

# LangfordLife

The Voice of the Village

Published by the Langford Village Community Association

## Secret Service Engineer

What's Langford Village got to do with 007?  
Brush off your tuxedo and find out inside!



London Road crossing update

Flywheel at Bicester Heritage

Ordeal for Langford dog owner

Wretchwick Green latest



**MERRY**

**CHRISTMAS**

and a Happy New Year

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**Steve Clack**  
Editor

# Editor's letter

It's been six months since the last issue, during which time the seemingly relentless expansion of Bicester has been continuing apace. As Langford Life is only published a few times a year we can't realistically focus on the many developments going on around the town – it's all simply happening too fast for us to compete with daily or weekly publications. In this issue we've included a few snapshots of the current state of play on some key areas that affect Langford residents though, such as the London Road crossing and Wretchwick Green development.

The main goal of Langford Life is to provide you with (hopefully) interesting updates on what's been going on around Langford Village and the Bicester area since the last issue, as well as what's coming up between now and the next one. As always, we're looking for *you* to provide us with some personal stories, like the 'High-speed pursuit' article on page 10 of this issue. If you've got an interesting job or pastime, or have anything else you think residents ought to know about or might interest them, please contact me directly at [editor@langfordlife.org.uk](mailto:editor@langfordlife.org.uk). Whether it's a favourite local walk, bike ride, picnic spot or place to take the kids, we'd love to hear about it.

Finally, we're still looking for a budding cartoonist to provide a short comic strip for each issue, as well as regular contributors. If you see yourself as a budding writer or reporter and can find the time to help us with just a couple of articles each year, why not get in touch?

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# London Road rail crossing: it's time for action

Projected rail traffic across the London Road crossing is likely to make the road virtually unusable within 4–7 years. **Richard Mallows**, Co-Chair of Bicester Traffic Action Group, reports

**A**s a Bicester resident, you probably know that the quickest, easiest way to get from the centre of town to the southeast is via the London Road railway crossing and then on to the A41 Graven Hill roundabout. If you're heading into town from Langford, the alternatives are either to take the ring road anti-clockwise to Launton Road and head south, or go clockwise onto the A41, then north on the Oxford Road (B4100) then up Church Street. Both of these routes add a couple of extra miles to the journey.

## The story so far

In 1995, Oxfordshire County Council, in partnership with other local county councils, started the East West Rail (EWR) Consortium to campaign for the re-opening of the Oxford–Cambridge railway line, in a bid to boost economic development.

In 2003, Chiltern Railways proposed to run a service from London Marylebone to Oxford via Bicester. This necessitated a new link between previously unconnected lines at what is now called Gavray Junction. In 2010, Chancellor George Osborne approved the project.

Following an extended closure of the London Road crossing this summer, Chiltern Railways is now operating two trains per hour in each direction.

Works between Oxford Parkway station and Oxford station are in progress, and this section is due to open in Spring next year. The extension of EWR to Bedford via Milton Keynes is due to be completed in 2019, though a recently-announced consultation



**BicesterTAG**  
Bicester Traffic Action Group

indicates that this may slip to 2022. The line will then provide one train per hour in each direction between Oxford and Milton Keynes, plus another from Oxford to Bedford. In addition to an hourly freight train, that makes a total of nine trains every hour through the London Road crossing.

Taking a fairly conservative estimate of three minutes for each train to pass, the crossing will be closed for at least 27 minutes in every hour.

Sadly, even this doesn't represent the whole picture, as the line is also being planned for one inter-regional train per hour (such as Southampton to Manchester) in each direction, plus an additional freight service. That gets us up to at least 36 minutes of closure per hour.

If you think this is a little sensationalist, Oxfordshire County Council's own modelling has shown that this figure could creep up to 45 minutes per hour – little better than a complete closure.

## Nightmare scenario?

With Bicester earmarked for around 20,000 extra residents, with much of the development to the south of town, the additional vehicle movements caused by a virtually disabled London Road crossing will contribute significantly to local pollution. We understand that air pollution levels in Bicester are already reaching dangerous levels, and Cherwell District Council is now monitoring the situation.

So, our town is expanding rapidly, but we are faced with changes that make walking and cycling less attractive, together with reduced bus subsidies. And all of this against a backdrop of Bicester being painted in a 'greenwash' of terms such as 'EcoBicester' and

'Garden Town' status. Bicester Traffic Action Group (BicesterTAG) have repeatedly raised these issues with all of our elected representatives. We have met with councillors from Oxfordshire (roads), Cherwell (planning) and Bicester (incorrect map distribution), and can see little evidence that the issue is being addressed.

### Looking for solutions

As reported in the last issue of Langford Life, Oxfordshire County Council have been looking at the possibility of either a bridge or an underpass to span the London Road crossing. Naturally, both are extremely costly ventures, with a number of practical limitations due to

the width of the road and the density of surrounding properties. The water table at that location is also high, so a tunnel could be prone to flooding. Residents adjacent to the underpass would also have the unpleasant view of a 10-metre drop immediately outside their front doors – not an ideal solution.

Funding for either solution, most likely costing more than £10m, does not appear to exist at this point. Incredibly, it seems that neither solution has even been planned for.

### Council inaction

Oxfordshire County Council have been promising a solution for over a year now, but still nothing has been

published. County Councillors have yet to respond to questions posed by BicesterTAG, despite promising to remain in contact.

### Time for action

Though the true 'time for action' from our local councils has long since passed, we can still work together to bring pressure to bear. This is *your* town and politicians have to listen to their electorate if they wish to retain their seats. We urge all Langford Village residents to email us at [bicesterTAG@gmail.com](mailto:bicesterTAG@gmail.com), or visit our Facebook page [facebook.com/BicesterTAG](https://facebook.com/BicesterTAG) or Twitter [@BicesterTAG](https://twitter.com/BicesterTAG) account, to help us formulate a plan to make our voices heard.

## Standing at the station...

Recently spotted by one of the Langford Life team at the new Bicester Village station, our new North Oxfordshire MP, Victoria Prentis, commented: "I am thrilled that Oxfordshire was the county to benefit from this investment. This new route will be a fantastic boost for North Oxfordshire too, increasing choice for those travelling to and from the area. Not only will local people be able to get to London more quickly and conveniently, but the line will enable many more tourists and visitors to travel between London, Oxford and Bicester Village. This level of infrastructure investment is great for our area, and I thank Chiltern Railways for their work. I know Bicester residents will be glad the work is complete, and will see the benefits of this investment in Bicester in the years to come."



