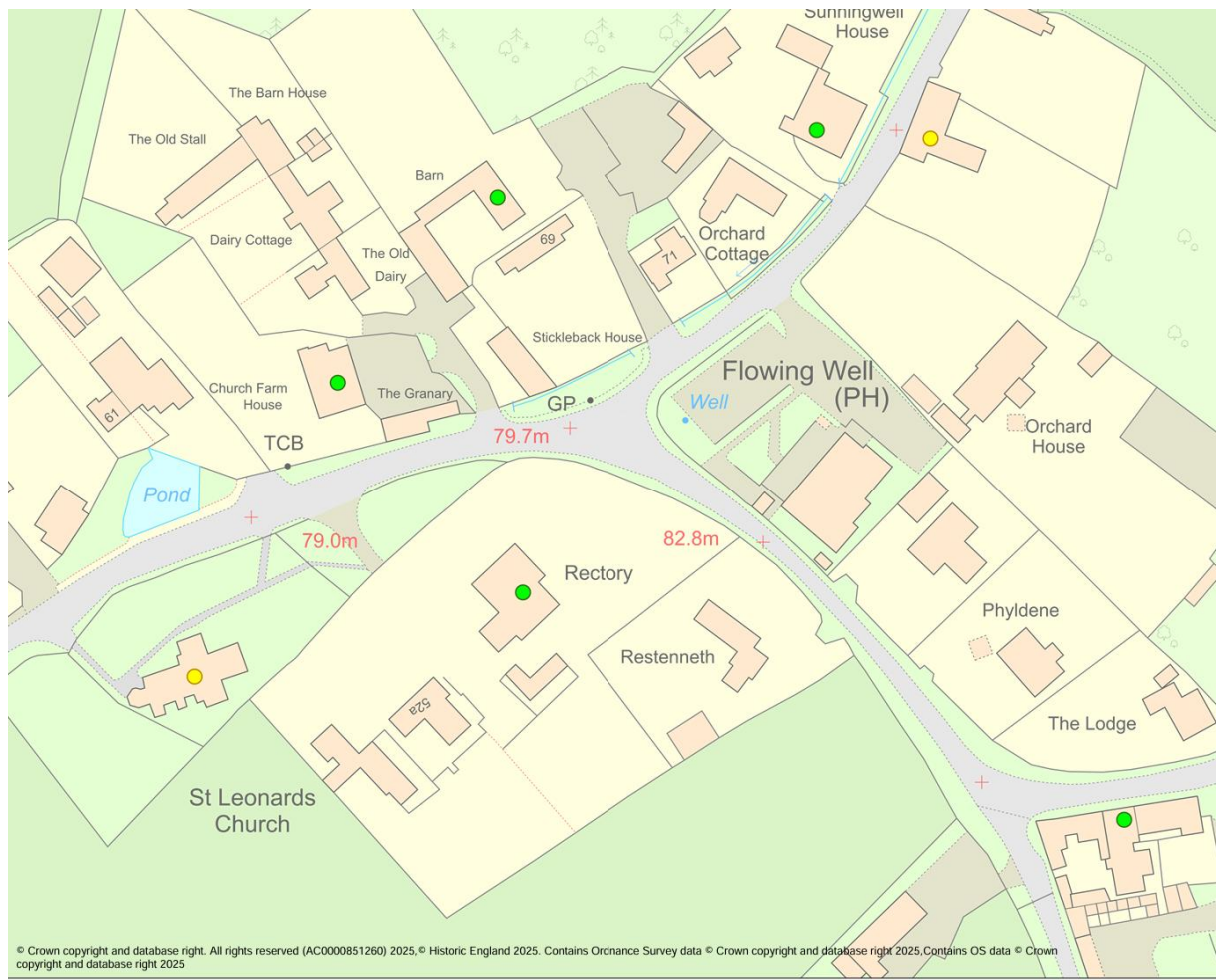


St Leonard's Church, Sunningwell village © Lucy Roberts Photography

Listed Buildings

Grade II*	St Leonard's Church, Sunningwell
Grade II*	The Old Manor, Sunningwell
Grade II	Sunningwell House, Sunningwell
Grade II	Beaulieu Court Farmhouse, Sunningwell
Grade II	The Old Rectory, Sunningwell
Grade II	Church Farmhouse, Sunningwell
Grade II	The Thatched Barn, Sunningwell

