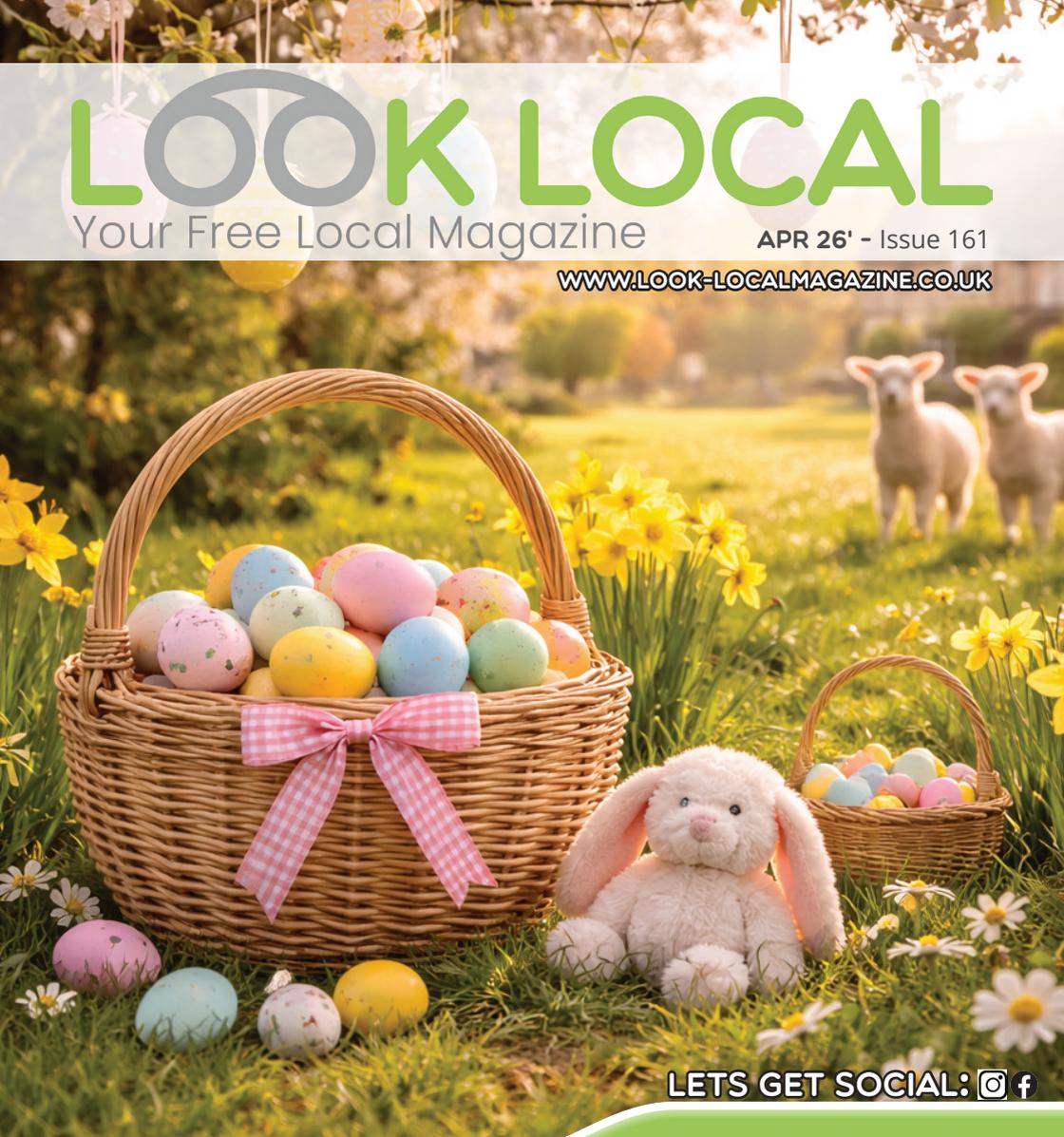


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Hello Readers,

Welcome to the **April 2026** issue of Look Local Magazine, bringing with it a true sense of spring across our villages.

The Chiltern Hills are coming alive with fresh green hedgerows, blossom-filled trees and fields dotted with newborn lambs - a gentle reminder that the season of renewal is well underway.

Easter falls this month, and with it comes a wonderful sense of celebration across our local area. One of the standout events is the much-loved **Thame Country Fair**, taking place over Easter Sunday and Monday (5th-6th). This long-running event offers something for everyone, from live arena entertainment and craft stalls to food, music and family-friendly activities - a fantastic day out right on our doorstep.

Across Oxfordshire, families can also enjoy a variety of Easter trails, egg hunts and outdoor adventures, with local farms, gardens and attractions hosting seasonal activities throughout the school holidays - the perfect excuse to get outdoors and make the most of the longer, brighter days.

