



THE OXFORDSHIRE VICTORIA COUNTY HISTORY TRUST

Charity number 1064776

NEWSLETTER SUMMER 2026

VOLUME XXIII PROGRESS: BURFORD AND AREA



Fulbrook church: a medieval chapel of Burford, in one of the outlying rural places to be covered in the Burford volume.

Work began last year on our [final planned volume](#) on the ancient (pre-1974) county, which will cover the market town of **Burford** and **eight surrounding rural villages** in the Windrush valley. Work is currently focused on the rural parishes of **Taynton**, **Fulbrook** **Swinbrook** ([now online](#)), and **Widford** (all north of the river), and of **Shilton**, **Westwell**, and **Upton and Signet** to the south, drafts of which will be made available on the VCH website (*see overleaf*) over the coming months. The northern parishes all lay on the fringes of Wychwood forest, in which they enjoyed grazing rights, while several included detached woods in the 'forest purlieu' and were shaped in part by medieval assarting (woodland clearance).

Work on Burford itself will gain momentum from 2027 as the rural parishes are completed. Alongside our usual archival research at [Oxfordshire History Centre](#), [The National Archives](#), and other repositories, we look forward to delving into the extensive archives of the [Burford Tolsey Museum & Archive](#), and are grateful for the interest and support already shown by the BTMA committee and others. Publication (subject to continued funding) is planned for 2030, with plans already developing beyond that (*see overleaf*).

WYCHWOOD VOLUME NOW ONLINE

All VCH volumes are gradually being made available – free of charge – on the [British History Online](#) website (BHO), which also hosts a wide variety of primary sources. The latest Oxfordshire addition is our volume on the Wychwood Forest area ([Volume XIX](#), originally published in 2019), including several surrounding rural settlements. The physical book also remains available.

VOLUME XXII IN PRODUCTION FOR SPRING 2027



The Kingham-based Lainchbury's agricultural engineering firm (covered in the forthcoming volume) at an early 20th-century agricultural show. (Photo by kind permission of John Hewett: <https://sites.google.com/view/lainchburys/home>)

Volume XXII (Chadlington, Enstone, and Area), covering ten west Oxfordshire parishes from Chastleton to Kiddington, is now with our publishers Boydell & Brewer, for publication in spring 2027 – so keep an eye on our website and BlueSky account for updates and discount offers. The area (set within a typical Cotswolds landscape dominated by traditional sheep-corn farming) is notable for some important country houses set in landscaped parks, as at Chastleton, Ditchley, and Sarsden, and contains several deserted medieval settlements. Other themes include Roman Catholic recusancy, Second World War airfields, and recent industries such as the 'Team Enstone' Formula One factory opened in 1991. The volume contains over 100 maps and illustrations including a few colour plates, and will extend to over 400 double-column pages. **Parishes covered:** *Chadlington; Chastleton; Chilton or Shorthampton; Churchill; Cornwell; Enstone; Kiddington; Kingham; Sarsden; Spelsbury (incl. Ditchley Park)*

SOME RECENT ACCOLADES

exemplary in the systematic and careful study of the area, and the clarity of presentation ... of relevance to professional historians as well as other informed readers
- anonymous peer reviewer on Volume XXII

Another volume of the Victoria County History is always welcome, especially when it keeps to the high standards we expect from the Oxfordshire team of editors ...

- review of Volume XXI (Chipping Norton) by Prof. Christopher Dyer (in *Oxonensia*)

FUTURE PLANS, FUTURE FUNDRAISING, AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANIZATION

With work on our last planned volume (on the Burford area) now begun, thoughts have turned to the future and to the prospect of revisiting the 60-odd historic parishes and six market towns taken into Oxfordshire from Berkshire in 1974. Those were covered in the VCH Berkshire series a century ago, which though ground-breaking at the time is inevitably inadequate by modern standards.

Following discussion, the VCH Oxfordshire Trust's intent has been to seek support for an initial new project on the **Faringdon** area of the **Vale of White Horse** from around 2028.

These plans have, however, been made more complicated by the recent government decision to divide the county into three for local government purposes from 2028, which will bring to an end our long-standing and highly fruitful partnership with Oxfordshire County Council.