Sunningwell Parish Neighbourhood Plan



Listed Buildings in Sunningwell village



St Leonard's Church (left), Church Farm House (centre), the Thatched Barn (right), and The Old Rectory and Wellingtonia (right), Sunningwell © Historic England



The Old Manor – Sunningwell © Google Maps



Sunningwell House © Google Maps



Beaulieu Court Farmhouse, Sunningwell Village



The Thatched Barn, Sunningwell

5. Local resources

Beaumont Care Home



Bayworth Santa visits Beaumont Care Home, Boars Hill

Village green



For dog walkers, ramblers and ecologists



Sunningwell bonfire and fireworks – attracts more than 500 people annually © Lucy Roberts

Bayworth Triangle



Remembrance Day on Bayworth Triangle



VE Day on Bayworth Triangle

Heelas Heating Hall



Macmillan Coffee at Heelas Heating Hall

Sunningwell Festival



Opera Anywhere – The Quarry

The Flowing Well

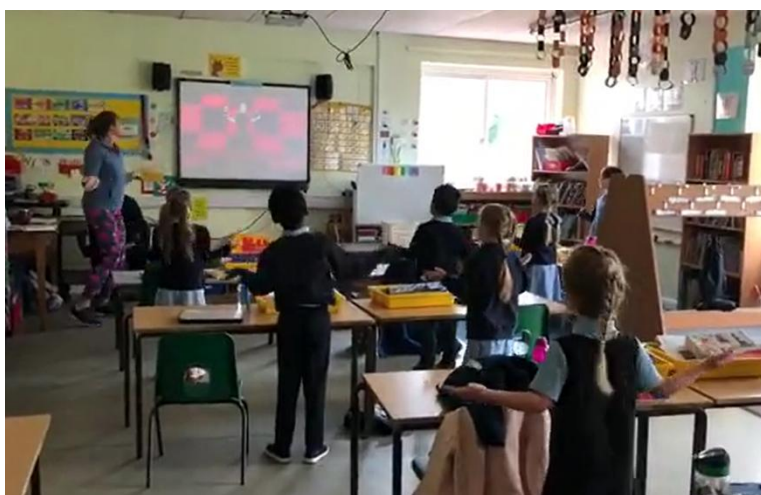


Sunningwell School of Art



Housed in the Old School House

Sunningwell Primary School



The Barn, Farm Shop and Café at Church Farm



Church Farm Deer Farm and School



FOREST SCHOOL
2ND - 4TH APRIL 2024

DEER SCHOOL
9TH - 11TH APRIL 2024

A UNIQUE EXPERIENCE FOR AGES 6-12 YEARS
HELD ON A PRIVATE DEER FARM IN SUNNINGWELL

FOR MORE INFO VISIT CHURCHFARMOXFORD.COM



**EASTER HOLIDAY
DEER SCHOOL**

10AM-2PM | 9TH, 10TH, 11TH APRIL | AGES 6-10

OUR DEER SCHOOL IS A THREE-DAY COURSE FOR 6-10 YEAR OLDS, FOCUSING ON DEER ECOLOGY, HABITATS, AND BEHAVIOURS. CHILDREN WILL INTERACT WITH RED DEER AT CHURCH FARM AND PARTICIPATE IN PRACTICAL ACTIVITIES. THE COURSE COVERS THE FIELD-TO-FORK PROCESS AND EMPHASISES NATURAL FARMING. ON THE FINAL DAY, FAMILIES CAN ENJOY A FARM WALK AND SAMPLE CHURCH FARM VENISON AT THE BARN FARM SHOP & CAFÉ.



Sunningwell Cricket Club





Senior, junior, boys', girls' and mixed teams © Sunningwell Cricket Club

Playground



Children's playgroud – adjacent to primary school and cricket field

Village Hall



Sunningwell Village Hall – home of Sunningwell and Bayworth Women’s Institute for more than a century, as well as ballet school, quiz-nights, film club, music, magic and many more events

6. Natural features

6.1 Open green spaces

The area enjoys several open-access green spaces, plus some others where access is by subscription.

Notable among the free-access areas are the village green in Sunningwell, and the Old Berkeley Golf Course in Boars Hill.