Regular rail passenger Victoria Prentis MP waits for her train on the platform at Bicester Village station

## Langford lollipop

After many months with no lollipop at Langford Village Community School, Jayne is delighted to have taken on the job to make crossing safer

Many of you will have seen Jayne's smiling face in the mornings and afternoons since mid-July, come rain or shine. As the new 'lollipop lady' she is really enjoying the job, as she loves meeting the children, their parents and the teachers, and is especially pleased to get a cheery hello or a welcome wave from pedestrians and drivers alike.

It's Jayne's responsibility to ensure that everyone stays safe, so always try to cross the road with her if you're anywhere near the school on Peregrine Way. She's found that most drivers are very courteous, but a few motorists drive too fast in the vicinity of the school, so please respect this valuable service and do your bit to help to keep our children safe.

In her spare time, Jayne is passionate about the martial art of Jado Kuin Do and loves training with both her son and her fiancé.





## LVCA AGM

The Langford Village Community Association (LVCA) 2015 Annual General Meeting in September saw a record attendance, with 120 people packed into the hall.

With the election of the next year's LVCA officers over, we moved swiftly to the main business of the evening.

Maureen Thompson, Head Teacher at Langford Community Primary School, reported success in raising standards and academic performance, and advised of plans for the 20th anniversary celebrations next year. If you were one of those early pupils, the school would love to hear from you.

Richard Kingshott then provided an update on his and Carole Hetherington's exhaustive work in seeking to improve the Wretchwick Way/Peregrine Way junction. Amazingly, some additional signs had appeared that very day, although representatives from Oxford County Council (OCC) claimed this to be sheer coincidence.

The most eagerly-anticipated part of the evening was an update from Lisa Michelson (OCC Locality Manager, Infrastructure) and Ben Smith (OCC Senior Traffic Planner, Transport Strategy) regarding the local road networks, especially the ongoing saga of the London Road.

James Waterson and Kate Ford representing the community police were warmly welcomed, and councillors Dan Sames and Tim Hallchurch provided updates on Graven Hill. The full minutes of the meeting, with Q&A, courtesy of our new LVCA secretary, Matt Phillips, can be found on our website.

The perfect conclusion to the evening was the excellent fayre generously provided by Ted and Mya Kingston and their team of helpers.

Many thanks to all who helped and showed their support.

# Turkish delight

One of Bicester's most popular eateries, we investigate Denis Turkish and Mediterranean restaurant in Sheep Street

After being greeted by a friendly smile on our recent Saturday evening visit, we were quickly seated at comfy chairs, and within just a few minutes our waitress arrived with menus, followed almost immediately with a small dish of complimentary hummus (chickpea dip) and turkish bread.

As per the sign on the door, Denis offers both traditional Turkish and Mediterranean cuisine. The Turkish fare includes a number of grilled chicken and lamb dishes, most often served with rice or salads. The çoban salad pictured below, with cucumber and tomato in olive oil, lemon and pomegranate dressing, is particularly delicious. The Mediterranean food has a strong Italian influence, with various pasta dishes, grilled fish and salads.

On this occasion our choices included a meze platter starter, with bread, hummus, grilled halloumi cheese, fried calamari, stuffed vine leaves, a feta parcel, aubergine salad and a delightful bulgur wheat salad – making this a particularly good selection if you want to try as many things as possible on your first visit.

For main courses one of us ordered the ever-popular chicken shish, made with the most succulent and moist chargrilled meat that good Middle-Eastern restaurants seem to excel at. The other went for hünkar begendi – sautéed lamb on a bed of chopped aubergine and peppers in a sauce.

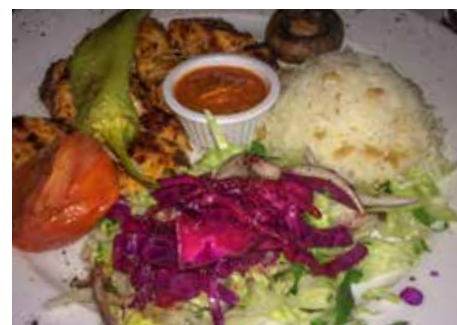
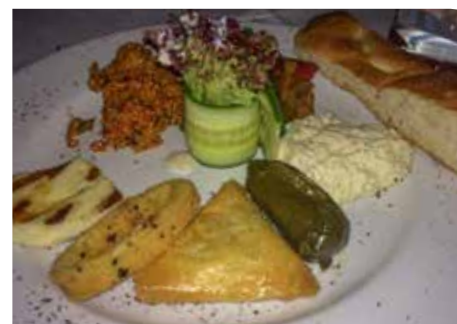
You may well find it hard to squeeze in three courses – we certainly did – but we can particularly recommend the sutlaç (oven-baked rice pudding, available either hot or cold), and their truly excellent apple tart with ice cream.

You'll find a full bar on offer, but the house wines are drinkable and reasonably priced, and if you're feeling a bit adventurous, the Turkish tea and

coffee are both worth a try. If you skip dessert you might plump for the salep instead – a hot, milky-tasting drink made with flour from orchid tubers.

Portions are always quite generous at Denis, and we've always found the service to be excellent. You'll probably have to book in advance, at least for dinner – there were absolutely no free tables by 6.30pm on this visit.

From our own experience, spanning several dozen visits, it's rare to find either a warmer welcome or more consistent food quality. At less than £30 each for three courses, a glass of wine and tea or coffee, we'd also consider it reasonably priced. All in all, we wholeheartedly endorse Denis ([www.denisrestaurant.co.uk](http://www.denisrestaurant.co.uk)) as one of the very best restaurants in town.



# Dogfight over Bicester

Fans of vintage cars, planes and military vehicles were given a rare treat back in June, when the brand new Flywheel event came to the Bicester Heritage airfield on the northeast corner of town



**The Bristol Blenheim bomber, of which four squadrons were based at Bicester Airfield during WWII. The Blenheim gave an impressive display at the Flywheel event**

**B**icester Airfield, now the Bicester Heritage site, is best known as the home of the Bicester Gliding Centre. On the weekend of 20/21 June 2015 it was used to host the first ever 'Flywheel' event, with a mix of vintage aircraft, vintage cars, military vehicles and other wartime memorabilia.

