

# WELCOME TO THE VILLAGE OF MERTON



## **Merton 2022, from the motorway flyover**

A warm welcome to the village; here is some local information that, hopefully, will prove useful to you.

Please note that the information given is accurate for the date shown in the footer. Inevitably, things change and this document will be updated when necessary.

### **1 Finding things out**

Sadly, the local parish magazine has ceased publication, so the main sources of information are the village Facebook page, the parish council website and the noticeboard.

## **1.1 Merton Village Facebook Page**

If you have a Facebook account, search for “Merton Village” and one of the options should be the village’s page. The page is visible to everyone but you will need to send a message to the admins and ask to join if you wish to add your own posts. This is the place to find out what’s happening in and around the village. If you have questions, post them here and someone may well be able to help you.

## **1.2 The Noticeboard**

This is attached to the right-hand exterior wall of the bus shelter; the shelter is, roughly, in the centre of the village. This is where parish council minutes and agendas, along with other official communiqués are posted.

## **1.3 Merton Parish Council Website**

This website, [mertonparishcouncil.co.uk](http://mertonparishcouncil.co.uk), shows parish council meeting minutes and agendas. There are sections on village history, the woodland, and local news.

## **2 St. Swithun’s Church**

The church is dated to the early 14<sup>th</sup>c. and is of the Decorated style of English Gothic architecture. Merton village is mentioned in the Domesday book, although the church is not, but there may well be the remnants of an earlier church beneath the building seen today. As there is the remains of a Knights Templar manor buried behind the church, and the Hospitallers succeeded to the Templar’s estates in 1334, it is that military religious order who, most likely, built the church seen today. A copy of the Domesday book is displayed in the church.



**St. Swithun’s, December 2020**

The dates and times of services are shown in the porch and on the noticeboard by the church gate. Contact details for the churchwardens are displayed on a notice posted within the church porch. With the normal services, there are also various special events around Easter, harvest festival and Christmas.

The vicar looks after the Ray Valley Benefice which, along with Merton, includes the parishes of Piddington, Blackthorn, Arncott and Ambrosden. This means that Sunday services rotate around the churches of the benefice.

## **2.1 Other denominations**

**Roman Catholic Church:** The Immaculate Conception, Causeway, Bicester, OX26 6AW. There is St. Barbara's Church in Ambrosden (23, Alder Drive) but this may be part of the Garrison Centre.

**Methodist Church:** Bell Lane Bicester OX26 6JQ

**Wesleyan Church:** North Street, Fritwell, Bicester OX27 7QR (about 12.5 miles)

**Mosque:** Kingsmere Community Centre, Whitelands Way, Bicester, OX26 1EG.

**Synagogue:** Zion Way Ministries International, ECB Building, 2, Barberry Place, Bicester, OX26 3HA

**Hindu Temple:** Gurdwara Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji, 295 – 297 London Road, Headington, Oxford, OX3 9HL.

## **3 Village facilities**

### **3.1 Merton Wood**

Situated  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile out of the village, on the road towards Ambrosden, is a woodland that was planted to commemorate the millennium. It is owned by the village and is for everyone to enjoy. It is accessible via a footpath and there are 17 acres of trees which were planted in 2002. The trees are now maturing nicely and provide great surroundings for walk in summer or winter, rain or shine.

There are benches set up in parts of the woodland so that the area can be enjoyed by those less able.

There is a woodland group who maintain the area and keep it tidy. Ask on the village Facebook page if you want to join the group and help out.



**The pedestrian and equestrian access gate**

### **3.2 The village playing fields**

The 7 acre playing fields belong to the Parish Council and include a fenced playground for younger children. It is located up a short road that is signposted Village Hall. There is a small car park where the bottle bank is located.

Close by the car park is the children's play area. Children must be supervised by a responsible adult when in the play area.



**The children's playground**

### **3.3 The Village Hall**

This has been refurbished recently, and is used for various village events. It is adjacent to the playing fields and available to hire for parties or other functions. Hiring costs, restrictions and details are available from [wendymeads@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:wendymeads@yahoo.co.uk)

The hall has a space for functions, 40 chairs and a number of tables. There is a kitchen area with a hob, kettle and fridge/freezer. Some crockery and glasses are available.