Sunningwell village green © Google Maps



Old Berkeley Golf Course, Boars Hill © Google Maps

Bayworth Triangle is a small but treasured area of grass in the centre of the hamlet where volunteers tend flowers and maintain benches.



Bayworth Triangle © Google Maps

The graveyard at St. Leonard's Church in Sunningwell has graves dating back to the 16th century including Nicolas Baskerville who 'died fishing' in 1597. His brother, Thomas Baskerville was a general in the British Army. He helped control the spread of the fire of London, and is buried in St. Paul's Cathedral, London.



St Leonard's graveyard, Sunningwell © Google Maps

6.2 Natural and green assets

Sunningwell pond is a long-standing and well-loved feature of the parish.



© Andrew Hoare (top) and Bob Evans (bottom)

For much of their length, the lanes in the parish are edged by well-established hedgerows.



© Google Maps

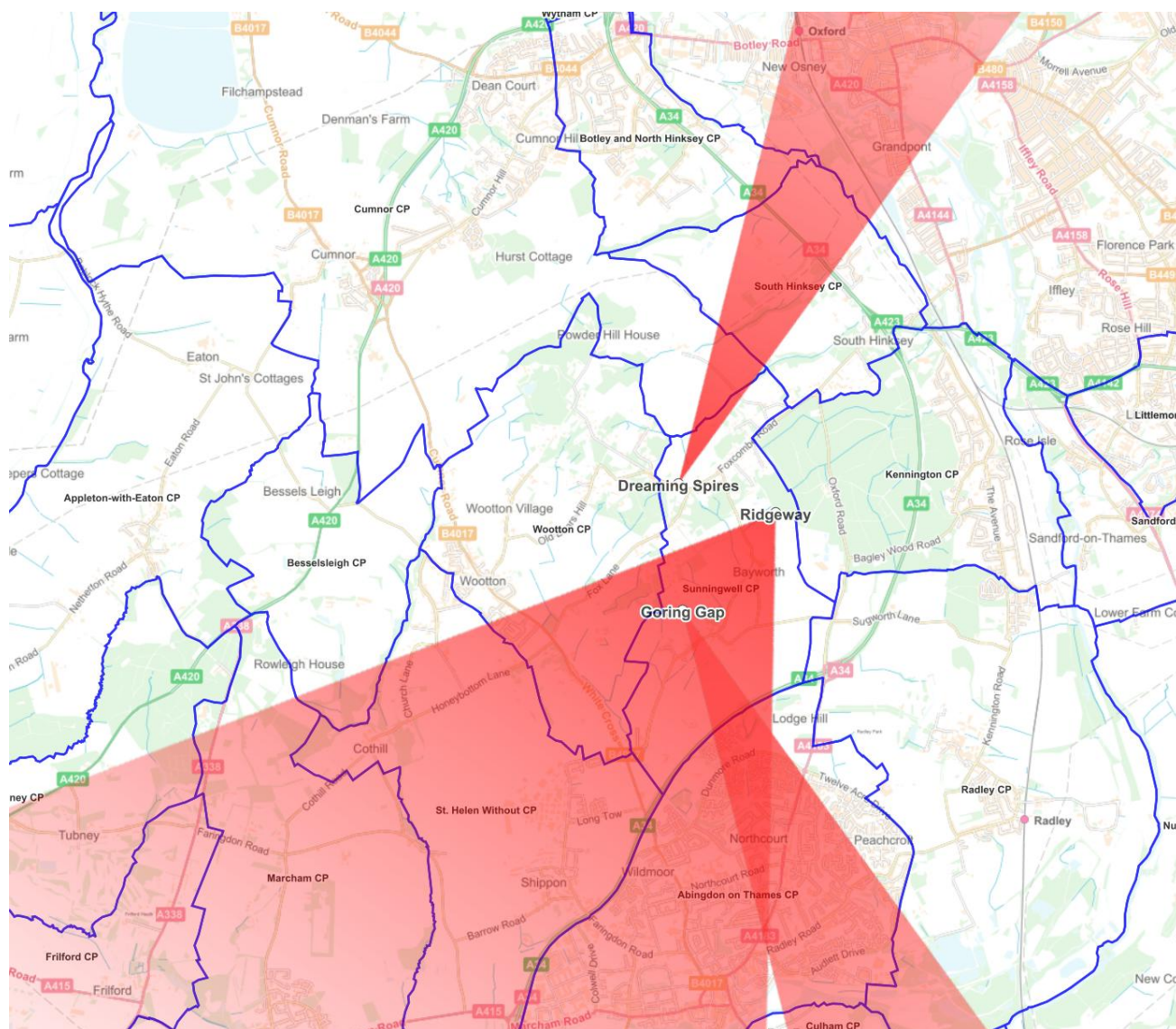
A more complete listing of the extensive green assets within the area can be found in the report of the Natural Environment, Biodiversity and Wildlife Working Group.