Although there were some static items on show, most of the vintage cars and planes were performing impressive displays throughout both days. The airfield site incorporates a modest-sized figure-eight track that was just perfect to showcase the dozens of vintage cars, which took turns to do a couple of laps each, making a great photo opportunity for spectators. One of the highlights of this was the amazing Packard-Bentley, whose 42-litre, 1,500-horsepower engine – stripped from a WWII motor torpedo boat – spewed huge tongues of flame from its exhausts as it shot around

the track.

The highlight for most of us was the extensive live airshow, which ran during both afternoons. As well as a rare display of the classic Bristol Blenheim bomber, stationed at Bicester Airfield during WWII, we were treated to stunning aerobatics and formation flying, including the beautiful Spitfire XI and the 'Tiger Nine' display team of 1930s de Havilland Tiger Moth biplanes. Another rarity, the amazing Great War Display Team were flying a whole range of replica WWI aircraft from both sides, including the Fokker DR.I triplane, as used by Germany's infamous 'Red Baron', Manfred von Richthofen. Complete with smoke trails, it was amazing to see these beautiful vintage aircraft performing simulated dogfights right on the edge of Bicester.

In between displays there were enough static exhibits to keep the crowd occupied for the whole day.







**CLOCKWISE FROM TOP** Flames shooting from the exhausts of the huge Bentley-Packard Special; The Spitfire was naturally one of the highlights of the show on both days; A battle-torn WWII M3 Grant tank, peppered with hundreds of holes from anti-tank fire

These included an American Sherman tank, jeeps and half-tracks, plus plenty of restored and reproduction aircraft spanning both world wars and beyond. Another popular exhibit was an American M3 Grant tank from the second world war, rusted all over and absolutely peppered with hundreds of holes from anti-tank shells.

With a good selection of food and drink choices across the site, live WWII music and fashion shoot, trade stands and lots of other fascinating displays on offer, Flywheel was truly a great day out.

Sadly the weather wasn't kind on the Saturday, with some major downpours in the afternoon, but in consideration of this the organisers offered free entry

for the Sunday to everyone who had attended the Saturday, despite the fact that almost none of the Saturday displays had been cancelled due to the weather. The hugely popular Avro Vulcan bomber was due to do a flypast to conclude the Sunday display, but unfortunately this was cancelled due to delays en route. To counter this disappointment, the crowd were treated to a second Spitfire aerobatic display, which was a major hit.

The best news is that, given the success of this year's event, Flywheel will be back on 2/3 July 2016 for an even bigger event, with more displays and more content. So, if you love cars, aeroplanes or simply wartime nostalgia, be sure to put the dates in your diary.

## Bicester Airfield: a debriefing

Did you know that Bicester Airfield was first established in 1917 as a base for the Royal Flying Corps, which then became the RAF? Apart from a brief closure from 1920–1928, it remained in use by the RAF until 2004. It is one of the largest remaining grass-surfaced airfields left in Europe. It is now designated as a conservation area by Cherwell District Council.

By the start of the second world war, RAF Bicester, as it was then known, had become the home to four squadrons of the Bristol Blenheim bomber (see main photo opposite), together with Spitfires and Avro Anson support aircraft, all used solely for training rather than active combat. Later in 1939 it was used for the maiden flight of the then-new Handley Page Halifax bomber, which was assembled in Bicester.

The airfield was attacked by an enemy aircraft on 13 October 1940, which was damaged by anti-aircraft fire from the site and later crashed in Oxfordshire, possibly Wheatley.

In March 2013, the site was acquired from the Ministry of Defence by Bicester Heritage Ltd (<http://bicesterheritage.co.uk>), with the aim of developing the UK's first business park dedicated to historic motoring and aviation.



**MEET THE FOKKERS** The WWI Fokker DR.I German triplane, as used by the Red Baron!



# Unsavoury snack for poor Peanut

The fields between Old and New Langford are extremely popular with Bicester's many dog walkers, but a routine stroll in the park nearly ended in tragedy for one local pooch. **Rich Ponsford** discovers why

**O**n a warm day in July this year, Donna Price set out on her regular walk around Langford Meadows with her beloved dog, Peanut. But within minutes of arriving home, one-year-old terrier Peanut had collapsed in the garden, unable to get to her feet. Concerned, Donna phoned her husband Steve at work, and asked him to come home.

Arriving at his home on Siskin Road, Steve quickly realised something was terribly wrong: "It was pretty obvious that Peanut was in a bad way and needed help. She couldn't stand and wasn't responding to us at all. We took her to the vet straight away."

Peanut was given emergency treatment at Hart Veterinary Centre, her system flushed with a charcoal solution to absorb any poisonous chemicals in her stomach and intestines. Still in a serious condition, she was kept on a drip overnight and monitored closely by staff. As hard as it was, Steve had no choice but to leave Peanut there, but he had every faith in her carers: "Harts were brilliant. There was always

someone available to give us a progress report whenever we called."

With Peanut's fate still hanging in the balance, Steve took to social media to warn other dog owners about the potential danger. He told Peanut's story in a post on the Langford Village Dog Owners Facebook page, and the response was one of deep concern, but not surprise. A couple of group members suggested that Peanut may have stumbled upon someone's drug stash, as they'd had similar experiences when out walking their own dogs around Langford Village.

As if to confirm these postulations, the vet later said that while a variety of things could have caused such a violent reaction (even something as innocent as a tea bag), there was a strong chance that Peanut had indeed swallowed drugs of some sort – most likely amphetamines.

Steve and Donna tried to pinpoint exactly where Peanut could have found these drugs, and realised to their horror that the most likely place was the row of bushes alongside Play Area 50, at

the north end of the fields. "Imagine if a child had found them," says Steve, "it doesn't bear thinking about."

Determined to do something positive, Steve organised a litter pick for the following Sunday, rallying friends and fellow dog owners via social media. Concentrating on Langford Meadows, the pick became known as 'Operation Clean Sweep', and although it was a success, Steve was alarmed at the amount of drug paraphernalia they found: "We didn't find any more drugs, but we did find evidence of drug use: empty bags with cannabis emblems on them and lots of empty packets of rolling papers."

The online conversation that Steve instigated also inspired two Langford dog owners to approach the Environment Agency about the levels of pollution in Langford Brook. After running tests, the EA confirmed that blooms of blue-green algae – extremely harmful to people, potentially fatal to dogs – had been found growing in the brook. Bicester Town Council have since put up signs at several points along the brook to warn people of the potential risks. The tests on contamination levels are ongoing.