**The Village Hall and playing field being used by a caravan club**

### **3.4 Allotments**

There are allotments located on the playing fields. The rent is under £20 per plot per annum but varies between plots due to differing sizes. The hire term starts on 1<sup>st</sup> May. Tenants should be residents of the Merton parish. However, tenants from outside the parish are considered subject to availability. For more information, please contact the clerk to the parish council on [clerkmertonpc@gmail.com](mailto:clerkmertonpc@gmail.com)

### **3.5 Post box**

There is one post box located close to the bus shelter and opposite the old pub. The collection is Monday-Friday 4.30pm and Saturday 9 am. Royal Mail deliveries arrive around 13:00 in the village.

Later collections are made from the box in Sheep Street, Bicester and are Monday-Friday 6.30pm, Saturday 12:15.

Parcels and other secure mail services that cannot be left on a doorstep can be collected from the sorting office in Murdock Road, Bicester

When using parcel delivery services from other couriers, note that the post code OX25 2NF covers the main street from where it meets West End Lane all the way to the end of the village on the route to Ambrosden. Expect to give detailed information to any courier on how to find your house within the village.

### **3.6 Dog waste bins**

For dog walkers, there are three dog waste bins. One is at the entrance to the village hall car park, the second is behind the church along a small access path and the third is at the woodland.

## **4 Travel**

There is one bus service through the village, the H5, which goes from Bicester Manorsfield Road stand 4 to the John Radcliff Hospital (JR) West Wing and then back again. This runs hourly from Monday through to Saturday, but not on Sundays or during the night. See the timetable in the bus shelter for the scheduled times.

To get to Oxford using an H5 bus:

- Take the H5 towards Bicester and get off at Bicester Village Station, then take a train into Oxford. Or go to Manorsfield Road and get the S5 bus into Oxford centre.
- Take the H5 to the JR then get a 13 into Oxford High Street.

For onward travel, Bicester Village Station connects to Oxford Station and London Marylebone. Bicester North Station is on the Marylebone to Birmingham Moor Street line. Rail services through Bicester are good due to Bicester Village shopping centre attracting a lot of visitors.

## **5 Communications**

The village still has the old POTS (Plain Old Telephone System) wiring and some of this is showing its age. Crackly lines are quite common unfortunately, mostly due to aged wiring getting corroded.

Mobile signals get good service from the major networks but there is no 5G available yet.

There is fibre from the exchange in Charlton-on-Otmoor to the cabinet, which is sited at the South Western end of the village, and speeds up to 30Mb/s can be achieved. The effect of the ailing copper or aluminium wiring from the cabinet to the houses may manifest as periodic micro-drop-outs in the connection. There is no fibre to the premises although there is a scheme being put in place by Oxfordshire Council to roll out fibre to all premises in the future.

## **6 Bin collection and recycling**

### **6.1 Bin collections**

The bins are collected on alternate weeks, landfill one week and then recycling the following week. The exception is food waste which is collected every week. Not all items can be accepted in the bins; there is a handy guide at [cherwell.gov.uk/info/10/waste-and-recycling/42/your-bins](http://cherwell.gov.uk/info/10/waste-and-recycling/42/your-bins) Note that the bin may not be emptied if it has the wrong items in it.

- Landfill: the **green** bin. This is for general rubbish that cannot be recycled.
- Recycling: the **blue** bin. Paper, card, cans and some types of plastic. See the online guide for what can and cannot be recycled.
- Garden waste, but not food waste: the **brown** bin. This is a paid collection now. Register on the CDC website, await a sticker that is valid for a year and stick it onto the brown bin just below where the handles are. When putting the bin out, make sure the handles are positioned so the collection crew can see the sticker.
- Food waste: the small, silver caddy is for outside and the smaller, brown caddy is for indoor use. Using two caddies means that food waste isn't stored in the house for long. When it's full, simply transfer the contents of the small, brown caddy into the silver caddy. The silver caddy is collected every week; the small brown caddy is not collected.

In addition to the various bins, some items may be placed upon, or beside, the blue bin.

- Small electrical items can be put on top of the bin. Use a plastic bag if they are small or there are a number of items. Small generally means something smaller than a microwave, e.g. a kettle.
- Spent batteries can be put in a bag and placed on top of the blue bin.
- Cardboard packaging that is too big to put in the blue bin can be stacked against it for collection. Make sure that all boxes have been

flattened so they are easy to handle, and that they aren't likely to be blown away when it's windy.

## **6.2 Recycling**

The nearest recycling centre, or tip, is at Ardley. This is on the other side of Bicester, about 7 miles away. Check the [oxfordshire.gov.uk](http://oxfordshire.gov.uk) website for the types of waste and recyclable items that can be accepted here. Trade waste cannot be accepted and there are limits on vans, all of which have to be registered with CDC before they are allowed in. Small vans are allowed 12 visits per year.