7. Important views

7.1 Long-distance views

The high ground in the parish means that it benefits from many long-distance views that extend well beyond the boundaries of the parish, taking in a considerable area of the Thames Valley and Vale of the White Horse.

Although there are views in every direction, perhaps the most notable are the three indicated below.



Long distance views from Sunningwell parish.

It is these long-distance views that attract many walkers and ramblers to the area. Each is visible from a range of vantage points, offering walkers a subtly changing perspective as they proceed.

7.1.1 Dreaming spires

The most famous view from the parish is from Boars Hill towards Oxford, setting the ‘dreaming spires’ between the green fields in the foreground and the rolling green hills in the background.



Oxford from Old Berkeley Golf Course © Oxford Preservation Trust



W. Turner - Oxford from Hinksey Hill c.1840

Visible from the Old Golf Course, and the adjacent Foxcombe Road and Berkeley Road, the view made famous by Matthew Arnold has remained intact since being painted by J.M.W. Turner and W. Turner in the first half of the 19th century.

7.1.2 Goring Gap

Extensive vistas to the south are available from several locations in the parish, notably from the end of Lincombe Lane, and the escarpment of the Old Quarry, with views stretching as far as Goring Gap (23km) and beyond.



View towards Goring Gap from Lincombe Lane © Mike Osborne

7.1.3 Ridgeway

Clear views to the Ridgeway, some 20km distant are visible from many points in the parish, with the image below showing from view from the observation chair installed at the edge of Woodcraft Wood above Bayworth.



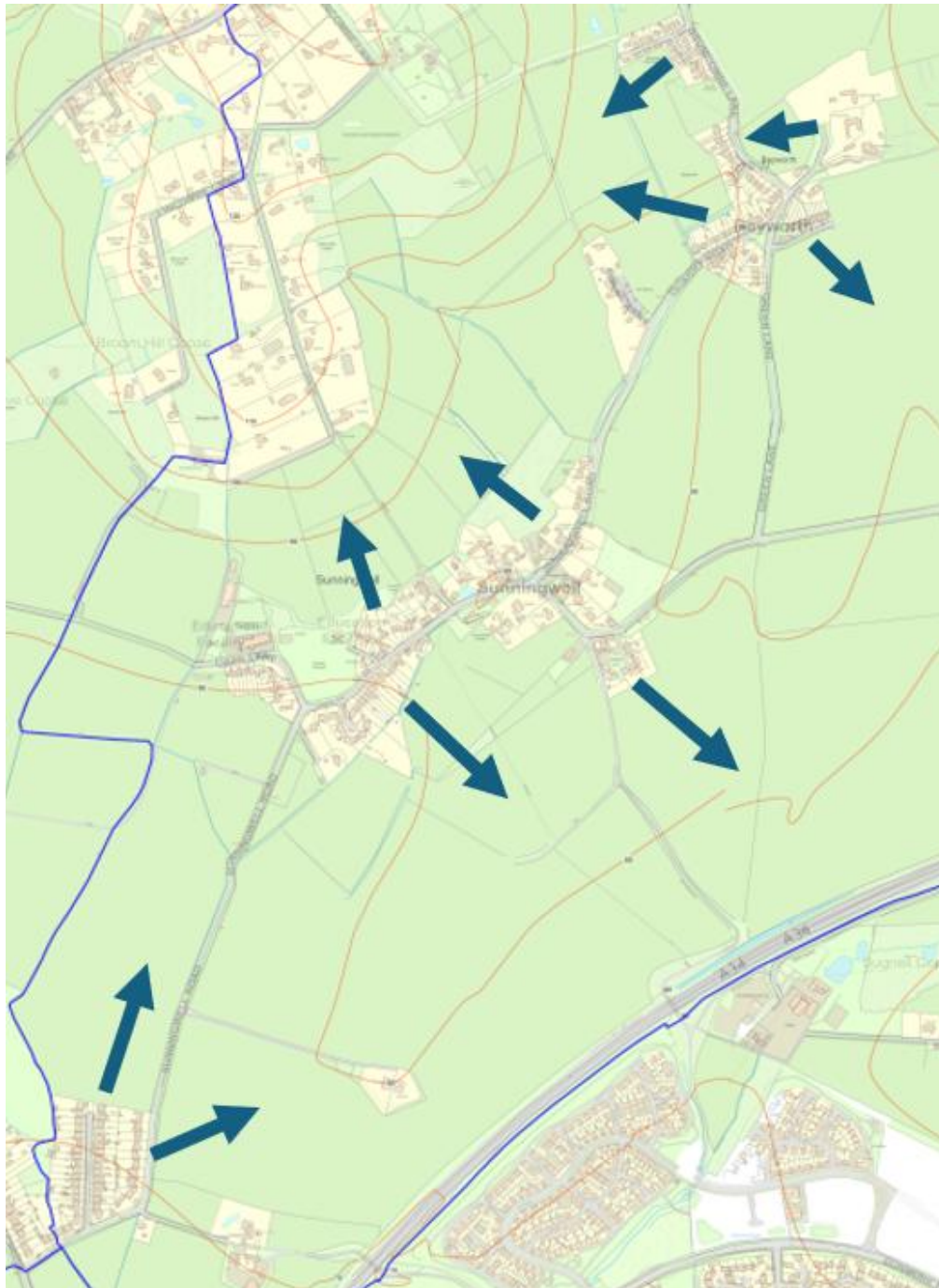
View over the Vale to Ridgeway and viewing chair © Katherine Rhodes