*If you find drugs or drug paraphernalia, inform Thames Valley Police immediately by phoning the non-emergency number, 101. If you find a used needle, call Cherwell Council on 01295 221531 and a trained operative will come and collect it. NEVER pick up used needles yourself, and keep children and animals at a safe distance until trained help has arrived.*

*If you suspect that your dog has swallowed something harmful, contact your regular vet immediately and get it checked out. Hart Veterinary Centre: 01869 323223 (24hrs); Bicester Vets: 01869 252077 (24hrs).*



**PEANUT BETTER** Steve with Peanut, who was left "Jaded but alright" and went on to make a full recovery; one of the signs warning of blue-green algae in the brook (inset)



## Constructive talks over Wretchwick Green

**A**t a refreshingly open and positive meeting with five representatives of Wates and Redrow – the two main companies responsible for delivering the proposed ‘Wretchwick Green’ (Bicester 12) development on the southeast of town – the LVCA Committee advocated the building of a science/business park rather than more swathes of warehousing.

The meeting on 16 November followed publication of plans for some huge (and inappropriate) warehousing on the adjacent Akeman Park site. With this in mind, the LVCA Committee and Councillors Porter, Sames and Cotter were keen to reduce further warehousing and promote the opportunity for more highly-skilled jobs associated with a science park,

especially as doubts have emerged over the viability of a science park on ‘Bicester 10’ due to significant archeological findings. Concerns were also raised about the levels of light and noise pollution that warehouses generate, and the point made that, in this age of automation, warehouses no longer offer the number of employment opportunities that Bicester needs. The development team were very open to our proposals and expressed a willingness to look into the matter.

For more information on the Wretchwick Green development, please go to [www.wretchwickgreen.co.uk](http://www.wretchwickgreen.co.uk).

Plans for the Akeman Park ‘logistics park’ (i.e. warehousing) monstrosity can be found at [www.framptons-planning.com/portfolio/item/akeman-park-bicester/](http://www.framptons-planning.com/portfolio/item/akeman-park-bicester/)

## Bake-off raises dough for muscular dystrophy

**On 5 September, The Nightingale pub played host to the Great Bicester Bake Off and charity cake sale in aid of Muscular Dystrophy UK. The event proved a runaway success, with an impressive 30 bakers competing in various categories. Langford resident Josie Stiff eventually rose to the top to be crowned Star Baker by special guest judges, the Mayor and Mayoress of Bicester.**

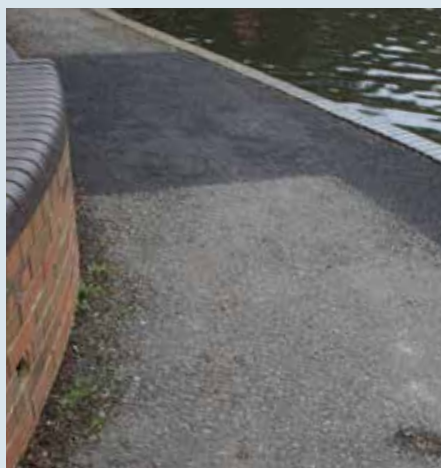
**Inspired by the hit BBC show and her own love of baking, organiser Angela Pearson explains that her goal was “... to raise vital funds for the charity Muscular Dystrophy UK, who invest a lot of money into research to finding a cure, as at the moment there isn’t one. They also provide help and support to families like us.” Angela’s two boys, Jay and Adam McKechnie, were both diagnosed with muscular dystrophy, a progressive muscle-wasting condition, at a very young age.**

**It was a great day for baking fans, with some truly fantastic bakes on display, but the £1,168 raised for charity was the real icing on the cake!**

## Jubilee Lake update

After a late start in June and a change of contractors shortly thereafter, the repairs to Jubilee Lake were finally completed back in the summer. It’s still not perfect, with a number of areas that could still use some attention, but nearly all the worst areas of deteriorating brickwork have been either replaced or repointed, and the worst potholes and sections of heaving tarmac have been repaired. It was also an opportunity to erase an unsightly piece of graffiti at the northern end of the lake.

If you notice any further deterioration that needs attention, you can contact Thames Water’s customer relations representative, Jon Denny, directly on 0800 00939565, from 8am–5pm, Monday to Friday.



**SHORED UP** Some of the much-needed repair work around Jubilee Lake



# High-speed pursuit

Langford resident and automotive engineer 'Jez' has spent much of his career in Formula One racing, but he's recently been working on the villain's car for Spectre, the latest blockbuster James Bond film. We talk to Jez about his career, the movie, and the most expensive Jaguar ever made

Of his 21 years with Williams, Jez has spent more than 12 of them touring with their Formula One motor racing team, travelling the world throughout the gruelling 10-month Grand Prix seasons. Most recently though, as a lead technician with Williams' Advanced Engineering division, he's been working with seven Jaguar C-X75 supercars on the set of Spectre, the 24th Bond film, starring Daniel Craig.

Originally developed in 2012 by Jaguar Land Rover Special Operations in collaboration with Williams Advanced Engineering, Jaguar decided that the 200mph+, 850-horsepower hybrid C-X75 was unlikely to make 'an adequate return on investment' in the economic climate of the time. At a planned retail price of almost £1m, it would have been one of the most expensive production cars ever.

With a budget of \$300m, Spectre is one of the most costly films ever made too. Its action highlight is almost certainly the night-time car chase featuring the C-X75 pursuing Daniel Craig's silver Aston Martin DB10 at breakneck speed through the streets of Rome and alongside the River Tiber.

**Can you tell us a bit more about how you started your career with Williams and your time in Formula One?**

Shortly after buying a house in Bicester in 1993, I got a job for the Ford Motorsport rally team in Essex, which meant I was hardly ever at home. Ford pulled out of rallying at the end of 1994, at which point Williams were recruiting for their new Renault Laguna touring car team, based in Didcot. So, as an opportunity to work closer to home I jumped at it.

After five years on touring cars I got to live my boyhood dream – and that of so many guys – to join the Williams Formula One team. So, after finishing my last touring car race at Oulton Park on the Sunday, I found myself on the team testing Formula One cars at Monza in Italy the following day. After two years of testing, an opportunity suddenly came up on the race team when another member of the crew damaged his knee, so I got flown straight from my testing venue to Brazil for the next Grand Prix.