These items can be recycled locally:

**Glass** – the closest bottle bank is beside the village hall. There are many others scattered around Bicester.

**Metal** – other than Ardley, there are two metal recycling bins in Bicester; one is in the Tesco car park, just after the petrol station, the other is in the car park at Homebase.

**Clothes and shoes** – the closest is in a car park beside the Cosco in Ambrosden. There are others in Tesco's car park and Homebase's car park.

If large items need to be taken away, a special collection can be booked on the council's website; search for bulky waste collection. This service is subject to a charge.

## **7 Further afield**

### **7.1 Library**

Bicester has a public library in Franklins House, Wesley Lane, Bicester, OX26 6JU.

### **7.2 Doctors' Surgeries, Medical Centres**

The two nearest doctors' surgeries are:

- Islip Medical Practice 01865 371666
- Langford Village, Bicester 01869 245665

Bicester Community Hospital (Piggy Lane, Bicester, OX26 6HT) provides inpatient rehabilitation and palliative care. It has a walk-in first aid facilities and a by-appointment out-of-hours GP service. Call 01865 903976 for the first aid centre and 111 to book a GP appointment.

The John Radcliffe Hospital, Oxford, has an A&E centre open 24 hours a day.

Veterinary practises:

- Bicester Vets, Victoria Road, Bicester, OX26 6PJ. 01869 252077.
- Beaumont Veterinary Group, 172, Oxford Road, Kidlington, OX5 1EA. 01865 373397.
- 24 hour emergency vets – Medivet, 62, Hensington Road, Woodstock, OX20 1JL. 01993 811355.

### **7.3 Shops**

The nearest shops are in Ambrosden. The Post Office is located in a small, but remarkably well stocked village shop just after the Turner Arms. There is a Costco a little further on towards Bicester.

Bicester has various supermarkets, Tesco, Sainsbury, Aldi, Lidl, M&S and CoOp. Kidlington has a large Sainsbury.

There are some specialist shops in central Bicester, 2 Chinese grocery stores, a halal grocer, fishmonger, butcher.

Bicester Friday market is held in Sheep Street. This has various vendors. Check the Facebook group *Bicester Friday Market*. Occasionally there are other markets held on Sheep Street, e.g. the French street market.

Bicester Village is the town's largest attraction for designer clothes and other fashionable items. It has various restaurants as well. Search for [bicestervillage.com](http://bicestervillage.com) online.

For more locally sourced produce look for these:

- The trout farm at Panshill Fishing.
- The Blue Texel butcher at Launton. Lots of local produce in the shop.
- Islip Village Hall shop.
- Nash's Bakery in Bicester. They deliver to the Ambrosden PO.
- Look out for Bicester honey, Islip honey, local eggs at Ambrosden PO.

Various restaurants in Bicester will deliver to Merton. Give a contact number and a good description of where you live as the village postcodes cover a number of properties that have names instead of numbers. It's not unusual to find lost delivery drivers or a stray parcel left at the wrong door.

## **7.4 Garages**

The nearest repair and MOT centres are:

- Three Corners Garage, Ambrosden: 01869 320100
- S&S Motors, Arncott: 01869 253933
- Islip Motors, [islipmotors.com](http://islipmotors.com)

## **8 Newspapers**

The local paper is the Bicester Advertiser. For Oxford, look for the Oxford Mail and Oxford Times. These papers are available from the local newsagents, such as the Ambrosden Post Office and shop.

Once a month, the Postal Advertiser is delivered with the mail. This gives details of various local trades.

## **9 General**

### **9.1 Taxis**

AA Cars Bicester 01869 248248

ABC Bicester 01869 242526

### **9.2 Police**

The non-emergency number is 101.

### **9.3 Sports centres**

Bicester Leisure Centre, Queen's Avenue, Bicester: 01869 253914

Kidlington & Gosford Leisure Centre, Oxford Road, Kidlington: 01865 376368

## **10 The Parish Council**

The Parish Council meets on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of the month at the village hall at 7:30pm. See the notice board (on the bus shelter) for the agenda and minutes of meetings. Minutes and other documents, including a list of current councillors and their contact numbers, are posted here: [mertonparishcouncil.co.uk](http://mertonparishcouncil.co.uk). The Clerk to the Parish Council can be contacted on [clerkmertonpc@gmail.com](mailto:clerkmertonpc@gmail.com).

The local council is Cherwell District Council, [www.cherwell.gov.uk](http://www.cherwell.gov.uk).  
Tel: 01295 252535