7.2 Local views

The layout of the dwellings within the parish means that almost every one is either in an isolated location, or sits at the edge of a settlement, yielding views in at least one direction.

From Boars Hill, variations of the long-distance views above are enjoyed by many.

For Bayworth, Long Furlong and Sunningwell village the views are often towards higher ground. These views are an essential part of the character of the area and are almost too many to list. Some are indicated below.



Local views – often towards higher ground

A typical example of the view towards Boars Hill from Bayworth Residential Park is shown below.



View from Bayworth Residential Park towards Boars Hill © Katherine Rhodes

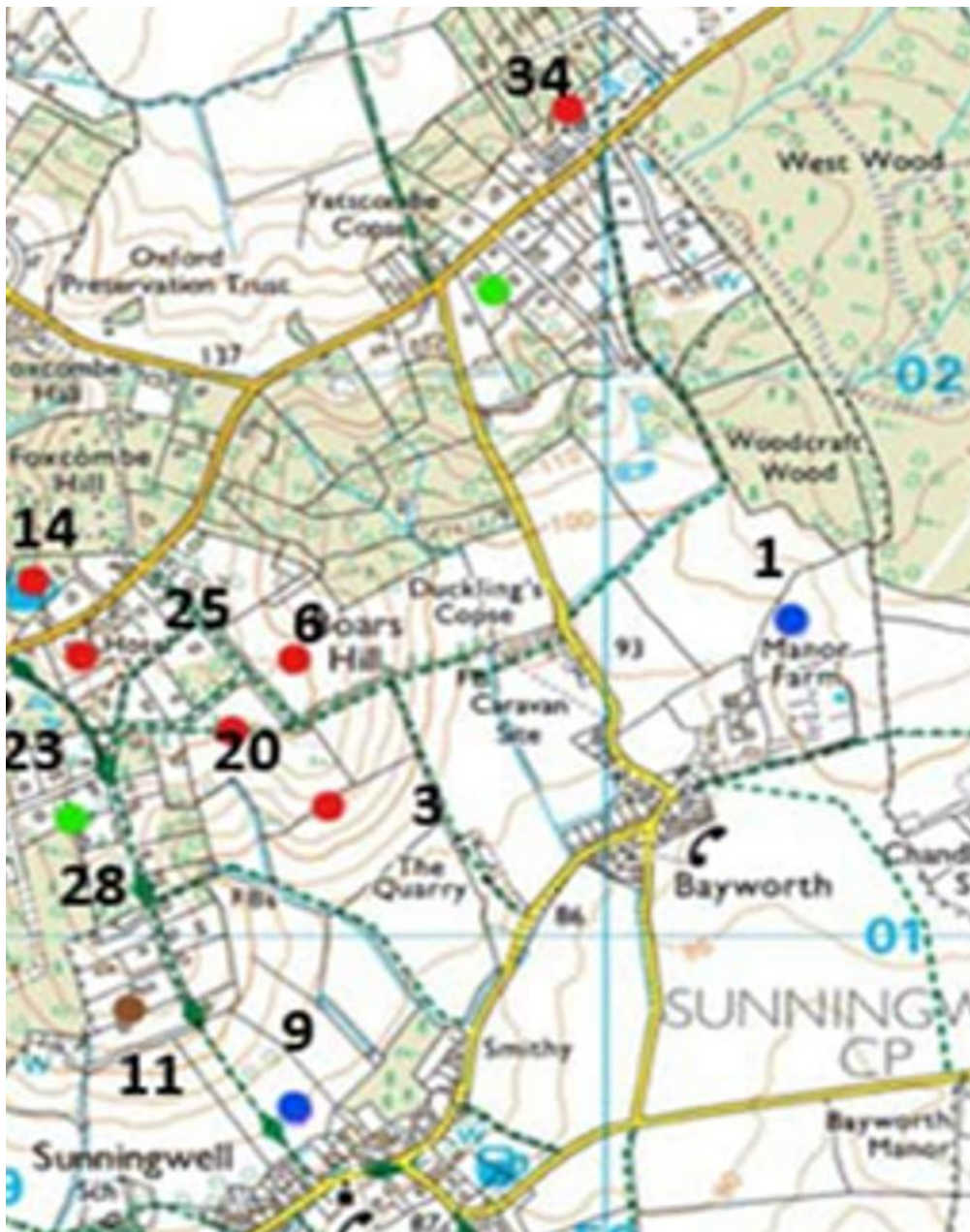
7.3 Views into the parish

Views of the parish are valued beyond the parish boundaries – the example below is from the Vale of White Horse (VoWH) ‘Dalton Barracks Strategic Allocation’ document where preservation of the view to Boars Hill is a named objective.



Extract from VoWH ‘Dalton Barracks Strategic Allocation’

Appendix 1: Archaeology



1	Site of chapel and manor house	Medieval
3	Pottery kilns	Roman
6	Pottery kilns	Roman
9	Holy Well	Medieval
11	Settlement evidence	Iron Age
14	Burial and pottery	Roman
20	Pottery kilns	Roman
25	Urned cremation burial	Roman
28	Ground stone axe	Neolithic
34	Pottery	Roman



2004 dig at Bayworth Manor (site 1) showing c17th century paving © Bob Evans

Appendix 2: The demographics of Sunningwell Cricket Club

History