**How did you get from Formula One to building concept cars like the C-X75?**

In 2012 Williams set up its Advanced Engineering division, specifically to support Jaguar on the C-X75 project. By that time, after 12 years on the F1

team I'd grown quite weary of all the travelling – and the enormous amount of time spent sat on planes, trains and buses, and waiting for flights – as fun and rewarding as it was, so was ready for a change.

**I guess the Formula One scene left you with very little time for other things during those 12 years then?**

Absolutely, and even in the touring car days before that. I've always been a big rugby fan, and in the three years since I've been off the F1 scene, I've been to Twickenham more times than in the whole of my life before that. I feel very privileged to have had the chance to work in F1, and to have travelled the world so much, but it meant I missed most of my friends' parties, weddings and other important events back

**After finishing my last touring car race at Oulton Park on the Sunday, I found myself testing F1 cars in Italy the following day.**



**PREMIERE CLASS** The 850-horsepower Jaguar at the Spectre premiere – maybe the hottest Bond car ever?





**LIGHTS, CAMERA, ACTION!**

The Williams team used scaffolding to mount up to 100kg of cameras both front and rear

at home.

I had always wanted to go skiing and had endless invitations from my mates, but in 20 years I only found the time to go once. The F1 season would normally start in the second week of January and my last one didn't end until the beginning of December, during which time I couldn't normally take holidays.

**So you headed up the team who looked after the Jags on the Spectre set. Tell us a little more about the cars.**

Yes, I was lead technician on the original C-X75 concept car project. It's very unconventional, as the C-X75 engine is only 1600cc, but turbocharged *and* supercharged, with two electric motors, one at the front and one at the rear, each producing another 200bhp. At the time, this made it the most electronically sophisticated car in the world.

It was designed to take on 'hypercars' such as the Bugatti Veyron, so we were aiming at a 0-60mph time of under three seconds, which it did comfortably. The car was so powerful that our biggest problem in the early days was breaking drive shafts due to

**The stunt cars had no electronic wizardry such as ABS or traction control. They were designed purely for stunt driving.**

the huge torque from the powerplant. Unfortunately, we didn't manage to do a 'V-max' run to test the top speed before the project was shelved, but we were already getting over 206mph on a test circuit with relatively short straights.

**If C-X75 production had already been cancelled, how did it get into Spectre?**

Following discussions with Jaguar, the film production team decided to use the C-X75 for the car chase in Rome, as well as their Land Rover Defender and Range Rover Sport SVR for some further scenes set in Austria.

We took seven cars out there, two of which were the original concept car prototypes we built for Jaguar, and the other five were stunt cars, with C-X75

bodies built onto a space-frame, using the five-litre supercharged V8 engine from the Jaguar F-Type. These had no electronic wizardry such as ABS or traction control, as they were designed purely for stunt driving.

Once the decision was made in early October 2014 to build the stunt cars, we had the first chassis ready within a month. The first car was then assembled within about three weeks and on the Longcross test track in Surrey by the end of November.

The stunt cars were mechanically very different to the original C-X75. We originally set them up with a hand-operated clutch and a big handbrake lever for doing stunts. We then spent a few months making tweaks to better suit the stunt drivers, which included stripping out the hand clutch to put in a conventional clutch pedal, ready for the first shoot in February this year.

**So you were part of the filming in Italy?**

Yes, but although the very start of the C-X75 car chase appears to be in Rome, it was actually filmed at Blenheim Palace in Oxfordshire, so we started there.

Within 48 hours of finishing at Blenheim, all the cars were in Rome, as was our team, ready to begin the main shoot. I was there for six weeks, with the first week at a small test venue to put the stunt cars through their paces.

Because the cars were going to be loaded with up to 100kg of cameras on both front and rear, we had to see just how much punishment they could take. To simulate the camera weight on the test track (and avoid damaging expensive movie cameras) we put scaffolding on the cars and then loaded it up with sandbags.

Shooting the car chase in Rome involved some amazing logistics. They were closing down main roads in the centre of the city from 6pm

in the evening – some up to a mile long. Shops had to be compensated for having to close, the flats all had to be paid to switch their lights off, and the film crew had a security guard manning every one of the doorways with a red/green baton to show the cars when it was clear for them to move – 400 guys in all.

All the cars along the street had to be removed and replaced with generic vehicles purchased by Pinewood Studios. They also had to install lighting, similar to football floodlights, down the whole length of the street. The filming then had to be stopped at 5am each morning and the street put back to normal for the coming day. And this went on for almost six weeks, shooting six days a week.

**All the stunts in the car chase were done without any CGI, so all the high-speed footage you see in the film is real.**



Apart from the five stunt C-X75s, we used two of the original prototypes as what the filmmakers call 'hero' cars, which were used for static shots and slow drives onto or off the set. One of the stunt cars was set up as a 'pod' car, where the actor can sit in the driving seat while a stunt driver controls the vehicle from a metal cage built onto the roof. This was incredible to watch, as all the stunts in the car chase were done without any CGI, so all the high-speed footage you see in the film is real.

**Is life a little quiet for you now the film is out then?**

Not exactly. Since the end of filming back in March we've stripped and rebuilt all the stunt cars back to their original condition and shipped them around the globe for various film premieres and Jaguar events. I was lucky enough to get red carpet access to the premiere in London in October, as we needed a team there to crane the C-X75 into place outside the Royal Albert Hall and another car for the party afterwards, held at the British Museum, before moving it onto the 'Bond in Motion' exhibit at the London Film Museum when the party was finished. Since then I've been working on advanced battery technology for car manufacturers and the Formula E series, as well as other industries, which is keeping me pretty busy.

**CLOCKWISE FROM TOP** The stunning C-X75 prowling the streets of Rome; ready to start the big car chase in 'Rome'; looking like something out of Mad Max, 'pod' cars let the stunt driver control the car from the roof while the actor takes a hair-raising ride from the driver's seat







# On the beat

An update on Langford community policing from local Thames Valley Police Neighbourhood Supervisor, **PC James Elton**

The clocks have now gone back and the run up to the Christmas period sees us promoting 'Here's a bright idea', which urges you to consider the question 'Is my home secure?' To help prevent your home being a target for criminals during the darker winter months, we urge you to get into the habit of locking your doors and windows when going out or to bed, keeping your valuables out of sight at all times, and investing in an external light timer switch or similar to make your home less appealing as a target. For home security advice, please contact one of your neighbourhood officers at Bicester Police station, either by email ([BicesterTownNHPT@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk](mailto:BicesterTownNHPT@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk)) or by calling 101.