We're also delighted to bring you our usual competition to win tickets to Thame Players Theatre, offering the chance to enjoy some wonderful local performances. Be sure to enter - it's always a popular one!

April is a month that encourages us to step outside, reconnect with nature and spend time with those around us. Whether you're enjoying a countryside walk along the Phoenix Trail, visiting a local market, or simply taking in the changing season from your own garden, there's a real sense of energy and optimism in the air.

As always, thank you for supporting local businesses and our community.

Wishing you a joyful and refreshing April.

Until next time, enjoy reading.

Love Emma

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Jamie Oakley, Manager at Home Counties Loft Ladders, explains: "Most people know their loft is there, they just don't use it because access is awkward or unsafe. Our job is to make that space easy, safe and practical to use."

"We work to three simple principles: Quality in our materials and workmanship, Integrity in how we treat people's homes, and Value in offering a fair price for a job done properly."

That approach has led to much of the company's work coming from recommendations by previous customers, homeowners who wanted the job done correctly, without mess or hassle.

To find out how you could make better use of your loft, call Jamie on **0808 301 9558** or visit homecountiesloftladders.co.uk to book a free, no-obligation quotation. You may be surprised how much space you already have.



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For more in-depth information or experienced advice regarding Wills, and Lasting Powers of Attorney contact
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Why Annual Health Checks Make Sense for Small & Medium Businesses...

By Dr Shanika Attale, 222 Healthcare.

Large organisations have long recognised the value of employee health programmes, with executive assessments and preventative screening now commonplace. In small and medium-sized businesses, however, health often receives less attention — even though the impact of illness can be far greater..

In smaller teams, every individual plays a critical role. When someone becomes unwell or takes extended time off, the effects are quickly felt. Workloads increase, projects slow down, and business owners may find themselves stepping back into day-to-day operations. As a result, more SMEs are beginning to see preventative health checks as a practical part of responsible business management.

The Health Risks We Can Detect

Many common conditions develop gradually and without obvious symptoms. High blood pressure, elevated cholesterol and early diabetes can go unnoticed for years, even in people who feel well. A simple annual health assessment can identify these risks early. With the right information, individuals can make small lifestyle changes or seek medical advice before more serious problems arise.

Typical assessments may include:

- Blood pressure and cardiovascular risk review
- Blood tests for cholesterol, diabetes risk and organ function
- Heart rhythm screening (ECG)
- Lifestyle and wellbeing discussion

These checks provide a valuable snapshot of overall health and support long-term wellbeing.

Benefits for Business Owners

Supporting employee health isn't just beneficial for staff — it also makes good business sense.

- **Tax efficiency:** Preventative healthcare can often fall within the £500 tax-free medical benefit allowance per employee.
- **Staff retention:** Access to convenient healthcare is increasingly valued and shows a genuine commitment to employee wellbeing.
- **Reduced absence:** Early access to medical advice can prevent minor issues becoming longer-term problems.

Ultimately, the health of a business depends on the health of the people behind it.

Why Choose a Local Private GP?

Working with a local private GP practice offers continuity of care. If concerns arise, employees can access a doctor who understands their history and can guide next steps — from further tests to treatment or referrals. This complements NHS care and provides additional support when timely appointments are needed.

Flexible Support for Businesses

Health checks can be delivered in-clinic or on-site for larger teams, minimising disruption. Additional services may include employment health checks, workplace vaccinations, travel health support and medical certifications.

Preventative healthcare is not simply an added cost - it is an investment in the wellbeing, resilience and performance of your team, helping your business stay strong and sustainable.

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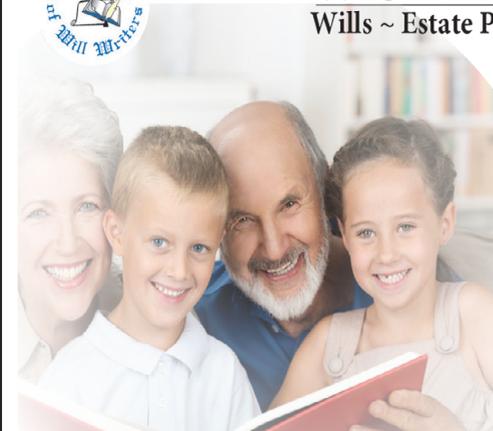
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NEWS & EVENTS

New Retail Concept 'Stamp' Coming to Thame High Street...

A fresh and exciting addition is coming to Thame High Street this spring, as innovative stationery and gifting retailer Stamp prepares to open its second store at the historic Glynswood site.