Sunningwell Cricket Club (SCC) was formed in the late 19th century and continues playing to this very day. The field was, after World War I, gifted to the parish by the grieving mother of a cricket loving son, Captain Clifford Whittington-Green, who was killed in action in 1915 at the Battle of Cambray. The field is dedicated to allow cricket to be played and is under the jurisdiction of the church wardens of St Leonard's Church, Sunningwell. Many families from the parish have been represented within its playing ranks across the generations. Over the years the field and its clubhouse have been used for a variety of concerts, village fetes and other community events.

The club in the 21st Century

Today, parishioners use the field for exercise, dog walking, family games of football, and, in the far corner of the field, the parish council, some years ago, upgraded the play facilities to more contemporary standards. The groundsman and club members maintain the ground and field to a high standard, keeping hedges and ditches that border the field maintained. The club is also raising money to improve and upgrade the pavilion.

The demographics of club members

A majority of SCC live outside of the Parish, in adjoining parishes or the town of Abingdon. However, this is indicative of the parish providing recreational and wellbeing opportunities for those wanting to enjoy a predominantly rural parish, on the outskirts of Abingdon. That said, a far higher percentage of All Stars, Dynamos and U11s–U16s do reside within the parish; many attend, or have attended, Sunningwell Primary School.

Twenty-five percent of the membership (both playing and non-playing) are female, rising to 45% for younger members, including the girls' Dynamo Team (8–11 year olds) and All Stars (5–7 year olds).

SCC has a relatively wide ethnic spread amounting to membership 25% of male adult players.