Bicester Police have over 1,500 followers on Twitter, and we now have the highest number of subscribers in the Cherwell Police area. Twitter is a great

way of keeping up-to-date with crime trends and witness appeals in your area, getting crime prevention advice and finding out what the Neighbourhood Team get up to when out on patrol. You can follow us at [https://twitter.com/TVP\\_Bicester](https://twitter.com/TVP_Bicester) or @TVP\_Bicester. Please note that Thames Valley Police Twitter pages cannot be used to report crime and are not monitored 24/7, so please dial 101 or 999 as usual to do this.

We are still working hard to encourage Bicester residents to join the Thames Valley Alert Service, which offers up-to-the-minute crime news, good news, crime prevention updates and information directly by email, phone, fax, or even all three if you wish. If you'd like to subscribe to the free service, please visit [www.thamesvalleyalert.co.uk](http://www.thamesvalleyalert.co.uk) or ask a member of the Neighbourhood Team for a registration form.

## Kung fu master

Edward Tomaine has been training in traditional kung fu for 20 years, and is the only instructor in the Bicester area. He is currently offering jow ga kung fu classes at the community hall (see page 20), which include numerous open hand and weapon forms, two-person fighting sets and a traditional lion dance. He also offers private classes. See [www.thetruekungfu.com](http://www.thetruekungfu.com) for more details, or visit [www.youtube.com/user/hungtaochoymei](https://www.youtube.com/user/hungtaochoymei) to view his videos.



## It's 30 for a reason

Back in the summer, police carried out a speed enforcement campaign on the streets of Langford Village. The fastest speed recorded was 44mph! Six people were given penalty notices, of which four were Langford residents. A further 37 people were given warnings for marginal speed infringements, 22 of whom were Langford residents. The worryingly high proportion of Langford residents was a major cause for concern. The community police are aiming to increase the frequency of local road enforcement exercises, and have also requested more enforcement on the wider network (including Wretchwick Way) by Thames Valley Police.

### Speed demons

Motorists caught speeding in Langford during the campaign



Key

Caution

Langford resident

Penalty notice

## Thanks Dom



Dom Cotter's initial involvement with the LVCA was as 'Disco Manager', which shows how long ago it was – 10

years to be precise. As a BBC local radio presenter, Dom was the natural choice. Despite impressive loudspeakers and even a glitter ball in the hall, technology has moved on, since which time Dom has volunteered (or been volunteered!) for other roles, including two years as chairman. Dom is now leaving the committee for a well-earned rest, although he'd better watch out as we know where he lives!

Many thanks, Disco Dom – great job!

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## It's health check and jab time!

Langford Medical Practice now has over 9,600 registered patients, a far cry from the Portakabin in a muddy car park we started off in 20 years ago when Langford Village had only just been established.

We're now in flu season, so please contact us if you'd like to get vaccinated and haven't yet got around to it. We're also offering shingles vaccines for those aged, 70–72, 78 or 79, so if you've already received a letter about this then please get in touch ASAP.

For members of the community aged over 40, we are offering an NHS health check where we will look at your Body Mass Index and blood pressure, give you a cholesterol blood test and offer some lifestyle advice to help keep you fit and well for years to come.

If you're looking to get away from it all and are planning a trip abroad or a gap year, please don't forget that you may need travel vaccinations before

you go. The sooner you get this done before you head off the better. Just download the travel assessment form on our website or drop in and collect one from reception. Once you've completed the form, you'll be able to book a travel health appointment and the practice nursing team will arrange all your vaccinations.

As always, the practice nurse team look forward to seeing you for any of our services, including childhood immunisations, minor injuries, cervical screening, blood tests, chronic disease screening and much more.

Our website ([www.langfordmedicalpractice.co.uk](http://www.langfordmedicalpractice.co.uk)) is available for booking GP and phlebotomy (blood test) appointments, as well as requesting repeat prescriptions and advice on simple ailments. You can also reach us by phone on 01869 245665.

**Samantha Fincham, Practice Nurse**

## Home workers rise up!



**Are you one of the increasing number of people who regularly works from home? Do you sometimes feel isolated? Do you miss the buzz and bustle of an office environment? Does the prospect of networking with other Langford residents who also work from home appeal to you, or perhaps you'd find the odd business seminar useful? Might you make use of a room equipped for business meetings?**

**A number of Langford residents are contemplating lobbying Cherwell**

**District Council for a local business hub to be built at the rear of the community centre. Hooked up to superfast broadband, its desks could be hired either by the day or on an hourly basis, and a fully-equipped room would be available for meetings. We need to establish if there is a realistic demand for a business hub in Langford Village, so if you think such a place would benefit you, please let us know and feel free to share your ideas with us. Email [editor@langfordlife.org.uk](mailto:editor@langfordlife.org.uk) with any thoughts, or just to show your support.**

## A festive friend

All but a handful of the streets on Langford Village are named after British birds. Robins Way was the obvious choice for this issue

A firm favourite when it comes to Christmas card material, this well-loved and common British bird has a darker side too. Although gardeners generally consider them friendly – it's quite easy to get them eating out of your hand – they're fiercely territorial when protecting their food supply, regularly attacking other birds. Although robins have been known to live up to eight years, 75% die before they reach a year old, either killed by predators or unable to fend for themselves.

If you want to attract robins into your garden then just start digging – there's a good chance one will soon arrive to start investigating for worms, one of their favourite snacks.

And did you know that postmen used to be called robins, back in the days when they wore red tunics? In fact, that's the very reason why the birds are associated with Christmas cards – because the cards were always delivered by red 'robin' postmen!





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# WI take the baton for centenary year

President of our local Women's Institute, **Beryl Mann**, talks about this year's centenary celebrations

This year has been a very special one for the Women's Institute, as we've been celebrating our centenary. Things have come a long way since the first UK meeting in Anglesey back in 1915, with the WI now recognised as the largest women's organisation nationwide. New WI groups are being formed weekly, appealing to all ages, and proving that we're not just a bunch of women making jam and singing Jerusalem. Far from it, we're now a campaigning force, listened to and respected by successive UK governments for many years.