While we very much hope to establish partnerships with the new successor councils, this means that **fulfilling our plans – including completion of the Burford volume – is likely to be more dependent than ever on fundraising by the VCH Oxfordshire Trust**, which is run on an entirely voluntary basis. **Any help that you feel able to give will therefore be most gratefully received.**

HOW TO DONATE TO THE TRUST

The VCH Oxfordshire Trust raises funds for the completion of VCH Oxfordshire's systematic histories of every town and parish in the historic county as part of a [national project](#), working with Oxfordshire County Council and with the Universities of London and Oxford. You can help through:

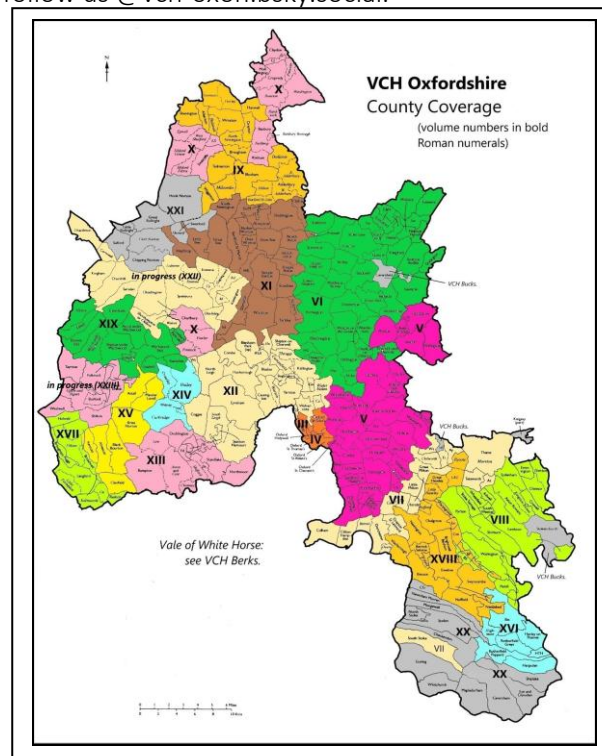
- **Regular donations by bankers' standing orders** (forms obtainable from the VCH Oxfordshire website (see opposite) under 'Support VCH Oxfordshire').
- **Cheques** (including **CAF charity cheques**) made payable to 'The Oxfordshire VCH Trust', sent to the **Hon. Treasurer Dr Michael Heaton** at: 48 High St, Wheatley, Oxon. OX33 1XX.
- **Bank transfer** into the account of the Oxfordshire Victoria County History Trust, sort code 30-99-03, account no. 01228711.
- **Gift-aid** forms are available from the Treasurer or via the VCH website.

CHRISTMAS LECTURE 2026

Our annual Christmas lecture and reception for donors and other supporters will be held on **Thursday 3 December** at **St John's College, Oxford** (5-7pm). Attendance is free but requires advance booking. Please contact the County Editor (details below) if you would like to be added to our mailing list for when invitations go out in October/November.

ACCESSING THE VCH

Draft work-in-progress is available as downloadable PDFs on the [VCH Oxfordshire website](#), while **published volumes** up to Volume XIX (with more to follow) are available at [British History Online](#). The **physical books** are available in local libraries, [Oxfordshire History Centre](#), or [to buy](#). For more on **current research**, contact the County Editor (simon.townley@history.ox.ac.uk). For **news and events**, see [VCH Oxon talks and events 2026.pdf](#), or follow us [@vch-oxon.bsky.social](#).



Coverage 2026, showing volumes published and in progress (XXII-XXIII). For full listings see the [VCH Oxfordshire website](#).

DO WE HAVE YOUR EMAIL CONTACT DETAILS?

To help reduce our costs, future Newsletters and notices of events will be by email only. If you wish to be added to our e-mail list, please forward your email contact details (which will never be shared) to the County Editor simon.townley@history.ox.ac.uk.

THE OXFORDSHIRE VICTORIA COUNTY HISTORY TRUST

(registered Charity 1064776)

President: Marjorie Glasgow, BEM, Lord Lieutenant of Oxfordshire

Trustees: Prof. William Whyte (Chairman), John Harwood (Vice-Chairman), Dr Michael Heaton (Hon. Treasurer), Prof. Robert Evans, Dr Laura Flannigan, Prof. Elizabeth Gemmill, Tom Hassall, Hilary Hibbert-Biles, Brig. Nigel Mogg, Christopher Parker, Dr Jill Pellew, Amanda Ponsonby, Sarah Taylor