The happy history of cricket passing from generation to generation is alive and well, with many of the U11s–U16s being the children of playing parents.

Appendix 3: Sunningwell CE Primary School



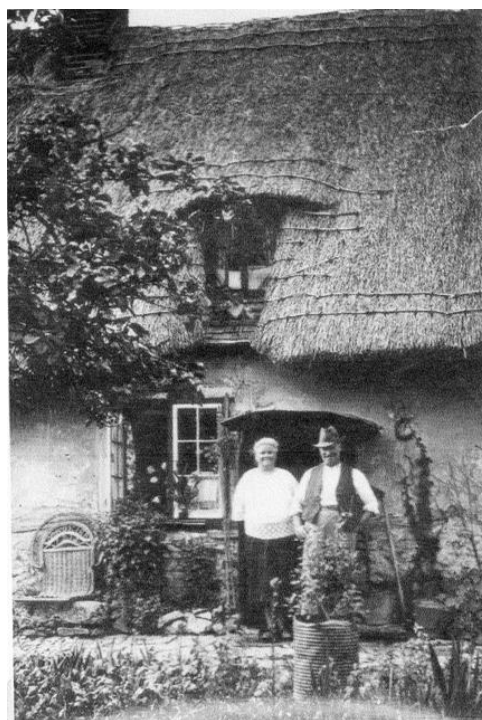
Sunningwell CE Primary School has been situated in Dark Lane since 1972. Prior to this the school was what is now the Art School and had been founded in the early 1870s. The number of pupils has fluctuated with the largest cohort, just over 100, attending the school in about 2015. Just prior to this the school was transformed by removing two prefabricated buildings and adding two new classrooms, new toilets and a new (much needed) staffroom. This enabled the four classes to be an integral part of the main building and Sunningwell Preschool to locate to the west end of the school in a large classroom with its own facilities.

The school serves a broad catchment area including (but not exclusively) Sunningwell, Bayworth, Whitecross, Boars Hill, Wootton, Abingdon and Dalton Barracks. We are blessed with a rich mix of nationalities and cultures partly due to our service families. We are part of a cluster of five small primary schools, Marcham, Radley, Dry Sandford and Wootton St Peter's, which itself is part of the Abingdon Partnership of Schools. We hold the Platinum Sainsbury School Games Kite Mark because of the inclusiveness of the wide variety of sports that we offer.

We have a strong relationship with St Leonard's Church and feel that our roots are grounded in sound Christian values. In our SIAMS in November 2023 findings indicated that 'Sunningwell Church of England Primary School is living up to its foundation as a Church school'. Our children can often be seen visiting the church and other areas of the village to develop their learning.

Through our teaching and care we equip children with the skills, knowledge, attitudes, values and understanding necessary to be able to make informed choices about the important things in their lives. We believe that appropriate teaching and learning experiences help children to lead happy and useful lives. As a church school these aims are underpinned by the school's Christian ethos.

We have wonderful green spaces around the school that enable the children not only to develop their physical skills, but which also provide rich learning opportunities in the form of a pond and 'The (John Savage) Spinney'. The latter has been the object of the excavation of the footings of Shrieve Cottages seen above in about 1939 with the last tenants (members of the Wooloff



family) just before they moved into the new cottages on Dark Lane and the cottages were demolished.



The Spinney is a source of rich ecology. In 2021 a study was carried out by a student from Royal Holloway University of London which included the Spinney. She was pleased to find this Pellucid Fly (hoverfly) which she reported is very under-reported in our area. The children love to spend time in the Spinney, and we hope that experiences there will encourage them to think about how important green spaces are and to develop skills which enable them to care for them locally and in the wider world.

Anita Leech Headteacher, Sunningwell CE Primary School

Appendix 4: Associations with Notable People

Note – Added material

This Appendix 4 was added to the Working Group Report on 16 July 2026 by Sunningwell Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group.

This Appendix was not included in any public consultations on this report that were carried out prior to this date.

The members of the Heritage and Character Working Group listed on page 3 were given the opportunity to comment or object to this addition, and no negative comments were received.