In January 2014 a celebratory baton began its journey from Anglesey to be carried through all the 69 regions that make up the National Federation of WIs. It arrived in Oxfordshire in April this year, having been handed over by Berkshire Federation and carried

by boat up the Thames to Oxford. Although it was a chilly, overcast day when our group received the baton at Wyevalle Garden Centre on Sunday 19 April, it was still a super occasion, and we distributed cakes to lots of customers at the garden centre. The baton had been transported from the north of the county by horse-drawn cart and vintage cars, then carried to the next handover point by a WWII jeep, courtesy of Bicester Home Guard Living History Group ([www.bicesterhomeguard.org](http://www.bicesterhomeguard.org)).

On 2 June, two members of Langford Village and Launton WIs attended a royal garden party at Buckingham Palace, hosted by the Duchess of Cornwall, and had a marvellous time. Two days later the national annual meeting was held in the Royal Albert Hall in London, attended by the Queen, the Princess Royal and the Countess

of Wessex, where the much-travelled baton was handed to Her Majesty amid tremendous applause.

The celebrations in Oxford concluded at Christchurch Cathedral on 15 September, where more than 700 WI members paraded their banners.

If you are new to Langford Village or the Bicester area, we'd be delighted to welcome you to our meetings on the first Wednesday of each month at the community hall (see page 20).



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# Photography competition

Think you're handy with a camera? Read on ...



In every issue of *Langford Life* we now run a photo competition. No huge cash prizes, unfortunately, but you'll get to see your name in print, and enjoy the fame that goes with having your photo on the cover of the magazine and posted through every letterbox in Langford.

The subject can be anything from

your last street party to a close-up of a kingfisher swooping over Langford brook, but as long as you're standing somewhere within Langford Village when you take the picture, you're eligible to enter.

Your photo should be **at least 3264 pixels wide by 2448 pixels high**, which is the equivalent of an 8-megapixel

camera (although the higher the resolution, the better). The winning photo will appear on the front cover of the next issue, so bear in mind that we'll crop your image to make it exactly the same shape as the one you see on the front of this issue.

Please email a low resolution copy of your entry to [editor@langfordlife.org.uk](mailto:editor@langfordlife.org.uk). If your photo is picked as the winner, we'll let you know and ask you for a copy at full resolution. There are no time limits for entry, so if you miss the next issue we'll simply enter you into the competition for the following one.

Issue 71 will be out around mid-year, so something with a summer flavour may stand a better chance of winning ...



Here's another great competition entry, entitled 'Lightman and lightdog', taken by Nick Ribeiro of Kestrel Way using a technique known as light painting. This involves leaving the camera shutter open for several seconds while waving a bright light source around to create the white 'brush strokes'



## A WINNING SHOT

This lovely image that also graces the cover of this issue is the winning photo from our competition in issue 69. It was taken near Langford brook by Ian Jones. Ian, who lives on Corncrake Way, is an engineer, part-time photographer and volunteer at the Hummingbird Centre. You can contact Ian on [ianricjonescorp@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:ianricjonescorp@hotmail.co.uk)



# Wordsearch



Continuing the theme of our Bond feature, the wordsearch this issue is a feast of 007 miscellany! Choose your next word very carefully, Mr Bond. I expect it to be your last ...

ANDRESS	MARTINI
ASTON MARTIN	MENDES
BLOFELD	MONEYPENNY
BROCCOLI	MOORE
BROSNAN	NIVEN
CONNER	OBERHAUSER
CRAIG	OCTOPUSSY
DALTON	ODDJOB
FLEMING	ONATOPP
GOLDFINGER	SCARAMANGA
JAWS	<b>SPECTRE</b> ✓
LAZENBY	THUNDERBALL
LOTUS	WALTHER



# Sudoku



	8			6			
			7			5	4
		7				8	9
		6			5		1
	3		2		7		8
4			6			3	
	4	1				9	
	2	5			4		
			5				6

Solution on page 22

## Bicestory!

Delving into the forgotten corners of local history...

The name Wretchwick is derived from Wrec-wic, meaning 'shelter of the exiles', and it's thought that the land was originally used for grazing cattle during the summer months. Wretchwick is mentioned as an estate in the Domesday survey of 1086, but its three farmhouses weren't built until the 17th century. Langford Farm – once part of the Wretchwick estate – appears in written records as early as the 13th century and occupied the site on which Langford Village now stands. By 1851, Langford Farm covered an area of 500 acres and employed 14 workers.

Source: [www.british-history.ac.uk](http://www.british-history.ac.uk) & [www.blhs.org.uk](http://www.blhs.org.uk)

## WHERE THE STREETS HAVE NO NAME



Hi. It's Bono again. Listen, I'm trying to get to my pal The Edge's house, but I still haven't found what I'm looking for! In the last issue I was in Merlin Way. Did you get it? But where in Langford Village am I now? Fill in the blanks to help me out.

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# Community hall schedule

Here's a list of current regular events at the Langford community hall at Nightingale Place (next to Tesco Express), with contact details for each. Please see [www.langfordlife.org.uk/community-hall/bookings-calendar/](http://www.langfordlife.org.uk/community-hall/bookings-calendar/) for the latest updates.

## Mondays

**Baby and toddler group (9.15–11.15am)**

Andrew Smith 01869 240467

**Cubs (6.30–8.00pm)**

Ellie Thompson 01869 322425

## Tuesdays

**Musical minis (9.30am–12 noon)**

Leena Thakker 01296 739652

**Jow Ga Kung Fu (4.45–5.45pm)**

Edward Tomaine 07479 733676

**Beavers (6.00–7.30pm)**

Ellie Thompson 01869 322425

**Square dancing (8.00–10.00pm)**

Julie Davis 01869 246455

## Wednesdays

**WI (1.30–3.30pm, first week of the month only)**

Beryl Mann 01869 325834

**Judo (5.15–6.15pm)**

Dave Cooper 07947 109185

**Jow Ga Kung Fu (6.30–7.30pm)**

Edward Tomaine 07479 733676

**Aikido (8.00–10.00pm)**

Martyn Tyas 01869 321375

## Thursdays

**Rugby tots (9.00–11.00am)**

Rob Hill 08453 131908

**Rainbows (4.30–5.30pm)**

Karen Smith 01869 324512

**Brownies (6.00–7.30pm)**

Tracey Honey thoney@sky.com

## Fridays

**Yoga class (9.30–10.30am)**

Elaine Whittaker 07917 453224

**Ballet tots (1.30–2.00pm)**

adults (2.00–2.45pm)

main class (3.30–8.30pm)