Part of the UOE retail group, Stamp brings together over four decades of independent retail expertise with a modern, community-focused shopping experience. The new store aims to breathe fresh energy into the high street while preserving what locals already love — including the existing team, the building's character, and a strong focus on local products.

The space will undergo significant refurbishment to create a bright, welcoming environment, showcasing a curated range of stationery, greetings cards, gifts and practical services tailored to everyday needs. Looking ahead, plans are also in place to transform the upstairs area into a flexible community space, hosting workshops, events and creative collaborations.

CEO Elliot Jacobs commented that the investment reflects a strong belief in the future of the high street, with a focus on creating vibrant spaces that support local connections and independent retail.

Stamp's arrival highlights a positive step for Thame's town centre, reinforcing its role as a thriving hub for community and commerce.

The new store opens at 11 High Street, Thame from 16th April.

See www.look-localmagazine.co.uk, for the full story.

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For these shows book online at www.thameplayers.co.uk or by telephone on 01844 212833, or in person from the Information Centre at Thame Town Hall

For a chance to **WIN** complimentary tickets for a family of four to a Thame Players' production* answer the following question:

Q: WHO WROTE LADIES IN LAVENDAR?

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*There are five Thame Players' productions a year. See website for details.





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Look locally over the garden gate with Lucie Giselle Ponsford



It is March in my garden, and I find myself quietly thrilled by the progress. There's a certain smugness that creeps in at this time of year, as though somehow we've outpaced nature, stolen a march on the season. Of course, I know how quickly that illusion will dissolve. Before long, everything will surge forward: buds bursting, greens unfurling, corners thickening into life, and I'll still have plants waiting patiently in their pots for a home I haven't yet dug over.

This year, though, I'm embracing a slower rhythm. Alongside my work transforming other people's gardens in a matter of weeks, I'm allowing my own space to evolve more gently. It feels important to labour over something I love without urgency.

At the front of the house, I've created what I call a microwoodland garden. It's a departure from the formal borders I might usually design. Instead, this space leans into softness: seasonal bulbs, a scattering of roses, and a light canopy of trees. Beneath them, shade-loving perennials are beginning to settle, forming something that will take time to reveal itself.

There's a patch of wildflower turf too, softening edges rather than defining them. Along the fence, I've started planting climbers that will, in time, stitch everything together.

One of the elements I'm most excited about is the path to the front door. It will be a hodgepodge of found materials—fragments of stone, perhaps a fossil or two. I like the idea that each piece holds a story, quietly welcoming those who arrive.

Instead of a neat steel edge, I'm building a low deadwood hedge to separate the planting from the wildflower turf. Made from gathered sticks and fallen branches, it feels imperfect and alive.

After the intensity of project work, this slower, more whimsical approach brings me immense joy. It's a reminder that gardens are never finished; they're simply becoming.

I've also found myself returning to garden centres with fresh enthusiasm. They offer a useful snapshot of the season and a chance to fill colour gaps. That said, I remain selective. Plants grown for display often falter once planted out. So I buy sparingly and try to propagate. It doesn't always work, but when it does, it feels like a triumph.

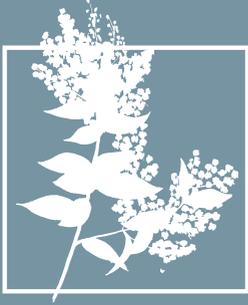
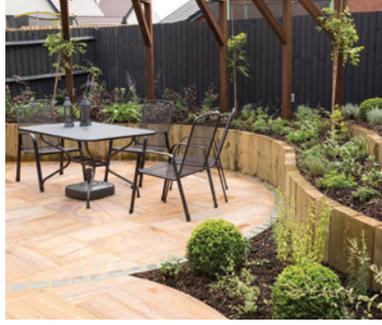
So this is where I am, in March: between planning and planting, between control and surrender. And I like to think that one day, you might find yourself at my door, stepping into a garden that feels a little like a storybook, quietly beckoning you in.

With love, Lucie x

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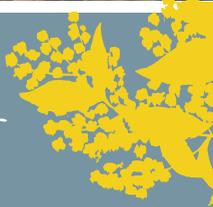
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What our customers say



Mary Clements

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Olwen Comino-James

Firstly I LOVE my new garden! The whole process was really great - Lucie came up with a lovely design, then successfully tweaked it to take budgeting considerations into account without compromising too much on the end result. The construction team were great. The planting is looking lovely and I can't wait to see it all flourish. Thank you Mimosa, highly recommend!

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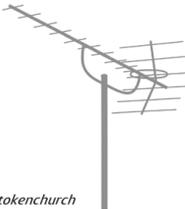
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March Auction Highlights



Lot 555 - MARY FEEDEN, RA., BRITISH COLLAGE WATERCOLOUR/ GOUACHE

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