The association with the many notable people who have lived in the area contributes to the history and character of the parish. A partial list of such people and dwellings is:

Boars Hill

Foxcombe Road / Fox Lane

Entwood and gardens: John Jewkes (1902-88) economist

Woodcroft and gardens: Geoffrey Blackman (1903-80) agronomist, and Audrey Blackman (1907-90) sculptor

Robin Wood: built 1910, Gordon Dobson (1889-1976) physicist and meteorologist, after whom ozone-layer measurements are named

Yatsden: built by Arthur Crane, Earlys of Witney; Kenneth Sisam (1887-1971) Anglo-Saxonist

Bayworth Corner, now Oxford Beaumont, built 1899: Oliver Gurney (1911-2001) orientalist (Akkadian and Hittite)

The Plain: built 1910, Catharine Stevens (1865-1959), astronomer

Woodlands (demolished 2023): Frank Roby (d 1940) champion of rights of way; later, 1984-95, Brian Aldiss (1925-2017) author

South Lodge: built by Ernest George, initially for Berkeleys

Glenfield: Pinsents, esp Ellen (1866-1949) social reformer, David (1891-1918) mathematician, and Hester (1899-1966) social reformer

Holmwood: Sir Reginald Aneurin Thomas (1879-1975) explosives expert; then Clubbs (prominent Oxford doctors) and cf Grace Dieu, Catholic Church of St Thomas More

Sunningwell Parish Neighbourhood Plan

Badgers Holt: Dorothea Clara Maude [= Nasmyth] (1879–1959) physician and surgeon

Foxcombe Rise: built 1930s for Leopold Wickham Legg (1877-1962) historian, ed of DNB

Grace Dieu: Bernard Henry Newdigate (1869-1944) author, publisher, printer, bibliographer

Foxcombe, Hamels & Bayworth lanes

Foxcombe End and gardens by Thomas Rayson: Lucy Silcox (1862-1947), headmistress and feminist; Olive Dymond, headmistress

West Side: Roy Lars Vollum (1899-1970) bacteriologist

Hamels and gardens built 1920s, burnt down 1973: Sir Frederick Keeble (1870-1952) botanist and Lillah McCarthy († 1960) actress; associated with David Macdonald, zoologist

Melfort: birthplace of Sir Lennox Berkeley (1903-89) composer; later Harold Chaloner Dowdall (1868-1955), judge

Heath Burrows: Edgar Carritt (1876-1964) philosopher and his famously left-wing family

Orchard Lea: Alice Dryden (1866-1956), historian, who in 1911 commissioned Clough Williams-Ellis to design the adjoining Lodge; Alistair Crombie (1915-96) historian of science

The Lodge: built by Clough Williams-Ellis

Lincombe Lane

The Grey House: John Adams (1920-84), physicist, director of CERN

Withy Copse and garden: Herbert Tuer Shawcross (1870-1961), lawyer and philanthropist; visited by his nephew (Lord) Hartley Shawcross (1902-2003), barrister

The Little House (now Holm Oak), by Thomas Rayson: also a house of Herbert Tuer Shawcross

Winterslow 1924 (demolished 2026): built for the widow of Sir Alfred William Winterslow Dale (1855-1921) academic administrator

Appletree House: Sir Colin Buchanan (1907-2001) town planner

Hillsborough (demolished 2015), now Lincombe House: Sir David Lindsay Keir (1895-1973) academic administrator

Romney: David Samuel Margoliouth (1858-1940) and wife Jessie Payne (1856-1933) orientalist

Winterslow Cottage: Leighton Reynolds (1930-99), classicist

Sunningwell

Old Manor: Una Stratford Duval, née Dugdale (1879-1975) suffragette

Rectory: (earlier building on site) Rev Joseph Benet (1721-95), rector and patron of the young JMW Turner

Beaulieu Court Farmhouse: built c 1660 for Charles Holloway, lawyer and serjeant at arms

Restenneth: Dr Jessie Mole (1916-2000), chemist

Foxcombe Lodge: (site of) Capt Mark Hewitson (1897-1973), MP (Lab) for Kingston upon Hull 1945-64

Dark Lane, no 10: Daisy May Hall (1917-2015) OBE, public servant

Bayworth

Baskerville House: (site of) Hannibal Baskerville (1597-1668), antiquarian, philanthropist, eccentric; and son Thomas Baskerville (1631-1700), antiquarian, traveller, author, poetaster

Long Furlong

Long Furlong Farm: Greening family of farmers from c 1900, esp John William Greening (1922-2010, at Long Furlong 1946-80), philanthropist