Victoria Hill 07748 455093

## Sundays

**Rugby tots (8.30am–12 noon)**

Rob Hill 0845 313 1908

## How to book the community hall

For general booking enquiries or to rent the hall for your own event, please call 07946 289092 (9am–6pm) or use the booking form on the website: [www.langfordlife.org.uk/contact/hall-booking-enquiry/](http://www.langfordlife.org.uk/contact/hall-booking-enquiry/)

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### Civic

Oxfordshire County Council 01865 792422  
Cherwell District Council 01295 252535  
Bicester Town Council 01869 252915  
Social Services 01865 375515  
Bicester Library (Old Place Yard) 01869 252181  
Bicester Police Station 01869 320919  
Langford Village CP School 01869 369021  
Bicester Leisure Centre (Queens Avenue) 01869 253914

### Medical

Langford Medical Practice 01869 245665  
Bicester Community Hospital 01865 903880  
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NHS 111 (fast medical help, less urgent than 999) 111  
St John Ambulance Bicester 01869 246648  
Child Line 0800 1111  
Samaritans 0845 7909090

### Transport

Bicester North Station 01869 245900  
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Bicester Taxibus 01869 323535

Thames Transit Buses 01869 772250  
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### Places of worship

St Edburg's (Anglican) 01869 252377  
Emmanuel (Anglican) 01869 244918  
Immaculate Conception (Catholic) 01869 253277  
Orchard Baptist Church 01869 388978  
Methodist Church 01869 240671  
Salvation Army 01869 369160  
Bicester Community Church 01869 244741  
Elim Christian Centre 01869 252753  
Hebron Gospel Hall 01869 277300

### Other

NSPCC 0808 800 5000  
Citizens Advice Bureau 01869 321076  
RSPCA 08705 555999  
Crimestoppers 0800 555111  
Gas emergency 0800 111999  
Electricity (power loss) 08457 331331  
Thames Water 0845 920038

## Join the club!

Want to meet like-minded people? Perhaps joining a club is your resolution for 2016? Here's a handy list of some of the most popular clubs and societies in the Bicester area.

### Sports and pastimes

Bicester and District Aunt Sally League  
[www.bicesterauntsally.com](http://www.bicesterauntsally.com)  
Bicester and District Darts Association  
<http://bit.ly/1QGn0gT>  
Bicester and District Pool League  
<http://bit.ly/1MQSXys>  
Bicester and Kidlington Ramblers <http://bit.ly/1YcRf2P>  
Bicester book group <http://bit.ly/1ObkSwz>  
Bicester Bowls Club  
<http://bicesterbowlclub.synthasite.com>  
Bicester Camera Club  
[www.facebook.com/BicesterCameraClub/](http://www.facebook.com/BicesterCameraClub/)  
Bicester Gliding Centre [www.windrushers.org.uk](http://www.windrushers.org.uk)  
Bicester Green Gym (outdoor exercise)  
[www.bicestergreengym.org](http://www.bicestergreengym.org)  
Bicester Lawn Tennis Club  
[www.bicestertennisclub.co.uk](http://www.bicestertennisclub.co.uk)

Bicester Local History Society [www.blhs.org.uk](http://www.blhs.org.uk)  
Bicester Speakers/Toastmasters Club  
<http://bit.ly/1lr4oqX>  
Bridge Club [www.bridgewebs.com/bicester/](http://www.bridgewebs.com/bicester/)  
Chess Club [www.freewebs.com/bicesterchess/](http://www.freewebs.com/bicesterchess/)  
Millennium Cycle Club [www.bmcc2000.com](http://www.bmcc2000.com)  
Rotary Club <http://bit.ly/1QpWZEW>  
Round Table <http://bicester.roundtable.co.uk>

### Music and drama

Bicester Choral and Operatic Society  
[www.bcoswesing.org.uk](http://www.bcoswesing.org.uk)  
Bicester Concert Band  
[www.bicesterconcertband.org.uk](http://www.bicesterconcertband.org.uk)  
Bicester Drama Society <http://bit.ly/1kOE7SM>  
Launton Players (pantomime)  
[www.launtonvillageplayers.org.uk](http://www.launtonvillageplayers.org.uk)  
Rock Choir Bicester <http://bit.ly/1HT0Dis>

If you're a member of a local club or society and would like it to feature in this list, please email the details to [editor@langfordlife.org.uk](mailto:editor@langfordlife.org.uk)

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**Sudoku solution (from page 19)**

9	8	4	3	5	6	2	1	7
2	1	3	7	8	9	5	4	6
5	6	7	4	2	1	8	9	3
8	7	6	9	3	5	4	2	1
1	3	9	2	4	7	6	8	5
4	5	2	6	1	8	3	7	9
7	4	1	8	6	3	9	5	2
6	2	5	1	9	4	7	3	8
3	9	8	5	7	2	1	6	4



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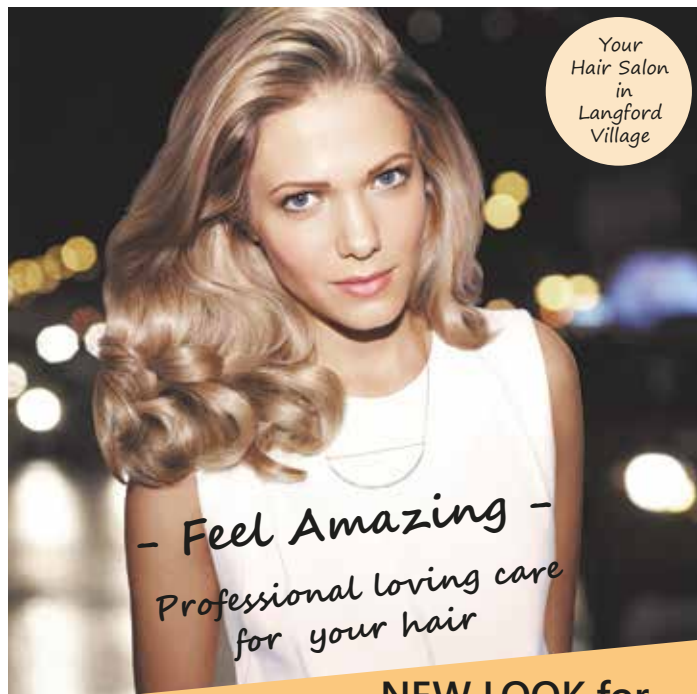
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